

GENERAL LICENCE

To take shrews (Soricidae) for scientific or educational purposes, or for the purpose of ringing or marking, or examining any ring or mark



OVERVIEW

This licence permits persons with appropriate knowledge and experience to trap and mark shrews for scientific or education purposes. Users must comply with licence terms and conditions.

Registration	Users do not need to register to use this licence
Recording & reporting	Users are required to report fatalities (see Condition 3(c))
Reference	WML - GL01

LICENCE TERMS and CONDITIONS

Legislation	Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) ["the 1981 Act"]
Relevant section(s)	Section 16(3)(a) and (b), and 16(5)
Valid for the period	1 January 2019 to 31 December 2019 (inclusive)
Area valid in	All counties of England (landward of the mean low water mark)
Purpose(s) for which this licence is issued	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Science or education,• Conserving wild animals,• Ringing and marking or examining any mark on wild animals.
What this licence permits	Subject to all the terms and conditions of this licence and solely for the purpose(s) stated above, this licence permits Authorised Persons to: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• take shrews (Soricidae) by the use of appropriate live capture traps, and• mark shrews (Soricidae) using appropriate humane methods.
Who can use this licence	Any person with appropriate knowledge and experience of shrews, and the trapping and marking techniques permitted, or under the direct supervision of such a person, except those with a recent conviction (see Information and Advice note n).

LICENCE CONDITIONS

1. This licence does not authorise the use of any method of taking which is prohibited by section 11 of the 1981 Act.
2. No work shall be carried out under this licence on a National Nature Reserve except with the prior written permission of Natural England.
3. At each inspection:
 - a. Any shrew taken under this licence shall be liberated at the site of capture immediately after examination and/or marking.
 - b. Any other species caught in a trap must be released, unharmed, at the site of capture immediately after examination and/or marking, unless they are listed on Schedule 9 of the 1981 Act. See Information and Advice note n. regarding any animals that are listed on Schedule 9.
 - c. Any dead animal caught in the trap should be removed from it. The licensee must report shrew deaths to Natural England (see contact details below) using Form GL-01 Annex at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/shrews-licence-to-take-them>, to help assess the trapping method.

4. All relevant animal welfare legislation must be complied with at all times, including the Animal Welfare Act 2006 and the Wild Mammals (Protection) Act 1996 (see Information and Advice notes).
5. When in use, every trap used under this licence must be physically inspected as follows:
 - a. *Where food and bedding are provided:* at least twice every day at intervals of no less than eight hours and no more than sixteen hours, or
 - b. *Without food and bedding:* at intervals less than three hours, except where this is not possible because of severe weather conditions. In such cases, every effort must be made to inspect the trap as soon as possible (see Information and Advice note e).
6. All equipment used for the purpose of this licence shall be so constructed and maintained as to avoid cruelty and distress to wild animals (see Information and Advice notes a -b).
7. Where a trap is not in use, it must be rendered incapable of holding or catching shrews or other animals. Any bait, food, or water must also be removed (see Information and Advice note k).

IMPORTANT

This licence authorises acts that would otherwise be offences under the legislation referred to above. Failure to comply with its terms and conditions:

- i. may be an offence against the 1981 Act or mean that the licence cannot be relied upon and an offence could therefore be committed. The maximum penalty available for an offence under the 1981 Act is, at the time of the issue of this licence, an unlimited fine and/or a six month custodial sentence; and
- ii. may result in your permission to use this licence being withdrawn. Natural England will inform any person or organisation whose permission to use this licence is withdrawn in writing. This sanction may be applied to other similar licences.

If the activity that you wish to undertake is not covered by this licence, or if you are unable to comply with any of the terms and conditions which apply to the use of this licence, then you will need to apply to Natural England for an individual licence.

Issued by and on behalf of Natural England on 1 January 2019

INFORMATION AND ADVICE specific to this licence

Trap construction

- a. It is the responsibility of each person relying on this licence to use appropriate equipment (eg trap) and to ensure that they are competent to use such equipment so as to avoid causing unnecessary suffering. Appropriate live-traps are those that are designed, set and operated in such a manner as to avoid death or injury. This licence is intended to be used with traps manufactured commercially for the purpose of catching small mammals. 'Home made' traps should not be used unless they match, or exceed, the specifications of those commercially available.
- b. All traps should be regularly maintained and checked to ensure correct operation before use.

