NEWS
Non-Estuarine Waterbird Survey
COUNT FORM

INSTRUCTIONS FOR THE 2026/27 NON-ESTUARINE COUNTS RECORDING FORM

This form is for recording numbers of Waterbirds (i.e. Waders and Wildfowl) at LOW TIDE on open non-estuarine coasts, inland fields and adjacent areas of sea. Numbered sections below refer to those on the following pages. It is very important that you make counts within Coast Sections provided by your Regional Organiser so that direct comparisons can be made with the previous NEWS Surveys. Please make all counts at any time WITHIN A 6 HOUR PERIOD COMMENCING 3 HOURS BEFORE THE LOCAL ADVERTISED TIME OF LOW WATER AND FINISHING 3 HOURS AFTER LOW WATER (www.tidetimes.org.uk). The survey runs from 1st December 2026 to 31st January 2027.

SAFETY – coasts can be dangerous. Take great care. Please inform someone of when and where you are counting and your expected time home. Counts along the base of cliffs must be made on a FALLING TIDE.

BEFORE commencing any counts, please ensure that you have read our guidance for volunteer fieldworkers on our website at www.bto.org/get-involved/volunteer/resources/guidance-for-volunteer-fieldworkers.

1. **COUNTER DETAILS**: Please provide all details requested.
2. **SECTOR DETAILS – START AND END GRID REFERENCES**: Please enter the start and end grid references or the Z-code for your sector, these can be found printed on the map supplied with this form. If you are unsure or have any questions please ask your Regional Organiser.
3. **DATE AND TIME**: Please enter the date and approximate start and finish times of the count for each sector (e.g. 0900/1300).
4. **TIDE STATE**: Please tick the appropriate box to indicate the state of the tide.
5. **DEAD/SICK BIRDS SEEN**: Please tick whether any dead or sick birds were seen and record any details. Please report to Defra.

6. **ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:** Please provide any other additional information you feel is relevant.

7. **LANDWARD HABITAT DETAILS**: Please choose one option that best describes the general character of the inland habitat
8. **INTERTIDAL HABITAT DETAILS**: Please choose the option that best describes the primary substrate and secondary substrate (if any) of the intertidal habitat.Please also indicate the amount of weed cover present and give an indication of the profile of the intertidal area.
9. **STRANDLINE (WRACK)**: Please indicate the % of your sector with light, medium, heavy wrack deposits (see additional instruction form and photos for guidance).
10. **SEAWARD HABITAT DETAILS**: Please choose one option that best describes the general character of the seaward habitat and please choose one option that best describes the sea state during your visit.

11. **DISTURBANCE:** Please indicate which activities took place during your visit and whether they were causing a disturbance.

12. **BIRD COUNTS**:

- Please enter the number of each species on INLAND habitats which are visible from the shore (within 100m of high water mark) in the Inland box.
- Please enter the numbers of each species counted BETWEEN THE HIGH AND LOW WATER MARK in the Intertidal box.
- Please tick the box if any birds were using the strandline during your visit. Please enter the numbers of wildfowl and seabirds which are visible ON THE SEA in the Sea box.
- Please record additional species observed in any of the blank lines provided.

- Movements of birds might occur as you survey the Coast Section. Count only those birds which you walk past, or which fly behind you or fly inland. Birds which fly FROM BEHIND you should be ignored if there is a possibility they have been counted already. The exceptions to this are species not previously recorded during the count.
- Birds flying overhead should be excluded unless obviously using your count area.
- Please indicate at the top of each section if you have not counted the birds present in that particular species group.
- Please indicate at the top of the section if you have or have not surveyed a particular habitat.

13. **MAMMALS:** Please enter the number of each mammal present on each of the three habitats. Please indicate whether you have or have not surveyed a particular habitat for mammals.

