

Ecology Survey Calendar



This calendar is a guide to the typical seasonal survey windows within which we usually have to work – it reflects best practice guidance. A number of visits may be required throughout the survey period with factors such as weather and geography potentially impacting dates. We pride ourselves on our innovative approaches and ability to find solutions so please speak to our ecologists before scheduling any work.

Optimal
 Sub-optimal
 No Survey

	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC	
Extended Phase 1 Habitat Survey													
Botanical Surveys	Lower plants only (mosses & liverworts)			Detailed botanical surveys						Lower plants only (mosses & liverworts)			
Fungi			Early species only						All fungi including waxcaps				
Breeding Birds			4 x surveys spread throughout Mar to Jun										
Wintering Birds	4 x visits												
Migratory Birds													
Badgers	Survey methods are possible throughout the year, vegetation can obscure					evidence in the summer			Licensable period for disturbance				
Bat Roost Assessment													
Bats – Emergence and Activity	Hibernation surveys only				Activity & emergence surveys to be spaced throughout the season						Hibernation surveys only		
Dormice				Tube surveys are carried out between Apr to Nov Nut searches between Aug and Dec						Nut search only			
Red Squirrels	Visual surveys Dec to Mar			Hair tube surveys throughout the year									
Invertebrates					Optimal period varies between species, consult our team before scheduling								
Otters	Surveys are possible all year round, weather and vegetation cover can be limiting factors.												
Water Voles	Burrow survey only	Habitat suitability assessment		Two surveys required: the first Apr to end Jun, the second Jul to Sep (to identify breeding territories and latrines)						Habitat suitability assessment	Burrow survey only		
Reptiles				Optimal survey period Apr to Jun									
Great Crested Newts				4 x aquatic surveys (must include 2 surveys mid-Apr to mid-May); eDNA survey season mid Mar to end Jun									
White-Clawed Crayfish	Habitat suitability assessment only			Weather dependent	No survey - females release offspring						Habitat suitability assessment only		
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Ecology Through The Seasons



SPRING

- The start of the 'typical' ecological survey season – consult us for forthcoming sites to make sure these windows are met.
- Spring is a great time to complete initial Phase 1 habitat surveys
- Key surveys: great crested newts and breeding birds. A good time to carry out reptile surveys – they like the sun after April showers, and dormouse surveys should be set up by the end of Spring to allow completion within the calendar year
- Hedgerow and scrub clearance will require pre-works checks for nesting birds
- Reptile and amphibian translocation and mitigation works can start as animals come out of hibernation

SUMMER

- Key surveys: bats, plants and invertebrates
- Although bat surveys during Spring and Autumn are possible, the presence of maternity roosts can only be confirmed in Summer
- Early summer marks the end of the great crested newt and breeding bird survey seasons
- Dormouse surveys set up in Spring will take place throughout Summer
- Summer is also the start of the period when works affecting badger setts may take place under licence

AUTUMN

- Autumn is the end of most survey periods including bats, reptiles and dormice
- Final survey dates can be hampered by poor weather so allow a buffer in the programme
- Late autumn is also the end of the period in which mitigation for many species may take place as animals become increasingly less active on the approach to hibernation
- Some wintering bird surveys, such as those for SPA qualifying species, commence in Autumn

WINTER

- Although most survey windows are closed through the winter, many surveys may still take place such as nut searches for dormice and baseline scoping surveys
- Winter is the key season for carrying out hibernation surveys for bats and surveys for wintering birds
- It is the optimum season for completing above-ground vegetation clearance works for hedgerows, woodland and scrub, when birds won't be nesting
- Winter is the perfect time to complete desk studies and constraints assessments so there is plenty of time to discuss options before the start of the survey and mitigation seasons

For more information, please contact Claire Wilmer, Director of Ecology, on 0207 250 7500 or email ecology@wyg.com