

WeBS Core Counts



3 Guide to WeBS Online

After carrying out your counts, it is important to ensure that your records are transferred clearly either to WeBS Online or, if you don't have internet access, to a recording form (please see *Completing 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. WeBS Online allows any counter with access to the internet to enter their WeBS counts themselves, removing the need for them to use the paper forms. Moreover, WeBS Online allows users

Getting started

Registering for WeBS Online

Your way into WeBS Online is through the WeBS homepage at www.bto.org/webs. Click on **'Register to use WeBS Online'**. There are two parts to the registration, one of which is general to all users of BTO online surveys, the other being specific to WeBS. You should now be at a page called **Register for WeBS Online**. You have two options here, depending upon whether or not you already use any of the BTO's other online surveys (such as BirdTrack, Breeding Bird Survey Online or Garden BirdWatch Online). If you are an existing online user, click on the lower of the two **'Register Here'** options (and skip the next section of these instructions).

Users completely new to online surveys

If you are totally new to BTO online surveys, click on the upper of the two **'Register Here'** options to get to the **Registration form**. On this page, please enter your name and contact details. We then ask a few extra questions, such as whether we can send your records and details onwards to county recorders. Once you've read through these, click on **'Submit my registration'**. You will then be presented with a suggested username. You can change this if you wish, so long as you choose a unique username (you'll be prompted if the one you choose already exists). You will then also be asked to enter a password. This password needs to be at least six characters long and it is case-sensitive (i.e. 2gh4jjss is not the same as 2gH4jJSs). Tips on choosing

access to past counts for their sites. Counters can also see maps of their count section boundaries.

Use of WeBS Online is not compulsory. Whilst we are obviously keen that as many counters as possible benefit from the advantages of the new system, we are fully aware that some counters will have no desire to use WeBS Online and would prefer to continue to use the paper forms. This is fine and we envisage receiving paper forms for many years to come. Just let your Local Organiser know whether to expect paper or online returns from you.

passwords are available on the page, but please don't use any passwords you already use for internet banking or similarly sensitive ones. You need to remember this username and password to be able to use WeBS Online, although we can send you reminders if necessary.

Survey Home

If you've completed the above registration steps, or if you were already an existing online user, you should now have reached a page entitled **Survey home**.

On this page you will see a list of available online surveys you can participate in. You should, as an existing WeBS counter, see a grey WeBS bar at the bottom of the list (if you don't see this, please contact us at webs@bto.org). Please click on **'Setup'** to get to the **WeBS Online setup page**. You then have a few WeBS-specific terms and conditions to read through and, assuming you're happy with them, tick the box and click the setup button. You are now ready to start!

Once you're a registered user

Following registration you will get sent straight into WeBS Online. On subsequent visits simply go to the WeBS home page at www.bto.org/webs and click on **'Login to WeBS Online'** 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, although if you have 'cookies' enabled then your username and password may be stored on your own PC.

WeBS Data Home

When you go into WeBS Online, you will find yourself at a page called **WeBS Data Home**. From here, you can access all the different functions of WeBS Online that are available to you.

The following instructions aim to cover the main features, but note that instructions are also accessible online from this page. Most counters will have the same set of options open to them. However WeBS Local Organisers have additional functions to manage their local teams of counters, and can review any counts being submitted online by their counters. Additionally, Local Organisers are able to input counts for any of the sections in their area.

Entering your counts into WeBS Online

For standard WeBS counts, click on **‘Core & LT Count Entry’**.

First you will be asked to record the visit details for the count. Select the count section at which you recorded the count. If you want to record a count for a site that does not appear on the drop-down list then please contact the WeBS Office.

The date of the count must also be recorded and, ideally, the approximate start and end time, as well as ice cover and (for coastal sites) tidal state. Importantly, if you feel that your count did not accurately represent the true number of birds present, October 2010



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, flooding, etc). Once you have completed this page, please click **‘Continue & record observation’**.

If you are entering the first/only count for a site for a month (which will usually be the case), then this count will be treated as the **“primary”** count for that month. However, if you wish to add subsequent counts within a given month, you will be given the opportunity to specify which should be treated as the primary count. You can then enter your species counts.

