Winter Gull Survey

3 **Guide to WinGS Online**

Getting started

Registering for WinGS Online

Your way into WinGS Online is through the WinGS homepage at www.bto.org/wings. You have two options, depending upon whether or not you already use any of the BTO's other online surveys (such as WeBS Online, BirdTrack, Breeding Bird Survey Online or Garden BirdWatch Online).

I have a BTO account already

If you are an existing online user for one of BTO's other surveys, go to https://www.bto.org/my-bto and scroll to the WinGS icon underneath 'Sign up for project' select 'Sign Up'. The WinGS 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 WinGS registration.

If you are not automatically redirected to the WinGS Data Home page, go to the WinGS homepage (www.bto.org/wings) and click on the yellow **'Go to Data Entry'** button and log into WinGS online. You are now ready to start!

I don't have a BTO 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 an Account start using My BTO today'** 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 uses. You need to remember this username and password to be able to use WinGS 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 '**Sign Up**' for WinGS. The WinGS 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 WinGS registration. Once you have agreed to the Terms and Conditions, the WinGS project will appear under the **'My Current Projects'** header (you may need to refresh the screen). Please click on the orange '**Go To Project**' button below the WinGS logo and log into WinGS online. You are now ready to start!

Once you're an active user

On subsequent visits simply go to the WinGS home page at www.bto.org/wings and click on the yellow **'Go to Data Entry'** button from the options on the right-hand side of the page. 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/wings

WinGS Data Home

When you go into WinGS Online, you will find yourself at a page called **WinGS Data Home**. From here, you can access all the different functions of WinGS Online that are available to you. You can also see past contributions you have made through WinGS Online.

Entering your counts into WinGS Online

Submitting WinGS Counts

For WinGS counts, under 'Your Options', click on **'Add Count'**.
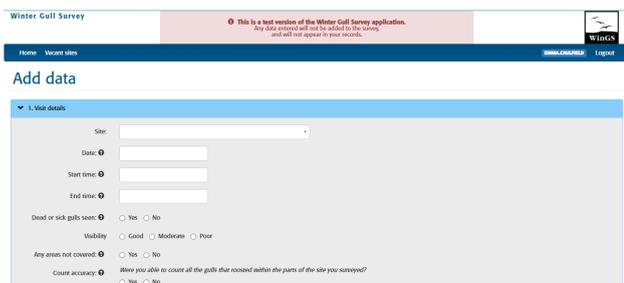
First you will be asked to specify the site, which you can find using the dropdown list.

The date of the count must also be recorded and the approximate start and end time in 24hr format (hh:mm). Please record conditions of ice cover (for inland sites), tidal state (for coastal sites) and visibility. If you encountered any dead or sick gulls suggesting the presence of Highly Pathogenic Avian influenza (HPAI) or similar please indicate and give details.

Importantly, if you feel that your count did not accurately represent the true number of birds present, please record a count accuracy of **'Low'** and tell us why this was. If there was any suitable roost habitat within your site boundary that was not covered, indicate the percentage of suitable area not covered. If the site was visited and no gulls were present please tick the associated box. Once you have completed this page, please scroll down to **'2. Gull Counts'** unless you ticked either the zero or assumed zero count box above.

The six key species to record for the WinGS counts are Black-headed Gull, Mediterranean Gull, Common Gull, Great Black-backed Gull, Herring Gull and Lesser Black-backed Gull. Please enter counts for these six species, and if no birds of a species were present you can put a 0 count.
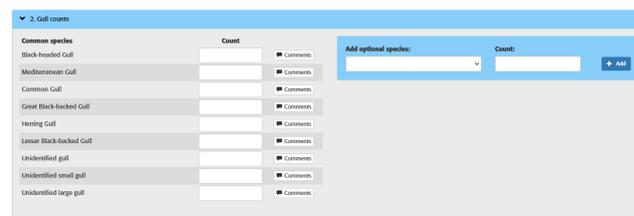
To record your count, simply enter the count of each species you saw in the relevant box. To the right, you can add counts of rarer gull species present by clicking on the white drop down box under **'Add Optional Species'** and choosing the species from the list and type the count in the box. If you wish to clear a species added by mistake, type 0 into the count box.

