

Non-Estuarine Waterbird Survey (NEWS) Instructions for WeBS Online



After carrying out your NEWS count(s), it is important to ensure that your records are transferred clearly either to WeBS Online or, if you don't have internet access, to a recording form. Accuracy at this stage is equally as important as during your counts. Whilst we will notice obvious mistakes, e.g. a large count listed for the wrong species, there is little chance that we will spot smaller-scale errors, so please follow the instructions below carefully and check against your recording form to ensure you have transcribed your counts correctly. WeBS Online allows any counter with access to the internet to enter their NEWS counts themselves, removing the need for them to use the

paper forms. Moreover, WeBS Online allows NEWS users to view past counts from their sites.

Use of WeBS Online is not compulsory. Whilst we are obviously keen that as many counters as possible benefit from the advantages of the system, we are fully aware that some counters do not have internet access and will be unable to use WeBS Online. In which case paper forms can be made available. Just let your Local Organiser know whether to expect paper or online returns from you.

Getting started

Registering for WeBS Online

Since the NEWS data entry system is within WeBS Online, we ask you to create a WeBS Online account if you don't already have one. Your way into WeBS Online is through the WeBS homepage at www.bto.org/webs. You have two options, depending upon whether or not you already use any of the BTO's other online surveys (such as BirdTrack, Breeding Bird Survey Online or Garden BirdWatch Online).

I have a BTO online account already

If you are an existing online user for one of BTO's other surveys, go to <https://app.bto.org/websonline> and select '**Existing BTO account- Sign up for WeBS Online**'. This will take you to your MyBTO page, where you can select '**Sign Up**' for WeBS. The WeBS Terms and Conditions will appear as a pop-up on screen; please read through and agree to the Terms and Conditions in order to complete your WeBS registration. If you are not automatically redirected to the WeBS Data Home page, go to the WeBS homepage (www.bto.org/webs) and click on the green '**How to take part**' button and click on '**view and enter data**' to log into WeBS online. You are now ready to start!

I don't have a BTO online account

If you are totally new to BTO online surveys, you will first need to create a MyBTO online account. Visit the BTO homepage (<https://www.bto.org/>) and select '**MyBTO**' in the top right hand corner. Press on '**Register**' where you will then be asked to create a username and password and fill in personal details. This password needs to be at least eight characters

long, it must contain both upper and lower-case letters, a number and a punctuation/special character. You will see prompts on the page if any of these are missing from your chosen password, but please don't use any passwords you already use for internet banking or similarly sensitive ones. You need to remember this username and password to be able to use WeBS Online. Once you have completed all the boxes and agreed to the Terms and Conditions, please click on '**Create New Account**'. You will then be directed to your MyBTO homepage, where you will see a list of projects under '**Sign Up for Projects**'. Select '**Register**' for WeBS. The WeBS Terms and Conditions will appear as a pop up on screen; please read through and agree to the Terms and Conditions in order to complete your WeBS registration. Once you have agreed to the Terms and Conditions, the WeBS project will appear under the '**My Current Projects**' header (you may need to refresh the screen). Please click on the '**View/Enter Data**' button below the WeBS logo and log into WeBS online. You are now ready to start!

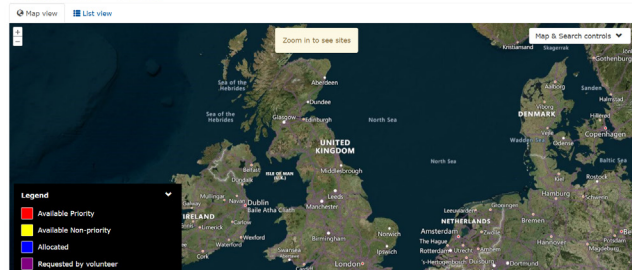
Once you're an active user

On subsequent visits simply go to the WeBS home page at www.bto.org/webs and click on the green '**How to take part**' button on the top of the page, and then select '**view and enter data**' under the Taking Part header. You may need to enter your username and password to login to the system. You can also bookmark the data homepage itself: <https://app.bto.org/websonline/>

Finding a Vacant Site

To look at the NEWS Vacant Sites map and to select a site(s), simply log into WeBS Online and click on the 'NEWS Options' tab on the right-hand side. Here, you can select 'Request a NEWS Sector'. This will take you to the map.

