Guide to GSMP Online

After carrying out your Icelandic-breeding Goose Census (IGC) counts, International Swan Census (ISC) or Age Assessments, it is important to ensure that your records are transferred clearly either to GSMP 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 notebook to ensure you have transcribed your counts correctly. GSMP Online allows any counter with access to the internet to enter their IGC counts and Age Assessments themselves, removing the need for them to use the paper forms.

Use of GSMP Online is not compulsory. We are keen that as many counters as possible benefit from the advantages of the system, but we are aware that some counters may not be comfortable using GSMP Online to submit counts. Forms for both IGC and Age Assessments can be downloaded from the GSMP website or requested from the GSMP Office by emailing gsmp@bto.org and submitted to your Local Organiser or the GSMP office.

Getting started

Registering for GSMP Online

Your way into GSMP Online is through the GSMP homepage at **www.bto.org/gsmp**. You have two options, depending upon whether or not you already use any of the BTO's other online surveys systems (such as WeBS Online, 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, on the BTO website, go to My BTO (**www.bto.org/my-bto**) and then click the 'Log in' button. This will take you to your MyBTO page, where you can select 'Register' for GSMP. The GSMP 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 GSMP registration.

If you are not automatically redirected to the GSMP Data Home page, go to the GSMP hompage and click on the 'View/Enter data' button on the left-hand side panel and log into GSMP 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 (**www.bto.org**) and select 'MyBTO' in the top right hand corner. Press on 'create a new account' 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 accounts. You need to remember this username and password to be able to use GSMP 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 GSMP. The GSMP 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 GSMP registration. Once you have agreed to the Terms and Conditions, the GSMP 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 GSMP logo and log into GSMP online. You are now ready to start!

Once you're an active user

On subsequent visits simply go to the GSMP home page at **www.bto.org/gsmp** and click on the 'View/Enter data' button from the options on the left-hand side of the page. You may need to enter your username and password to login to the system. When you go into GSMP Online, you will find yourself at a page called GSMP Data Home. From here, you can access all the different functions of GSMP Online that are available to you.

GSMP Data Home

You can also see the count dates for the IGC and the key months for age assessments of the different species and once you have been allocated to any IGC or ISC sites, these will also be displayed, which you can then click on to enter counts. You can also see past contributions you have made through GSMP Online. The following instructions aim to cover the main features, but note that instructions are also accessible online from this page.
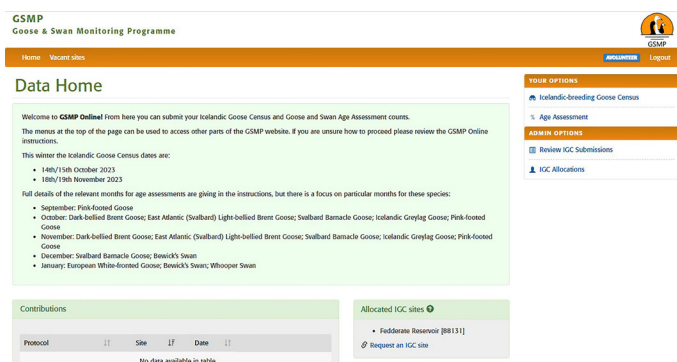

Icelandic-breeding Goose Census (IGC)