If you feel your count was a significant underestimate of the numbers you would have been able to count under ideal conditions then please use the comments box next to the count to tell us.

If you do want to record any specific comments about a particular species then there is a comments box to click on against each species. Once you have entered your count data, proceed to **'3. Site annotations'**.

The map of the site you are entering data for (as selected in **'1. Visit details')** will display on the bottom of the recording form. Here you can create points, paths or polygons to record additional information about the site. For key sites, this could be an additional nearby water body that is not covered by another site that you have made a roost count for. It can also be used to indicate the location of the roost, direction of flight lines or observer vantage

point.

To add an annotation, click on the geometry type you would like to add in the top right of the map viewer. To add a point, click the point button and then on the area you would like to place the marker. To create a path, click and drag your mouse to create a line, click again to add a node and repeat until you have a path of your desired shape. To complete the path double click the left mouse button. To add a polygon, click and drag the mouse to start the shape and click to create a node. When happy with your polygon, double click the left mouse button to complete the shape.

When the geometry is created it will show up under **'List of annotations'** where you can add details to describe the map. To edit the geometry, click on the blue pencil icon next to the annotation you would like to edit. When you are happy with your edit please click the white Done button on the right of the map viewer to exit edit mode.
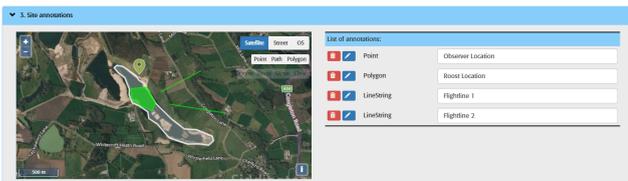
Once you've finished entering all the counts and adding site annotations, click on **'Save'**. If any essential information has been omitted, such as the date, ice cover or whether you recorded gulls, these will be highlighted as an error in red at the top of the page. **These must be addressed before the count can be submitted otherwise your count will not be saved.**

If you are satisfied you have recorded everything correctly, and the count has been submitted on the online database and you can close the page, or alternatively return to the WinGS '**Data Home'**. If you would like to submit another gull count for the same site you can click **'Enter another visit here'** or alternatively for a new site **'Enter another visit'**.

Viewing & editing past records

You may receive a message after data submission from your local WinGS Organisers indicating that they have a query with your data input form. This could be a data entry error in the recorded count input or they may need to double check with you if you were lucky enough to record a high count or an unusual species. If it was an error you may need to edit your data input. From the **'Contributions to**

current survey' section of the Data Home page, you can go back to view any records you have previously entered into WinGS Online or make any corrections by pressing **'View/Edit'** or you can delete the entire visit using the **'Delete'** button.

The BTO keeps a track of all edited or deleted data in case of mishaps.

When to submit your counts

We recommend that you submit your counts as soon as possible after each count so that any queries can be dealt with whilst the count is still fresh in your memory. Failing this, please submit winter counts before February 28th of the same year.

FAQs

● **I already have a BTO username and password. Why can't I log into WinGS Online?**
Before you can log-in you need to activate your WinGS access. Sign into 'My BTO' at www.bto.org/my-bto and scroll down to 'Sign Up for Projects'. Please read through and agree to the WinGS terms and conditions to complete your registration. You can find WinGS under the "**My Current Projects**" header, please click on the "**Go To Project**" button to log into WinGS Online.

● **I've forgotten / lost my 'Log In' details - can you help?**
Please contact us at wings@bto.org with your name and address and we will be able to help.

● **I didn't complete my WinGS count on the Key Date, should I still enter the data as an WinGS Count?**
Please enter your data as a WinGS Count. All complete counts should be submitted regardless of whether they were on the Key Date or not.

● **I've input data incorrectly - can this be rectified?**
Yes. From the **'Contributions to current survey'** section of the Data Home page, you can go back to view any records you have previously entered into WinGS Online or make any corrections by pressing **'View/Edit'** or you can delete the entire visit using the **'Delete'** button

● **I am experiencing problems with WinGS Online and cannot submit my counts?**
Please make a note of any messages that appear and at which point they occur then send us an email at wings@bto.org with these details and we will look into the problem for you.