Trap use

- c. **Food:** Leave plenty of suitable food in the trap nest-box. Blowfly larvae or pupae (*Calliphora* spp., also known as "casters") are best. These can be frozen and used as required. Use in sufficient numbers to provide 10 g per trap.
- d. **Bedding:** Leave in the nest-box to provide *insulation*. Hay is best. Ensure it is dry.
- e. Any person acting under this licence should have regard to the inspection requirements contained in Condition 5. Shrews need to eat every *three to four* hours, so inspect the trap at suitably frequent intervals.
 - i. If sufficient food and bedding are left, twice daily inspections (ideally at dusk and early morning) should be sufficient.
 - ii. If for any reason food cannot be left, shrews are likely to die in the trap if left there for more than four hours, and visits should be correspondingly frequent (at intervals of less than three hours) - particularly if trapping from July to September when more shrews may be caught. Remember, however, that very frequent visits to the trap will cause disturbance to the habitat and this may affect trapping success.

- f. When setting traps you should carefully record the location of each one and ensure that all those set are collected at the end of trapping. You may wish to mark the location with small flags or coloured tape on a stick.
- g. Traps should be stable and the nest chamber of any traps used should be sloped to prevent water running into the bedding.
- h. Traps should be covered with surrounding vegetation or other material, to insulate against extremes of temperatures. When trapping following periods of cold weather, particularly when the ground has been frozen, ensure that the trap has sufficient insulation from the ground, which will remain colder than the air temperature. This is particularly important when using metal traps.
- i. At each visit, check bedding and food within the trap and cover outside the trap and replace as required.
- j. If shrew deaths occur, adjust the amounts of food and bedding, or increase the frequency of inspections, as appropriate. If despite this, deaths continue, suspend trapping and seek advice. (See Conditions 3(c) and 7 on this licence).
- k. In order to render any trap incapable of holding or catching shrews or other animals when out of use, it is necessary to either secure the door in a fully open or closed position or to remove the door completely.

INFORMATION AND ADVICE for all Class and General Licences

General Information

- l. Ordinarily, licences will be reissued on 1 January each year (*NB you do not need to re-register for those with registration requirements*). Please note, however, that they can be modified or revoked at any time by Natural England or the Secretary of State, but this will not be done unless there are good reasons for doing so. You are advised to check the terms and conditions of a licence prior to your first use of it each year in case of amendments.
- m. The common name of the species given in a licence is included by way of guidance only; in the event of any dispute or proceedings, it is the scientific name of a species only that will be taken into account.
- n. No person convicted on or after 1 January 2010 of an offence under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017, the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981, the Protection of Badgers Act 1992, the Deer Act 1991, the Hunting Act 2004, the Wild Mammals (Protection) Act 1996, the Animal Welfare Act 2006 or the Protection of Animals Act 1911 (all as amended) may use this licence without the permission of Natural England unless, in respect of that offence, either:
 - i. they are a rehabilitated person for the purposes of the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 and their conviction is treated as spent; or
 - ii. a court has made an order discharging them absolutely.

Any request to use the licence by a person to whom this note applies will be considered on its merits.

Non-native species

- o. Under section 14 of the 1981 Act it is an offence to release into the wild any animal included in Part 1 of Schedule 9 to the 1981 Act. Any animals of species listed on Schedule 9 accidentally caught by licensed trapping should be treated as follows:
 - i. Animals of the following species, which are considered native to Great Britain, must be released immediately upon discovery. This is permitted under General Licence WML- GL22.

Barn Owl	<i>Tyto alba</i>
Capercaillie	<i>Tetrao urogallus</i>
Corncrake	<i>Crex</i>
Common crane	<i>Grus grus</i>
Northern goshawk	<i>Accipiter gentilis</i>
Red-billed chough	<i>Pyrrhocorax pyrrhocorax</i>
Red kite	<i>Milvus</i>
White-tailed eagle	<i>Haliaeetus albicilla</i> (also known as <i>Haliaeetus albicilla</i>)
 - ii. Animals of other species listed on Schedule 9 (this includes: the Canada Goose *Branta canadensis*, Monk parakeet *Myiopsitta monachus*, Ring-necked Parakeet *Psittacula krameri*, Grey Squirrel *Sciurus carolinensis*, Edible Dormouse *Glis glis*; also known as *Myoxus glis*, and North American Mink *Neovison vison*; also known as *Mustela vison*) must not be released or allowed to escape into the wild. It is preferable that these animals are killed in a quick and humane manner as soon as reasonably practicable after discovery. These animals may only be released under an individual licence obtained from Natural England.