IGC Vacant Sites

The easiest way for prospective counters to find and request to count a vacant IGC site is via the Vacant Sites page. The link to this appears on the top bar of GSMP Online and also on the Taking Part section of the GSMP website.
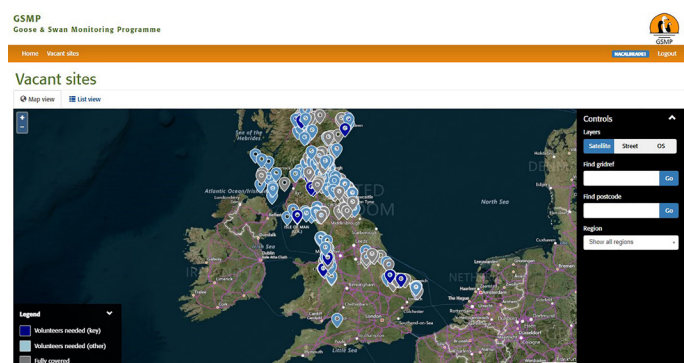
On the map on the homepage, are markers for the IGC sites. These are colour coded:
- Dark blue - Vacant Key Site
- Light Blue - Vacant Site
- Grey - Non Vacant
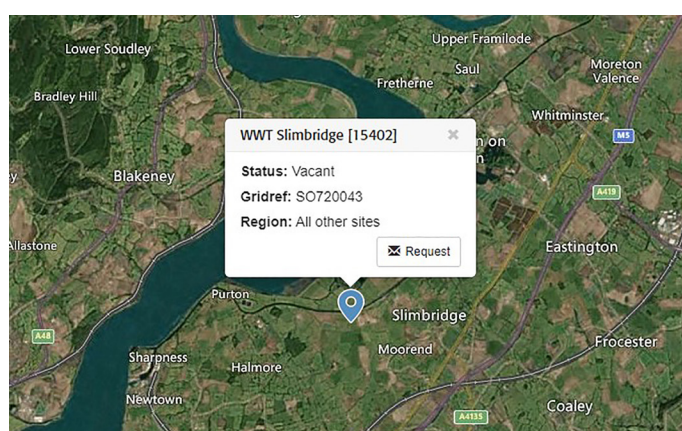
You can zoom in to an area using your mouse to see the locations of the sites or if you know the name of the site already, you can find them using the List View. You can also search for sites by grid reference, postcode or region using the collapsible control panel on the right of the screen, which can be accessed by clicking the ⌄ icon.

To request a site, simply click on the marker, 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, and press 'Send'.

An email will be sent to both the Local Organiser for that site and copied to the GSMP Team.
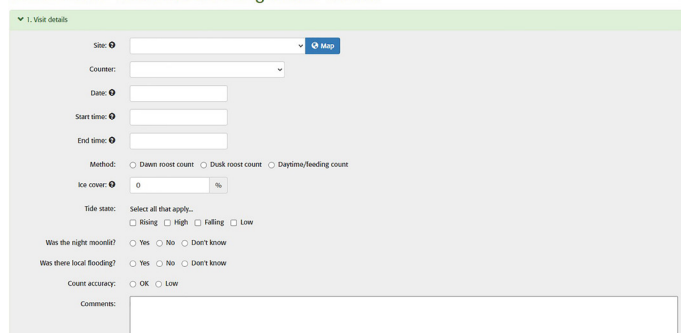
Submitting IGC Counts

To enter IGC counts, you can either click on the name of the site in the list of your allocated IGC sites on the Data Home page, or under 'Your Options', click on 'Icelandic-breeding Goose Census'.

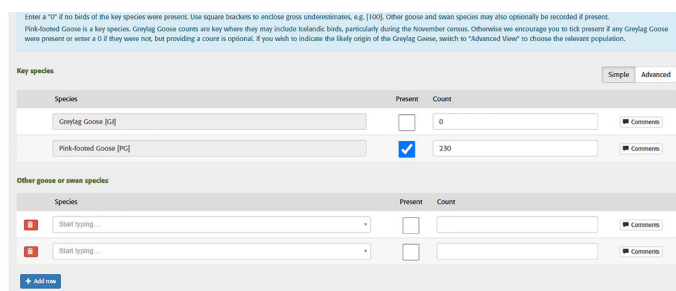Enter Count - Icelandic-breeding Goose Census

First you will be asked to specify the site, which you can find using either the dropdown list or from the map of existing sites. Only the sites allocated to you will appear in the dropdown and on the map. To request additional sites, visit the Vacant Sites page through the link on the top bar.

The date of the count must be recorded and, ideally, the approximate start and end time, as well as ice cover, whether the count was carried out as a Dawn Roost Count, Dusk Roost Count or Daytime/feeding Count and (for coastal sites) tidal state. Please also indicate the moonlight and local flooding conditions during the counts using the key provided. 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. There is also a facility to record extra details (e.g. additional counters, disturbance, etc).

Once you have completed this section, please scroll down to '2. Counts'.

The two key species to record for the IGC counts are Pink-footed Goose and Greylag Goose. Please enter counts for these two species, and if no birds of either species were present please enter a 0 count so that we can differentiate between there being no birds present and birds present but not counted.

If you are confident as to the origin of the Greylag Geese, by changing to Advanced view, you can enter counts for the different populations.

Below this, you can add count of any other swan or goose species present. If there are not enough rows to cover all the additional species present, then click on the blue 'Add Row' at the bottom. Alternately, if you wish to clear a species added by mistake, click on the corresponding red bin button to the left of the species name.