Please only use this form for <u>ONE</u> section as specified on your NEWS map, and return this form to your Local Organiser or submit your count via WeBS Online

THANK YOU FOR YOUR HELP

1 **NAME AND ADDRESS:**	2 **SECTOR DETAILS:**
POSTCODE:	START GRID REF: .....
	END GRID REF: .....
	'Z' CODE: .....
	4 **TIDE STATE:**
	LOW TIDE (+/- 3 hrs) ☐
	HIGH TIDE (+/- 3 hrs) ☐

3 **DATE:**	**START TIME (24 hrs):**	**END TIME (24 hrs):**

5 **ANY DEAD/SICK BIRDS SEEN?** YES ☐ NO ☐

Details (if yes):

NEWS is funded by BTO, Natural England, Natural Resources Wales, NatureScot, NIEA and the WeBS Partnership, supported by I-WeBS

6 ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

7 LANDWARD HABITAT DETAILS (tick one):			
Salt marsh	☐	Moorland - grass-dominated	☐
Maritime Grassland	☐	Suburban	☐
Freshwater marsh	☐	Urban	☐
Arable farmland	☐	Industrial	☐
Pastoral farmland	☐	Other (please specify):	☐
Moorland - heather-dominated	☐		

8 INTERTIDAL HABITAT DETAILS			
SUBSTRATE - PRIMARY (tick one):			
Sand	☐	Cobbles (can pick up in one hand)	☐
Mud	☐	Boulders (too large and heavy to pick up in one hand)	☐
Rock slabs/bedrock	☐	Pebbles/gravel	☐
SUBSTRATE - SECONDARY (tick one):			
Sand	☐	Cobbles (can pick up in one hand)	☐
Mud	☐	Boulders (too large and heavy to pick up in one hand)	☐
Rock slabs/bedrock	☐	Pebbles/gravel	☐
No secondary substrate	☐		
WEED COVER (tick one):			
None (less than 1%)	☐	Medium-high (26-50%)	☐
Low (1-10%)	☐	High (more than 50%)	☐
Medium-low (11-25%)	☐		

PROFILE (tick one):							
Flat	☐	Moderate slope	☐	Steep slope	☐	Cliff	☐

The name and contact details of NEWS observers will be kept on a computerised database for the purpose of NEWS administration, and for furthering the BTO's objectives. We will not sell your details to anyone else.

9 STRANDLINE (WRACK) - see counter instructions for guidance					
Please indicate the % of your sector with each level of wrack deposits (tick one for each row)					
	<1%	1-10%	11-25%	26-50%	>50%
Light	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Medium	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Heavy	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

10 SEAWARD HABITAT DETAILS					
GENERAL CHARACTER (tick one):					
Open Coast	☐	Exposed/open sea loch	☐	Bay	☐
Sheltered/narrow sea loch	☐	Estuarine	☐		

SEA STATE (tick one):			
Sea like a mirror	☐	Small waves becoming longer, numerous whitecaps	☐
Ripples with appearance of scales, no foam crests	☐	Moderate waves, many whitecaps, some spray	☐
Small wavelets, crests of glassy appearance, not breaking	☐	Larger waves, whitecaps everywhere, more spray	
Large wavelets, crests begin to break, scattered whitecaps	☐		

11 DISTURBANCE (tick all that apply):					
Activity	**Present**	**Causing disturbance**	**Activity**	**Present**	**Causing disturbance**
Walkers	☐	☐	Vehicles	☐	☐
Horse Riders	☐	☐	Unpowered boats	☐	☐
Anglers	☐	☐	Powered boats	☐	☐
Wildfowlers	☐	☐	Jet-skis	☐	☐
Bait-diggers	☐	☐	Wind-surfers/Paddle-boarders	☐	☐
Shellfishers	☐	☐	Swimmers	☐	☐
Cyclists	☐	☐	Micro-lights	☐	☐
Birdwatchers	☐	☐	Light aircraft	☐	☐
Dogs on-lead	☐	☐	Military aircraft	☐	☐
Dogs off-lead	☐	☐	Helicopter	☐	☐
Joggers	☐	☐	Drone/Radio controlled model aircraft	☐	☐
Other Human presence	☐	☐	Bird of prey or other predator	☐	☐
Other:	☐	☐	Other:	☐	☐