The species you see on the form may vary depending upon your user preferences. To reduce the size of the form you have to look through, we have set WeBS Online to show you only those species previously recorded at that site. However, we have currently set the system so that if there are less than 20 species recorded for a site, you get the original full set of species from the paper recording form. This can be changed through ‘My Details & Settings’ however.

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 (but please make a count wherever possible).

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. Note however that if you have recorded an approximate count (e.g. circa 1500 Dunlin) then this does not need any brackets or additional notation.

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. **Important: If you visit your section and see no wildfowl or waders then please tick the box at the top to say "NO waterbirds were present".** Gulls and terns are included as separate groups. As has been the case with WeBS in the past, recording of these groups is optional, but we would encourage all WeBS counters to count gulls and terns unless they have a particularly good reason not to do so. Approximate counts or even just a 'present' tick are better than no counts at all. **Important: if you have recorded no gulls or terns, it is crucial that we can determine whether a) these birds were truly absent, or b) these birds may have been present but you weren't recording them.**

To do this, if you are happy to record gulls and terns but encounter none during your count then please tick the box at the top of each section to say "NO gulls/terns were present".

If you come across a species not on the main list, simply scroll through the list of additional species at the bottom and double click on the species you want. It will then appear on the right-hand side where you can enter the number present. Once you've finished entering the counts, click on '**Submit Species Details**'. This will take you to a validation page,

Please check this Core count species list

Site Name: Sandy Loch (Reservoir) Primary count? ☒

Date: Thu, 16 Aug, 2007 Time: 08:00 - 09:00

Note: You have checked the 'No terns present' box, indicating an assessment was made.

Species counted	Count	Comment	Points to check
Mute Swan	10		
Teal	250		Unusually high bird count
Lapwing	37		
Redshank	12		
Black-headed Gull	8		
Total number of species	5		

The above species list contains one or more unexpected records marked in red. These may be genuinely very interesting records that we would like to receive or they may be data entry errors. Please check the whole list carefully. Review the records marked in red and do not submit them if you are doubtful about the reliability of your observations. If you have made a mistake just go back to the species list to correct it.

Use this button to return to the previous page to amend your records

To abandon this list and return to Data Home click this button

When you are sure your list is correct click CONFIRM to enter your species list in the database

where a summary of your entered counts is shown for you to look at and make sure you haven't typed in a count for the wrong species, or added an extra zero to a number by mistake. To try to help you spot

inputting errors, you will sometimes be prompted by comments about the species, the numbers recorded or the date.

These suggestions are an advisory check only and can often be disregarded. However, they should hopefully reduce the number of midwinter Little Ringed Plover records that should have been entered in the Ringed Plover box!

From the validation page, you can either go back to make any corrections or else click on '**Confirm species list**' if you are happy with what you have entered and would like it to be stored in the online database.

Submitting Casual & Roost Counts

From the WeBS Data home, the option to submit '**Casual & Roost counts**' is for when counts of some species have been made, but not necessarily all. Examples could be an evening gull roost count, or daily counts of Whimbrels at key passage sites. Such additional information can be of great use in supplementing the main counts. NOTE however that if you want to submit a second complete count (all species recorded) for a month, this should be done by clicking on '**Core & LT Count Entry**'.

When submitting casual/roost counts, there are only two differences compared to the submission of standard counts. Firstly, you are asked to specify whether you are entering a casual daytime count, or a specifically targeted roost count (either dawn or dusk – enter the count times for us to know which). Secondly, you will see no pre-selected species names, but instead need to select any individual species concerned from the dropdown box.

Viewing & editing past records

By clicking on '**View/edit submissions**' counters will see a list of their sites. Clicking on each site will then bring up a list of all the visits made to that site. By clicking on the visit, counters can view that count in more detail.

If you happen to carry out a core count of a section of a larger site, then you will also be able to view the consolidated total counts for the larger site. These totals are calculated annually, once data for all sections have been received (from online and paper form submissions), so you will not be able to see consolidated totals for the most recent year.