To record your count, simply enter the count of each species you saw in the relevant box. If you recorded a species but were unable to make a count for some reason (e.g. insufficient time, birds flushed before you could count them, etc.) then simply tick the 'Present' box. Please make a count wherever possible.
You can use the tab key to move from one species to the next. When you type a number, the 'Present' box is automatically ticked for you. If you accidentally enter a count next to a species that was not present, please delete the number and untick the 'Present' 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 [square brackets] to show this.

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've finished entering all the counts, click on 'Save'. If any essential information has been omitted, such as the date, method, whether the night was moonlit, local flooding or count accuracy, 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, then the count has been submitted on the online database and you can close the page, or alternatively return to the GSMP 'Data Home' or 'Enter another visit here' to enter more counts for that site, or 'Enter another visit' if you have more data to input for a different site.

Adding pinpoints to IGC Counts

When submitting IGC data, you are now able to pinpoint flocks, flightlines and vantage points (optional) in the online data entry form. The purpose of this new feature is to allow people to map where within their site flocks are, which direction birds are flying from/to, as well as mapping vantage points to understand where counters are viewing these birds from their study site, which may be of use to future counters of that site.

After filling out the rest of our IGC data on the form, if you scroll down below species count you will see '**3. Pinpoint Map**' at the bottom of the form:
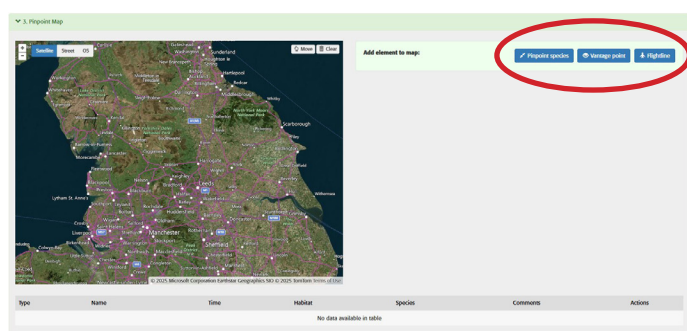
The view will automatically zoom into the site you chose when entering your count, with the centre point in the middle. Please note that you can only pinpoint within 5km from the centre of the site. A warning will appear if you try to submit a pinpoint from further afield.

If you are wanting to map a flock or an individual goose, simply press the 'pinpoint species' button (note you won't be able to pinpoint until you have filled in the species count in section '**2. Counts**' above the pinpoint map.

Once you select 'pinpoint species', simply click on the map where you want to mark your flock. You can also zoom in and out either on the '+' and '-' button on the top left of the map or by using your mouse. Once you click on the map, a form will pop up where you can enter details relating to your pinpoint. Everything is optional apart from species count/present.
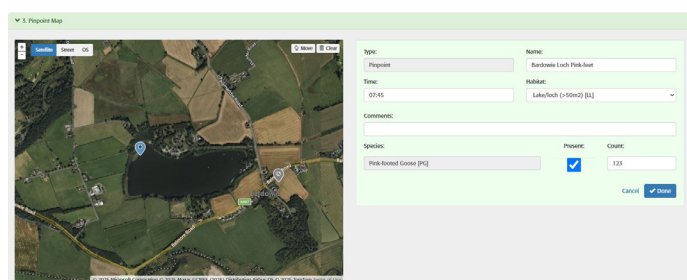
If you don't know the exact number of birds in your flock, you can either do a number in [square brackets] for underestimate or just select 'present' to indicate the species in your flock without having to give a specific number.

Also note you can move or delete your point using the 'move' or 'clear' buttons on the top right of the map. Once you are happy with your pinpoint entry, simply press 'done'.

This entry will then appear in a table below, where you can edit or delete if needed.

You can add as many pinpoints as you would like, simply keep pressing 'pinpoint species' and fill in the form until you have mapped everything you wish to.