12 **WADERS:**	INLAND	INTERTIDAL	SEA
surveyed?	YES ☐ NO ☐	YES ☐ NO ☐	YES ☐ NO ☐
Species		tick if any using strandline:	
Little Egret		☐	
Grey Heron		☐	
Oystercatcher		☐	
Golden Plover		☐	
Lapwing		☐	
Ringed Plover		☐	
Curlew		☐	
Turnstone		☐	
Sanderling		☐	
Dunlin		☐	
Purple Sandpiper		☐	
Redshank		☐	
		☐	

WILDFOWL:	INLAND	INTERTIDAL	SEA
surveyed?	YES ☐ NO ☐	YES ☐ NO ☐	YES ☐ NO ☐
Species		tick if any using strandline:	
Shelduck		☐	
Tufted Duck		☐	
Eider		☐	
Long-tailed duck		☐	
Common Scoter		☐	
Goldeneye		☐	
Red-br. Merganser		☐	
Goosander		☐	
Red-throated Diver		☐	
Black-throated Diver		☐	
Great Northern Diver		☐	
Great Crested Grebe		☐	
Slavonian Grebe		☐	

SEABIRDS:	INLAND	INTERTIDAL	SEA
surveyed?	YES ☐ NO ☐	YES ☐ NO ☐	YES ☐ NO ☐
Species		tick if any using strandline:	
Cormorant		☐	
Shag		☐	
Puffin		☐	
Black Guillemot		☐	
Razorbill		☐	
Guillemot		☐	
Black-hd. Gull		☐	
Med. Gull		☐	
Common Gull		☐	
Lesser B-b. Gull		☐	
Herring Gull		☐	
Great B-b. Gull		☐	
		☐	

RAPTORS:	INLAND	INTERTIDAL	SEA
surveyed?	YES ☐ NO ☐	YES ☐ NO ☐	YES ☐ NO ☐
Species		tick if any using strandline:	
Hen Harrier		☐	
Sparrowhawk		☐	
Buzzard		☐	
Barn Owl		☐	
Short-eared Owl		☐	
Kestrel		☐	
Merlin		☐	
Peregrine		☐	
		☐	
		☐	
		☐	
		☐	
		☐	

OTHER BIRDS:	INLAND	INTERTIDAL	SEA
surveyed?	YES ☐ NO ☐	YES ☐ NO ☐	YES ☐ NO ☐
Species		tick if any using strandline:	
Chough		☐	
Jackdaw		☐	
Carrion Crow		☐	
Hooded Crow		☐	
Raven		☐	
Skylark		☐	
Shore Lark		☐	
Starling		☐	
Black Redstart		☐	
Stonechat		☐	
Grey Wagtail		☐	
Pied Wagtail		☐	
Rock Pipit		☐	
Water Pipit		☐	
Twite		☐	
Snow Bunting		☐	
Lapland Bunting		☐	
		☐	

MAMMALS (and extra space):	INLAND	INTERTIDAL	SEA
surveyed?	YES ☐ NO ☐	YES ☐ NO ☐	YES ☐ NO ☐
Species		tick if any using strandline:	
Otter		☐	
Common Seal		☐	
Grey Seal		☐	
Harbour Porpoise		☐	
Bottlenose Dolphin		☐	
Common Dolphin		☐	
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THANK YOU FOR TAKING PART IN NEWS IV!

You can now enter your records via the WeBS Online App, by clicking on NEWS Options, then Count Entry, selecting your site, and copying this information into our online database.

The results of NEWS IV will be published in our Waterbirds in the UK 2026/27 report, which will be published in 2028.

We are hugely grateful to every volunteer that contributes to our surveys allowing so much coverage across the UK and Ireland. If you'd like to continue surveying on a regular basis, visit www.BTO.org/webs to find out about the Wetland Bird Survey!

BTO Birds Science People