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Species Survey and Mitigation Planner

Many environmental survey and mitigation undertakings have seasonal constraints. Early planning and identification of such constraints is advised, so that your project does not encounter avoidable delays.

To aid your planning and ensure you are compliant with ecological legislation, the species survey and mitigation planner overleaf identifies the optimal times that work can be carried out, allowing you to meet your end objectives.

Thomson cover a breadth of environmental services and are always pragmatic.

Our specialist teams can assist you with:

- Ecological advice, surveys and assessments
- Habitat design and creation, ecological contracting, and invasive species management
- Freshwater and marine consultancy
- Arboriculture
- Data management and mapping
- Laboratory analysis

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Species Survey and Mitigation Planner

	TYPE	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEPT	OCT	NOV	DEC
Habitat Management	Survey	Sub-optimal for phase 1[1] and detailed botanical survey[2]			Optimal time for phase 1[1] and detailed botanical survey[2]						Sub-optimal for phase 1[1] and detailed botanical survey[2]		
	Mitigation	Vegetation clearance, tree and hedge planting		Control of invasive species, spraying/stem injection, wild flower sowing. Construction and creation of ponds and hibernacula							Vegetation clearance, tree and hedge planting		
Invertebrates	Terrestrial Survey	Habitat surveys only			Optimal time for surveys						Habitat surveys only		
	Aquatic survey	No surveys undertaken – invertebrates inactive or at inappropriate lifestage		Optimal time for surveys – maximum number of species active			Sub optimal time for surveys – fewer species at appropriate lifestage			Optimal time for surveys – maximum number of species active			No surveys undertaken – invertebrates inactive or at inappropriate lifestage
	Mitigation	Installation of bee biomes, insect hotels, hibernacula, brash piles, in addition to all habitat management mitigation.											
White-clawed crayfish	Survey	Habitat surveys only – reduced crayfish activity			Optimal time for surveys (hand searching, torchlight and trapping)	Optimal time for torchlight surveys only – crayfish breeding		Optimal time for surveys – substrate search by hand, torchlight and trapping				Habitat surveys only – reduced crayfish activity	
	Mitigation	No capture at this time			Optimal time for licensed capture and exclusion	No capture at this time		Optimal time for licensed capture and exclusion				No capture at this time	
Great Crested Newt	Survey	Outside eDNA[3] presence /absence survey period				Newt eDNA[3] survey period		Outside eDNA[3] presence /absence survey period				No pond surveys – newts hibernating	
		No pond surveys – newts hibernating			Optimal time for pond surveys								
		Habitat surveys can be carried out all year round – no seasonal constraints											
	Mitigation	Pond management only – newts hibernating		Sub-optimal time for licensed newt trapping in ponds and on land	Optimal time for licensed newt trapping in ponds and on land			Optimal time for licensed newt trapping on land only				Sub-optimal time for licensed newt trapping on land only	Pond management only – newts hibernating
				Optimal time for new pond and hibernacula creation									
Reptiles	Survey	Habitat surveys only – reptiles hibernating		Optimal time for surveys				Sub-optimal for refugia surveys – reduced reptile basking time		Optimal time for surveys	Surveys less effective – low reptile activity	Habitat surveys only – reptiles hibernating	
	Mitigation	Above ground vegetation clearance only – reptiles hibernating		Sub-optimal time for capture and translocation programmes	Optimal time for capture and translocation programmes			Sub-optimal time for capture and translocation programmes – hot weather		Optimal time for capture and translocation programmes	Sub-optimal time for capture and translocation programmes	Above ground vegetation clearance only – reptiles hibernating	
					Optimal time for vegetation clearance (subject to the absence of breeding birds)								
Birds[4]	Survey	Optimal time for wintering birds		Optimal time for migrating birds		Optimal time for breeding birds		Sub-optimal time for breeding birds	Optimal time for migrating birds		Sub-optimal time for wintering birds	Optimal time for wintering birds	
	Mitigation	Optimal time for vegetation clearance and building demolition		Avoid vegetation clearance and building demolition – key bird nesting period					Sub-optimal time for vegetation clearance and building demolition	Optimal time for vegetation clearance and building demolition			
Bats	Survey	Inspection of hibernation roosts for roosting bats		No emergence/activity surveys should be undertaken	[5] Sub-optimal for activity surveys (North of the UK)	Optimal time for summer roost emergence and activity surveys			Sub-optimal time for emergence surveys	[5] Sub-optimal for activity surveys (North of the UK)		Inspection of hibernation roosts for roosting bats	
					[5] Optimal for activity surveys (South of the UK)					[5] Optimal for activity surveys (South of the UK)			
		Preliminary inspections on buildings – no seasonal constraints											
		Optimal time for preliminary inspection of trees – no leaf cover		[6] Sub-optimal time for preliminary inspection of trees due to leaf cover								Optimal time for preliminary inspection of trees – no leaf cover	
	Mitigation	Licensed works on maternity roosts as bats hibernating		Licensed works on maternity and hibernation roosts		Licensed works on hibernation roosts – as bats in maternity period			Licensed works on year round roosts		Licensed works on maternity and hibernation roosts		Licensed works on maternity roosts as bats hibernating
Hazel Dormouse	Survey	Sub-optimal time for gnawed hazelnut searches			Optimal time for nest tube surveys								Unsuitable for nest tube surveys
									Optimal time for gnawed hazelnut searches				
	Mitigation	Optimal time for above ground vegetation clearance for displacement		Sub-optimal time for above ground vegetation clearance for displacement – risk to nesting birds		Optimal time for capture	Sub-optimal time for capture	Optimal time for capture				Optimal time for above ground vegetation clearance for displacement	
							Optimal time for release						
						Optimal time for stump and root clearance (following above ground vegetation clearance)							
Water vole	Survey	Habitat surveys only – low water vole activity	Optimal time for initial habitat surveys	Optimal time for habitat and field surveys to be carried out – may be limited by vegetation cover and weather								Optimal time for initial habitat surveys	Habitat surveys only – low water vole activity
	Mitigation	No damage/disturbance of burrows – water voles wintering		[7] Optimal time for exclusion works (fencing, trapping, displacement)		No exclusion works – water voles breeding			[7] Optimal time for exclusion works (fencing and trapping)			No damage/disturbance of burrows – water voles wintering	
Badger	Survey	Sub-optimal time for bait marking and sett surveys		Optimal time for bait marking and sett surveys		Sub-optimal time for bait marking and sett surveys			Optimal time for sett surveys				Sub-optimal time for bait marking and sett surveys
	Mitigation	No closing of existing setts – building of artificial setts only						Licensed stopping up and closing of existing setts					No closing of existing setts – building of artificial setts only
Otter	Survey	Surveys limited by vegetation cover and weather conditions rather than seasons											
	Mitigation	No seasonal constraints but likely to be restricted where otters breeding											

[1] Phase 1 = Phase 1 habitat survey in accordance with JNCC 2010.
[2] NVC = National Vegetation Classification as per Rodwell 1991 et seq

[3] eDNA = environmental DNA
[4] Please note that barn owls require a license to survey

[5] Activity surveys can be carried out whenever night time temperatures are >10C, the season therefore differs from north to south, with October potentially optimal in the south (and part of April)

[6] It is better to inspect trees in the winter, as there are no leaves
[7] Trapping only = licensed

KEY:
- Optimal or no constraints – ideal time for work to be carried out.
- Sub-optimal or restricted – task can be carried out, but not the best time to do it.

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