

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/UKHabs Survey	Survey possible but may require repeat visit during optimal season			Optimum period for habitat surveys					Survey possible but may require repeat visit during optimal season			
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				6 x surveys								
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	Trees			Buildings								
Bats – Emergence and Activity	Hibernation surveys only			Activity & emergence surveys					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	Habitat suitability assessment only			eDNA survey season mid Apr to end Jun			Habitat suitability assessment only					
				4-6 aquatic surveys between mid-March & mid-Jun (including 2-3 between mid-Apr to mid-May)								
White-clawed Crayfish	Habitat suitability assessment only				No survey - females release offspring					Habitat suitability assessment only		
Biodiversity Net Gain Condition Assessment	Survey possible but may require repeat visit during optimal season			Optimum period for habitat surveys/condition assessment					Survey possible but may require repeat visit during optimal season			
Modular River Survey				Optimum period for habitat surveys/condition assessment								

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