Vacant sites - NEWS



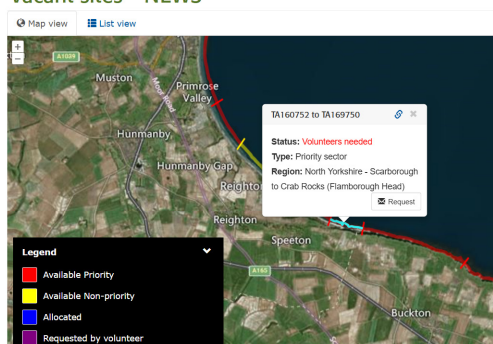
On the vacant site map, you can zoom in to the area you are interested in by using your mouse or the '+' and '-' on the top left of the map. Alternatively, you can use the List View if you know the site name you are interested in. You can also search using grid reference, postcode or region using the collapsible control panel on the right of the screen, named 'Map & Search Controls'. When you zoom in, you will be able to see colour-coded sites:

- Red: Available Priority (We encourage you to select priority sites over non-priority)
- Yellow: Available Non-priority
- Blue: Allocated
- Purple: Requested by volunteer

To request a site, simply click on the site boundary, and then press the 'Request' icon. This will bring up a form, and you simply fill in this form with your contact details so that the Local Organiser can get in touch with you. You can include a message for the Local Organiser if you wish to explain why you would like to count the site, or to give any additional information about your previous experience with bird surveys, and press 'Send'. An email will be sent to the Local Organiser for that site and copied to the NEWS team.

Once your Local Organiser accepts your request, you will be able to see your allocated sites by going into the count entry form 'Count Entry' (under 'NEWS Options') and clicking on sites. Here you can zoom into your sites and look at the site boundaries of your allocated sectors. If you would like to print out a map of your site boundaries to take into the field, you can screenshot your site(s) from this map. You can also select OS or Street View.

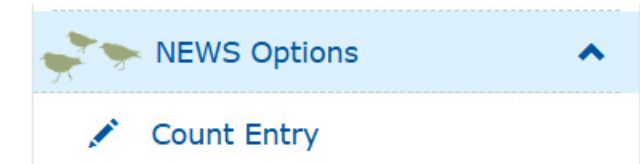
Vacant sites - NEWS



Entering NEWS counts into WeBS Online

Data entry

The data entry form can be found below the ‘NEWS Options’ tab on the right-hand side of WeBS Online home. After clicking on ‘NEWS Options’, please select ‘Count Entry’. Here, you will be directed to the online count form.



1. Visit details

After selecting your name/your counter’s name in the ‘Counter’ box, you will be asked to specify the site you/your counter was surveying by either using the dropdown list or the map of your allocated sites. By clicking on the map icon, you will be able to zoom into your sites. If you click onto and then select a site, this will autofill in the form, allowing you to submit data for this site.

WeBS NEWS Data Entry

▼ 1. Visit details

Site: [Map](#)

Date:

Start Time:

End Time:

Tide State:

Dead or sick birds seen: ☐ Yes ☐ No

Comments:

4000 characters remaining

The date of the count must also be recorded and, ideally, the approximate start and end time, as well as tide state (please note priority counts should be made at low tide, however we do accept supplementary counts at high tide). Please tick whether any dead or sick birds were seen and include details if any were recorded. Finally, there is also a ‘Comments’ box to record extra details (e.g. additional counters, additional details of any disturbance etc).Once you have completed this page, please scroll down to ‘2. Habitat details’.

