



Consultant Ecologists

Ecological Survey Calendar

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Optimal survey period

Sub-optimal survey period

Surveys not recommended

January February March April May June July August September October November December

Habitats

Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA)	Scoping surveys are possible all year as long as the weather is suitable. This survey will inform the need for further species specific surveys detailed below.											
Phase 1 & 2 habitat/botanical surveys	Sub-optimal	Sub-optimal	Sub-optimal	Optimal	Optimal	Optimal	Optimal	Optimal	Optimal	Optimal	Sub-optimal	Sub-optimal

Bats

Structure: Bat roost potential assessment	Bat roost potential surveys can be undertaken all year. Further nocturnal surveys and/or hibernation surveys may be required to determine the ecological status of the structure if evidence/potential for bats is identified.											
Structure: Nocturnal bat roost survey	Sub-optimal	Sub-optimal	Sub-optimal	Sub-optimal	Optimal	Optimal	Optimal	Optimal	Optimal	Optimal	Sub-optimal	Sub-optimal
Tree: Roost potential & climbing inspection	Potential roost sites easier to see			Vegetation may obscure potential roost sites but surveys can be undertaken.								
Tree: Nocturnal bat roost survey	Sub-optimal	Sub-optimal	Sub-optimal	Sub-optimal	Optimal	Optimal	Optimal	Optimal	Optimal	Optimal	Sub-optimal	Sub-optimal
Hibernation surveys	Optimal	Optimal	Sub-optimal	Sub-optimal	Sub-optimal	Sub-optimal	Sub-optimal	Sub-optimal	Sub-optimal	Sub-optimal	Sub-optimal	Optimal
Nocturnal survey to assess habitat use	Sub-optimal	Sub-optimal	Sub-optimal	Sub-optimal	Optimal	Optimal	Optimal	Optimal	Optimal	Optimal	Sub-optimal	Sub-optimal

Badgers

Sett identification	Sett identification is possible all year but signs are clearer in spring and autumn.											
Activity survey	Sub-optimal	Increased activity in spring			Decreased activity in summer			Increased activity in autumn			Sub-optimal	
Bait marking study	Sub-optimal	Territories most frequently marked			Sub-optimal			Bait marking less effective in autumn			Sub-optimal	

Birds

Nesting bird check	Sub-optimal	Sub-optimal	Required during the breeding bird season (March-September/October)						Sub-optimal	Sub-optimal	Sub-optimal
Breeding bird survey	Sub-optimal	Sub-optimal	Optimal	Optimal	Optimal	Optimal	Sub-optimal	Sub-optimal	Sub-optimal	Sub-optimal	
Winter bird survey	Optimal	Optimal	Sub-optimal	Sub-optimal	Sub-optimal	Sub-optimal	Sub-optimal	Sub-optimal	Sub-optimal	Optimal	

Dormice

Gnawed nut search	Increased survey effort may be required. Only suitable in areas with Hazel present.						Only suitable in areas with Hazel present						
Nest tube searches	Sub-optimal	Sub-optimal	Set tubes	Best practice is to set tubes in March and then survey 1-2 times per month from April to November.									Sub-optimal

Great crested newts

Pond suitability assessment	Pond suitability assessment will inform the need for aquatic surveys											
Aquatic surveys (4-6 surveys needed)	Sub-optimal			At least 2 of the surveys should be between mid-April to mid-May						Sub-optimal		
eDNA presence/absence survey	Sub-optimal			One survey visit between late April and end-June			Sub-optimal					

Natterjack toad

Field survey	Toads in hibernation			Surveys for breeding adults using torchlight (night searching), refugia search and listening for breeding calls				Surveys possible if weather suitable	Surveys for adults		Toads in hibernation		
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Otter

Field survey	Optimal survey time (low vegetation cover)			Surveys for otter can be carried out all year though vegetation cover may restrict survey effort						Optimal survey time (low vegetation cover)		
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Reptiles

Activity survey	Reptiles in hibernation		Surveys possible if weather suitable	Optimal survey period for all species			Weather usually too hot		Optimal survey period	Surveys possible if weather suitable	Reptiles in hibernation	
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Water vole

Field survey	Low WV activity	Initial survey possible	High WV activity and low vegetation cover			Surveys may be limited by dense vegetation cover and high temperatures						Initial survey possible	Low WV activity
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White-clawed crayfish

Field survey	Reduced WCC activity			Surveys possible		Avoid surveys (females releasing young)		Optimal survey period			Reduced WCC activity		
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This calendar is intended as an overview, with the information on survey periods for guidance only. No action should be taken without professional advice. Torc Ecology Ltd. cannot accept responsibility for any loss incurred by any person or organisation acting on the information provided in this calendar.