

Mountain Hare

Survey Instructions

Rambling Survey



MOUNTAIN HARE, SARAH KELMAN / BTO

This project aims to gather much-needed information about Mountain Hares in Scotland. You can also record all UK mammals and, optionally, up to 23 upland bird species. You can take part year-round and at any time of day.

Rambling surveys can be carried out on any walk in Scotland, either by using the [Mammal Mapper app](#), or by using paper survey sheets. You can actively survey throughout your walk if you want to, or you can just record during a short section – it's up to you. Just enter a grid reference or a [what3words](#) location into the box on the survey sheet to mark the start of your survey when you are ready to start recording. You can get your grid reference location by either using a GPS device or a GPS OS app on your smartphone such as [OS Locate](#) or [GPS OS Grid Reference](#). If you don't have a smartphone, GPS device or paper map to work out the location, you can add this later by using Grid Reference Finder online. When you want to finish recording, remember to add an end point grid reference or what3words location in the box at the bottom of the data entry table. You can use multiple sheets on one survey, just mark the page number in the box at the top of the survey sheet. You may find a clipboard with a plastic cover or a weatherwriter useful for filling in the recording sheet in the field.

Starting the survey

At the start of your survey, fill in the top-level information on the field recording sheet, including your name, contact details, the date of survey and the weather information. When you are ready to start your survey, record the starting point 12-figure grid reference or the what3words location, and the start time.

During the survey

Please walk at a steady pace along your route. Record all individuals and groups of birds and mammals on the field recording sheet. Enter the species code (found in the table at the bottom of the field recording sheet) in the **Species column**, how many you saw in the **Count column**, and your estimate of the distance the individual or group is from the transect line in metres in the **Distance column**. In the **Detection column** record the way in which you saw or heard the mammal or bird; the codes are in the table at the bottom of the form. Please try to avoid double-counting and be conservative in your estimates of numbers. If your encounter abundant species such as Meadow Pipit very frequently then you don't have to record every individual; instead, add a record every 500m or so, giving an estimate of the number seen since your last entry. If your walk is long, add a waypoint grid reference approximately every kilometre; you should also do this if you significantly change direction. It may be helpful to us if you can draw your walk on an OS map, but it isn't necessary. When you get to the end of your walk or if you wish to stop recording, enter the 12-figure grid reference or what3words location, and the time below your bird and mammal records. **Please remember** to indicate whether you attempted to record all mammals rather than just mountain hare, and whether you attempted to record all bird species listed, in the tick box in the bottom left of the field recording sheet. If you are only confident in identifying some, but not all, bird species, please tick the individual species as indicated in the table of bird species. If you made no attempt to record birds, please tick "I did not record birds". If you wish, you may record other bird species seen that are not on the list. If you require more space to add more records from your walk, please use a further sheet. Fill in the top-level details of any subsequent sheet with your name, the survey date and the page number so that the sheets can be linked.

After the survey

Please send your completed field recording sheets or scanned/photographed sheets to: **Volunteer Mountain Hare Survey, BTO Scotland, Unit 15 Beta Centre, Stirling University Innovation Park, Stirling, FK9 4NF** or to vmhs@bto.org

Extra background and information on methods are provided on the survey page on BTO's website, which also has a useful FAQ section. You can also email vmhs@bto.org with any additional questions.

The Volunteer Mountain Hare Survey is a partnership involving BTO along with NatureScot, the Mammal Society, and the Game & Wildlife Conservation Trust



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