Similarly, to plot flightlines, press 'flightline'. This will then generate an arrow, where you click once to start the arrow and click again (just once) where you want the arrow to end. This can either be in relation to a flock you have already pinpointed or completely separate from your flocks.
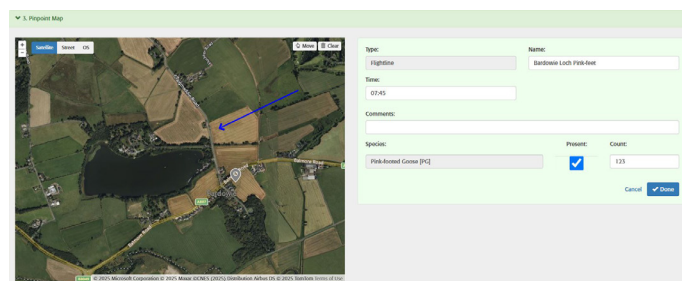
As with pinpoints, you can then fill in the pop-up form with the relevant information (species present/count being mandatory). When finished, press 'done' and this will then appear in the table underneath the map.

Finally, you can mark vantage point if you would like to show where you were viewing these birds. Press 'vantage point' and simply click once on the map where you were standing. Optionally, you can add a name and/or comments. You can mark as many vantage points as you want.

Once you have plotted all of the flocks, flightlines or vantage points you would like, press 'save' on the bottom right of the screen. If any essential information has been omitted, a warning will appear highlighted in red. This must be addressed before the count can be submitted.

When finished, press 'done' and this will then appear in the table underneath the map.

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Submitting Age Assessments

From GSMP Data Home, under 'Your Options', click on 'Age Assessment'.

First you will be asked to specify the site, which if this is a site where you have previously done Age Assessments, you can find using either the dropdown list. If it is a new site, you can create this by clicking the 'Map' button and zooming in and clicking on the map at the relevant point. You can add a site name to help you find the site in future and then click 'Create site'.

The date of the count must also be recorded and, ideally, the approximate start and end time, as well as

whether there was any local flooding and the habitat the birds were using. There is also a facility to record extra details (e.g. additional counters, disturbance, etc). Once you have completed this page, please scroll down to '2. Counts'.

You can add counts of any swan or goose species that you want to do age assessments for. If there are not enough rows to cover all the species present, then click on the [+ Add row] icon at the bottom. Alternatively, if you wish to clear a species added by mistake, click on the corresponding red bin button to the left of the species name.

To enter counts, enter the overall flock size and then the number of adult, young and indeterminate aged birds within the flock.
To add brood sizes, click on the [⊞ Broods] icon to the right of the flock size fields. In the relevant fields enter the number of broods of each size, and if there are any broods larger than 4, these can be added in the Custom brood sizes box. Then click 'Ok'.

Once you've finished entering all the counts, click on 'Save'.

Viewing & editing past records

From the 'Contributions' section of the Data Home page, you can go back to view any records you have previously entered into GSMP 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.

FAQs

• **I already have a BTO username and password why can't I log into GSMP Online?**

Before you can log-in you need to activate your GSMP 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 GSMP Terms & Conditions to complete your registration. You can find GSMP under "My Current Projects" header, please click on the "Go To Project" button to log into GSMP Online.

• **I've forgotten / lost my 'Log In' details - can you help?**

If you know your username, you can reset your password. If you don't know either, please contact us at **gsmp@bto.org** with your name and address and we will be able to help.

• **I didn't complete my IGC count on the Census Date, should I still enter the data as an IGC Count?**

Please enter your data as an IGC Count. All complete counts should be submitted regardless of whether they were on the Census Count Date or not.

• **I've input data incorrectly - can this be rectified?**

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

• **I have just signed up to GSMP Online but the counts I have previously done for WWT are not there - do I need to re-enter the data?**

No, we have got the data though at the moment you can only see data entered into GSMP Online.

• **I am experiencing problems with GSMP Online and cannot submit my counts?**

Please make a note of any error messages that appear and at which point they occur then send us an email at **gsmp@bto.org** with these details and we will look into the problem for you.

International Swan Census (ISC)

ISC Vacant Sites

To find a vacant ISC site, look on the ISC vacant sites map (blue points are vacant). This can either be found on the top bar of GSMP online or on the Taking Part section of the GSMP website.