The limits of licences

- p. Licences permit action only for the purposes specified on that licence.
- q. Licences do not permit actions prohibited under any other legislation, nor do they confer any right of entry upon land.

- r. Unless otherwise stated the provisions of Natural England licences only apply landward of the mean low water mark in England. The Marine Management Organisation is responsible for all licensing seaward of the mean low water mark.

Relevant legislation and good practice

- s. Persons acting under a licence should have regard to legislation and good practice relevant to the action(s) undertaken, including animal welfare and the Animal Welfare Act 2006. It is an offence to cause any unnecessary suffering to an animal (including birds) under the control of man (section 4 of the 2006 Act). This applies to the humane despatch of captured animals and the treatment of animals held in traps or nets, including decoy birds and non-target animals. For advice on the relevance of the 2006 Act to wildlife management please refer to the Natural England leaflet '[The Animal Welfare Act 2006: what it means for wildlife](#)' (TIN072).

Protected sites

- t. With the exception of WML-CL25 (*To permit the diversionary feeding of hen harrier (Circus cyaneus) on grouse moors in northern England*), a licence is not permission from Natural England for an activity that could damage a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI). The notification documents for each SSSI contain a list of operations that could damage its special features and for which prior permission from Natural England is required. Owners and occupiers of sites notified as SSSIs are required to give written notice to Natural England before beginning any of these operations, or allowing someone else to carry out these activities. A similar process applies for public bodies and statutory undertakers (as defined under Section 28G of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended)) and this obligation applies even where the operations are carried out on land outside of the SSSI. See [Gov.uk](#) for further information.
- u. In considering whether to issue consent or assent for activities on a SSSI that is a European Site, in other words a Special Protection Area (SPA) or Special Area of Conservation (SAC), Natural England will consider whether there is likely to be a significant effect on features of European importance (alone or in combination) and carry out a Habitats Regulations Assessment, as required.
- v. To identify SSSIs, European Sites and the features for which they are designated, refer to [www.magic.gov.uk](#). Consult the SSSI citation for details of 'operations likely to damage', and consider whether your activity is likely to have an impact. Advice may be sought from the local adviser for the SSSI: <https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/natural-england>.

Biosecurity

- w. Users of this licence should consider the risks of activities to biosecurity and take relevant precautions when visiting heathland and woodland sites to avoid the spread of invasive non-native species, and tree and plant pests and diseases such as [Phytophthora](#) and Ash dieback [Chalara](#). General biosecurity advice can be found on the GB Non-Native Species Secretariat [website](#). Further information on plant biosecurity is available on the Animal and Plant Health Agency's [website](#).

The law

- x. Natural England has issued this licence in exercise of the powers conferred by the 1981 Act. Visit [www.legislation.gov.uk](#) to view the full text of this legislation.
- y. Section 16 of the 1981 Act provides that the offences in Part 1 of the 1981 Act shall not apply to anything done under and in accordance with the terms of a licence granted by the appropriate authority, which is, in England, Natural England.
- z. This licence complies with Article 9(1) of the Bern Convention (the exception applied in this case is 'for the purposes of research and education') ([Convention on the Conservation of European Wildlife and Natural Habitats](#)).

Further information: The Mammal Society Booklet *Live Trapping Small Mammals - A Practical Guide* by J Gurnell and J R Flowerdew (2006), contains many useful hints (available from The Mammal Society, 18 St John's Church Road, London, E9 6EJ. Tel: 02380 010981).

Contact details for Natural England

For licensing enquiries:

Telephone 020 802 61089

Email wildlife.scicons@naturalengland.org.uk

Postal address Wildlife Licensing, Operations Delivery,
Natural England, Horizon House, Deanery Road, Bristol, BS1
5AH

For other enquiries use the Enquiry Service:

Telephone 0300 060 3900

Email enquiries@naturalengland.org.uk

Web <https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/natural-england>