



COVID-19 guidance for the Goose & Swan Monitoring Programme network

Updated: 18 September 2020

The spread of COVID-19 (Coronavirus) is having a significant impact on our lives and is likely to continue to do so over the coming months.

The health of the Goose & Swan Monitoring Programme (GSMP) network of counters and of those landowners and communities with which we interact is of the utmost concern to WWT. No volunteer should feel under pressure to carry out fieldwork if they do not feel comfortable doing so, or if they are concerned about the impacts of carrying out survey work on relations with landowners or other members of the public.

Please be reassured that any reduced survey coverage in any one year will not be detrimental to the long-term value of the surveys. The annual goose and swan surveys organised by WWT are part of a long-term monitoring scheme which will not suffer markedly from the occasional reduction in data collation (as similarly happened in 2001 during the Foot & Mouth outbreak). Your health and wellbeing and that of your family, friends and colleagues is of much more immediate concern.

The rapidly changing environment poses significant challenges to WWT in providing updates to the GSMP network each time any local restrictions are imposed or lifted. Therefore, we ask that all participants ensure they check the situation for both their geographical region and local area carefully before considering undertaking any fieldwork.

All participants must follow the government guidance in their geographic region and local area regarding outdoor activities and travel. Please also consider that such guidance may change quite rapidly in response to local or wider outbreaks.

Before commencing any fieldwork, please ensure you check the appropriate guidance for your geographic region and local area, and if different, for the area (both geographic and local) in which your survey site is located. Links to regional administration guidelines are listed below.

Please do not feel you have to carry out a survey if you have concerns about the health and safety of yourself or other people.

Before commencing your surveys, please consider the following:

- Please ensure you follow all regional and local regulations and guidance in the areas through which you travel and survey.
- Please do not carry out your surveys if you or anyone in your household is showing signs of COVID-19.
- Please do not carry out your surveys if you are required or been asked to self-isolate: for example (but not limited to), due to a member of your household having symptoms of COVID-19 or you have been asked to self-isolate as part of the government's track and trace system.
- Please do not carry out your surveys if you are concerned about the health of yourself or others, in particular if you or members of your household, or others you are in regular contact with, are e.g. in the extremely clinically vulnerable category.
- Please ensure you have the appropriate landowner permission to access a site. Please address any concerns the landowner may have regarding your visit and please respect

their wishes. Please do not access their site if you are in any doubt that the landowner/site manager is not completely happy with your visit, or that you do not feel comfortable doing so. Please note that landowners who have allowed you to operate on their land previously may be unwilling for you to do so in the current circumstances.

- We strongly recommended that you avoid using public transport to travel to/from your site wherever possible. If this is not possible, please assess your ability to follow the guidelines set by your regional and local administrations and otherwise keep you and others safe during the journey. Please do not visit your site if you are not sure you can keep yourself and others safe for the entire journey. Face coverings must be worn on public transport unless you are exempt.
- Please consider the location of your site and access to the site. Some public sites, including car parks, may be closed or have local restrictions in place.
- Please only visit your site if you are certain that you will be able to maintain social distancing while travelling to/from your site and during your survey. If your survey includes standing at a location to carry out a count, please consider if passers-by will be easily able to walk around you leaving a 2m gap.
- Please ensure you maintain social distancing with anybody you encounter while travelling to/from your site and during your survey.
- Where possible, please carry out surveys individually or with a member of your household.
- If multiple observers from different households are required to cover your site, please adhere to the current regional and local guidance for group activities outdoors. Members of different households should remain 2m apart at all times. Please take the names and contact numbers of the people who assisted with the survey on each date.
- If you are undertaking your survey as part of an organised group led by a particular organisation (e.g. a wildlife trust volunteer group), please adhere to all guidance and protocols set out by the leading organisation.
- Where possible, please do not share equipment.
- Please take hand sanitiser with you.

It is vital that all our staff and volunteers follow the latest government guidance. However, this can change quickly so it is important to check the appropriate website for your geographical location regularly for the current advice. Please remember guidance may differ between geographical regions and local areas.

Further advice from the UK government can be found at:

<https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-meeting-with-others-safely-social-distancing>

Please continue to follow the latest advice and guidance from the appropriate administration in your geographical region(s).

England: <https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus>

Scotland: <https://www.gov.scot/coronavirus-covid-19/>

See also FISA: <https://forestry.gov.scot/publications/788-working-safely-in-forestry-duringcovid-19/download>

Wales: <https://gov.wales/coronavirus>

See also: <https://phw.nhs.wales/topics/latest-information-on-novel-coronavirus-covid-19/>

Northern Ireland: <https://www.nidirect.gov.uk/campaigns/coronavirus-covid-19>

Republic of Ireland: <https://www.gov.ie/en/campaigns/c36c85-covid-19-coronavirus/>

Isle of Man: <https://covid19.gov.im/>

Jersey: <https://www.gov.je/Health/Coronavirus/Pages/index.aspx>

Guernsey: <https://covid19.gov.gg/>

Alderney: <http://www.alderney.gov.gg/>