The map shows points of all the vacant and non-vacant ISC sites. These are colour coded:
• Dark blue - Vacant Key Site (more than 10 Whooper swans found there in the last 5 years)
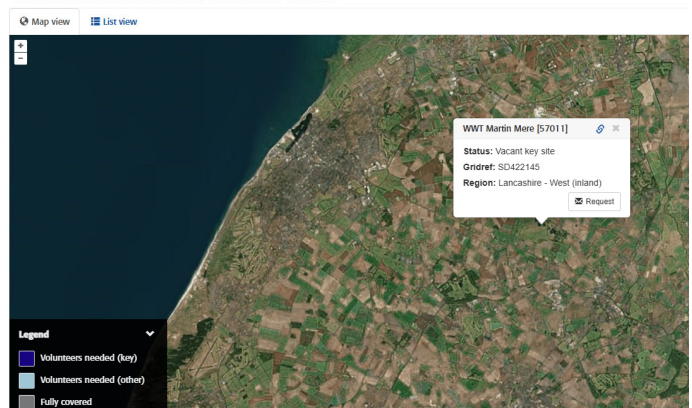• Light Blue - Vacant Site
• Grey – non-vacant
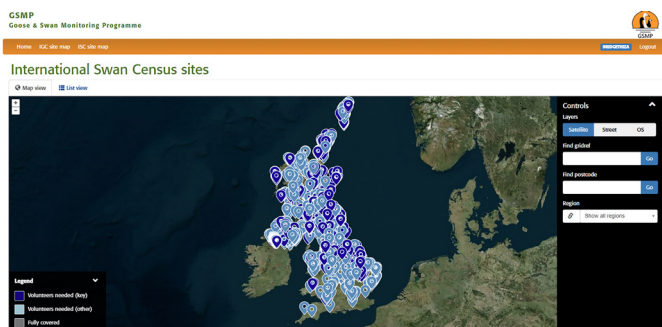
You can view the vacant site map without logging in to GSMP Online. However, in order to request a site, you must be logged into GSMP online (or by contacting your Local Organiser if you are a WeBS counter). For more information on how to register to GSMP Online, look at the 'Getting started' section above.
Once you have registered to GSMP and are logged in on GSMP Online, you can then click on a vacant site to request.

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, which can be accessed by clicking the ⌄ Icon.

To request a site, simply click on the marker, 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, and press 'Send'. An email will be sent to both the Local Organiser for that site and copied to the GSMP Team.

Once your Local Organiser accepts your request, you will see your site allocated to you on the Home page under 'Allocated ISC sites'

Entering your ISC counts into GSMP Online

Submitting ISC Counts

To enter ISC counts, you can either click on the name of the site in the list of your allocated ISC sites on the Data Home page, or under 'Your Options' in 'International Swan Census'. Please note this form will be available to open from December 15th 2025-Feburary 15th 2026.


To submit your ISC count data, under 'Your options', click on 'International Swan Census'. First you will be asked to specify the site you were surveying by either using the dropdown list or the map of existing sites. The dropdown list will show the site(s) you are allocated. If you want to submit data to a new site that is not on the vacant site map (e.g. a feeding flock you saw during your count in a field), you can create a new site by clicking on the globe next to site and zooming in to plot your site location. You can then name it and proceed. Please note you cannot plot a new site within a WeBS boundary/ISC site that is already being counted. When zooming into the map, you will be able to see proximity to current sites.
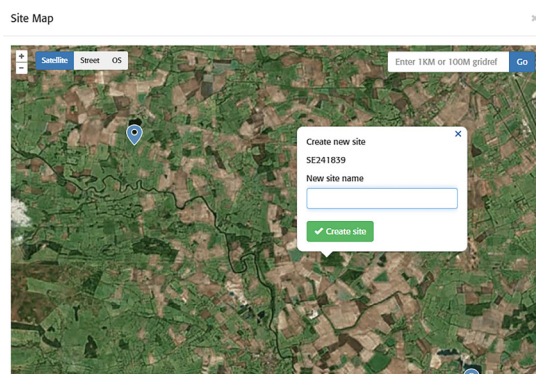
The date of the count must also be recorded and, the approximate start and end time, ice cover, whether the count was carried out as a Dawn Roost Count, Dusk Roost Count or Daytime/feeding Count and (for coastal sites) tidal state. Please also indicate site use, if ringed birds were seen and if any dead/sick birds were seen using the key provided. Please note that BTO doesn't deal with the colour ringing of Whooper and Bewick's Swans, however if you do see colour ringed swans, please select 'yes' and input your details into www.ring.ac. 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. There is also a facility to record extra details in the comments box (e.g. additional counters, disturbance, etc). Once you have completed this page, please scroll down to '2. Counts'.
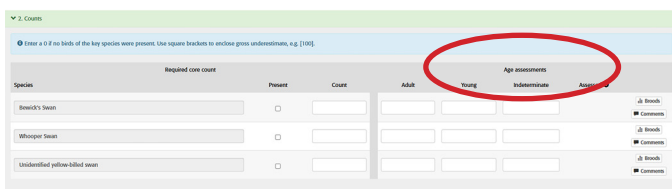