▼ 2. Habitat details

Landward

General Character:

Substrate - Primary:

Substrate - Secondary:

Weed Cover:

Profile:

Strandline (Wrack)

Please indicate the percentage of your sector with light, medium, heavy wrack deposits:

Light: [Show Photo](#)

Medium: [Show Photo](#)

Heavy: [Show Photo](#)

Seaward

General Character:

Sea State:

Landward habitat details

Please choose one option that best describes the general character of the inland habitat.

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.

Strandline (Wrack)

Indicate the % of your sector with light, medium, and heavy wrack deposits. Click on ‘show photo’ for visual guidance.

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.

Once habitat details are filled in, please scroll down to ‘3. Disturbance details’

3. Disturbance details

☐ Present ☐ Causing disturbance?	Light Aircraft	☐ Present ☐ Causing disturbance?
☐ Present ☐ Causing disturbance?	Micro-lights	☐ Present ☐ Causing disturbance?
☐ Present ☐ Causing disturbance?	Military Aircraft	☐ Present ☐ Causing disturbance?
☐ Present ☐ Causing disturbance?	Other Human presence	☐ Present ☐ Causing disturbance?
☐ Present ☐ Causing disturbance?	Powered boats	☐ Present ☐ Causing disturbance?
☐ Present ☐ Causing disturbance?	Shellfishers	☐ Present ☐ Causing disturbance?
☐ Present		☐ Present

Here, you will see a list of potential disturbance activities. Please tick all that were present, as well as whether any were causing visible disturbance. If there were no potential disturbance activities, please leave blank. Once complete, scroll down to ‘4.Observation details’.

▼ 4. Observation details

Species	Land		Intertidal		Sea	
	Surveyed	Not Surveyed	Surveyed	Not Surveyed	Surveyed	Not Surveyed
Oystercatcher	☐ Present	☐	☐ Present ☐ Using strandline?	☐	☐ Present	☐
Golden Plover	☐ Present	☐	☐ Present ☐ Using strandline?	☐	☐ Present	☐
Ringed Plover	☐ Present	☐	☐ Present ☐ Using strandline?	☐	☐ Present	☐
Lapwing	☐ Present	☐	☐ Present ☐ Using strandline?	☐	☐ Present	☐

Please record the number of species recorded on the land, sea and intertidal area. The form starts on the ‘Waders and Herons’ tab, so please enter all counts, as well as ticking whether any birds were using the strandline in the intertidal area. Do this by ticking the ‘Using Strandline?’ tick box next to intertidal species counts. If a species was present but the number not recorded, you can tick the ‘present box’ next to the species. If an undercount, please enter the count in [square brackets].

If you did not count land or sea habitats, please select ‘Not Surveyed’. However, we strongly encourage that you survey these habitats if possible (surveying the intertidal habitat is mandatory).

If a habitat section was recorded but there were no birds seen, please tick ‘no Waders and Herons present’ to indicate they were looked for, just not there.

If any waders or heron species were seen but are not shown on this initial list, scroll down to the bottom of the page and search for the species under ‘Add Waders and Herons from extended list’.

Once all waders and heron counts have been entered, please repeat this for the other tabs: Wildfowl, Gulls and Seabirds, Raptors, Other Birds, and Mammals. If any of these were not surveyed, click on ‘Not surveyed’ under land, sea and intertidal.

Once you have finished entering all the counts, click on ‘Save’. If any mandatory information has not been entered, a warning on the top will appear asking you to fill in the missing information. Once this has been entered, please press ‘Save’ again, and your data will be submitted.

Viewing & editing past records

Back on the WeBS Online Home page, you can view or edit your past records under the ‘NEWS Options’ tab by clicking on ‘View/edit my submissions’. Here, you can either view, edit or delete your past submissions. Please note you will not be able to edit or delete historic submissions from previous NEWS counts made in the 2015/16 survey, however you can view them. The BTO keeps a track of all edited or deleted data in case of mishaps.