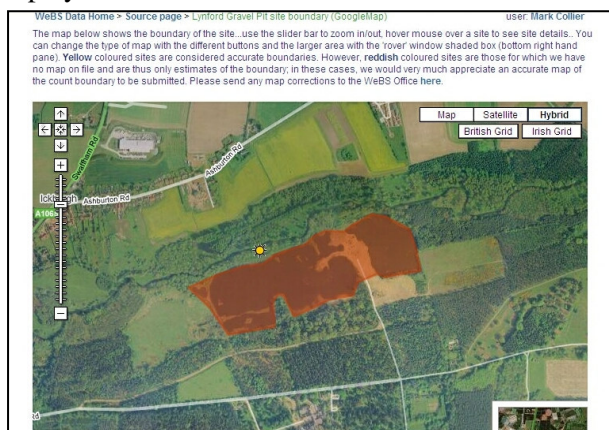
For individual count sections, you will be able to edit or delete a count only if a) you are the counter who made the count, and b) if the count has only been entered recently and has not been uploaded to the main WeBS database for combining with paper-based submissions. If the record is editable, the relevant buttons are shown at the top of the page. If you can't edit a count, but notice an error, you can click on a link to send an email to the WeBS Team.

There are two main elements to the editing facility (aside from deleting a count entirely). Firstly, the visit details can be altered individually (e.g. if the location or date were entered incorrectly). Secondly, the species counts can be altered (e.g. if the species or numbers were entered incorrectly). The BTO keeps a track of all edited or deleted data in case of mishaps.

Viewing your sites

Clicking on '**View site details**' brings up a list of all the sites you are connected with, either through counting or viewing those counts as part of 'complex sites'. You can view a UK map showing the position of your sites by using the '**Google Maps**' button. More usefully, you can look at the boundaries of any of your count sites by clicking on the site code number next to the site name. This will show the boundary of the site displayed on a Google Maps backdrop, which can be viewed as a traditional 'road atlas' type map, a satellite map, or a combination of both. The Google Maps can be zoomed in and out of, and panned around using the onscreen arrows and zoom tools.

Boundaries of sites shown in yellow indicate that the map is based on information received from WeBS counters. For some sites, boundaries have not yet been provided by counters and in many of these instances an approximate 'best guess' boundary has been provided; such approximate site boundaries are displayed in red.



If you have a site with a red or missing boundary then please send a map of the correct boundary to the webs office.

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. As the WeBS **recording year** runs from July to June, all counts up to and including the June count should be submitted promptly after the June

Summaries

Two facilities for summarising WeBS data are available for counters.

The first, '**Local site summaries**', provides the ability to compare the counts for a site across a range of years, or months within a particular year. Counters can also compare different sites in the same year or month, or combinations of the two, using the '**Compare sites**' button.

Species	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Max
Barnacle Goose (naturalised)					5	1	2	4					5
Bittern				1	1								1
Black Swan	2	2	1			3	4	2	1	2			4
Black-headed Gull	22	115	185	343	933	708	660	592	497				933
Common Gull	1		12	44	89	43	29	63					89
Common Tern	31	5											31
Coot	701	1527	2293	2484	3118	3435	2756	1991	1733				3435
Cormorant	44	110	119	120	153	121	117	136	94				153
Egyptian Goose				1									1
Gadwall	63	89	282	318	486	622	540	426	267				622
Goldeneye					16	32	13	31	40				40
Goosander					2	21	41	17	13				41
Great Black-backed Gull						3							3

The second option, '**Search and Download**', allows counters to interrogate their data in any way they wish. They can select one or all sites, one or all species, and a variety of dates or date ranges. The feedback will summarise the data available, and depending on the data returned, will provide tabular results, graphs and the option to download the result as a separate file (e.g. for use in Excel or other packages).

WeBS The Wetland Bird Survey

WebS Online Data Home > Data search

Confirm search values

Please check the details below, and then select the options available for these data. For example, not all data are available for graphing, so viewing tables online or downloading data may be the only options available. The numbers in parentheses show the numbers of locations, species, dates and records returned by the search.

You have selected:	Location	Species	Dates	Number of records returned by search
	Lynford Gravel Pit	All species	All the years surveyed	(1) (35) (46) (482)

Show zero count visits on graphs or downloads ☒



count but before the end of October of each year. Thus, counts from July 2009 to June 2010 need to be submitted by the end of October 2010, and so on. We cannot guarantee that any data submitted after the end of October will be included in the annual report.