2. Counts

The two key species to record for the ISC is Whooper and Bewick's Swans. Please enter counts for these two species, and if no birds of either species were present you can put a 0 count. If you are unsure whether it is Bewick's or Whooper, you can mark it as 'Unidentified yellow-billed swan', however we urge you to try to specify the species if you can. 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 [square brackets] to show this.

To record your count, simply enter the count of each species you saw in the relevant box. If you recorded a species but were unable to make a count for some reason (e.g. insufficient time, birds flushed before you could count them, etc.) then simply tick the 'Present' box to indicate that species was present but not fully counted. Please make a count wherever possible.
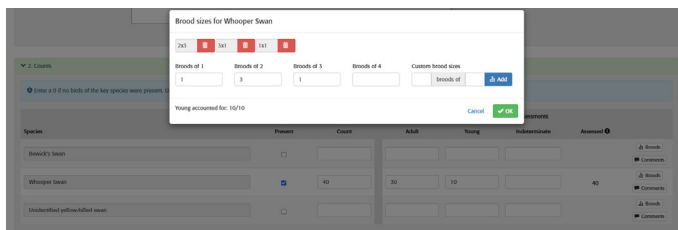
When you type a number, the 'Present' box is automatically ticked for you. If you accidentally enter a count next to a species that was not present, please delete the number and untick the 'Present' box.

Age Assessments

When carrying out your ISC counts, we encourage you to record age assessments if possible, recording broods as well as number of adults and juveniles assessed. This can be input in section 2 in the righthand side of the table labelled 'Age assessments.' Here, input the number of adults you assessed along with the number of young you assessed (note: this doesn't have to add up to your total count, you can age assess however many you choose as long as this number doesn't exceed your count). Once you enter in these two boxes, the right hand column labelled 'Assessed' will automatically calculate how many swans you assessed for ages. You can then fill in the remaining that you didn't age assess in the indeterminate box.
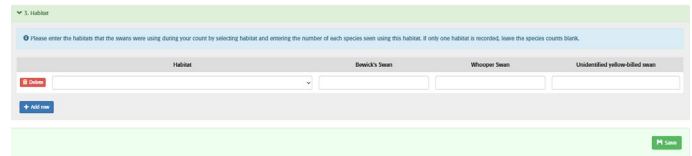

After filling in adults and young, you can also add broods by clicking the 'broods' icon on the right. This will come up with a pop-up window where you can enter the number of broods of each size, and if there are any broods larger than 4, these can be added in the custom brood sizes box. Then click 'Ok'. If you didn't do age assessments, you can leave the age assessments columns blank.

3. Habitat

Finally, there is an optional tab at the bottom of the form to input habitat that recorded swans were using. Specify the number of each species you are recording for habitat use, as well as the habitat type they were found on. Simply click on the drop down and select the habitat type you recorded. You can then enter a count of each species using this habitat. If you want to record separate flocks on the same habitat, you can do this by adding another row of the same habitat and inputting different counts of species to indicate flocks. If only one habitat is recorded, leave the species counts blank.

Once you have entered all your data, click 'Save' at the bottom right of the page. If any mandatory information has been omitted, 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, then the count has been submitted on the online database and you can close the page, or alternatively return to the GSMP 'Data Home' if you have more data to input for a different site.

Viewing & editing past records

From the 'Contributions' section of the Data Home page, you can go back to view any records you have previously entered into GSMP 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 your count so that any queries can be dealt with whilst the count is still fresh in your memory. As the WeBS recording year runs from July to June, your ISC counts should be submitted promptly before the end of September of each year. However, since this count takes place in January, we would assume most will submit data well before September. We cannot guarantee that any data submitted after the end of September will be included in the WeBS/GSMP annual report.

Entering your ISC counts as a WeBS counter

If you are a WeBS counter, you can enter your counts without having to create a GSMP Online account. Simply enter your usual January Core Count in WeBS Online, and if you enter a Bewick's or Whooper Swan, once submitting your form, click on the 'Pass data to International Swan Census' button in orange.