

CAPABILITY STATEMENT



Birds

BSG Ecology has ornithological expertise throughout the practice, and a network of bird surveyors based UK and Ireland-wide. We can design and implement survey work, carry out data analysis, assess effects, and provide advice on mitigation, legislative compliance, and habitat management for birds.

Birds

BSG Ecology has a specialist ornithological team, with expertise spread across the practice. Our ornithologists have complementary backgrounds, including academic research, management of bird reserves (including Special Protection Areas), survey and monitoring of reedbed, moorland and cliff nesting birds and offshore bird survey. This combined capability gives us an excellent strategic overview of bird survey, data interpretation and assessment requirements.

Bird Survey Capability

Our experienced team of in-house ornithologists is complemented by numerous regionally-based specialist sub-consultants, with whom we have long-standing relationships. This capacity and capability allows us to undertake bird survey work anywhere in the UK and Ireland to a high technical standard and enables us to pull together large teams of skilled field workers in a cost-effective manner.

We have experience of a wide range of survey techniques and our ornithological field services include:

- Vantage-point (VP) surveys to record flight lines of 'target species.' This includes adaption of techniques to map the flight lines of breeding divers, communally-roosting harriers and waterfowl that move from roosting to foraging areas in response to the tidal cycle or at specific times of day;
- Walkover (breeding) bird survey work based on Common Birds Census methods and standard moorland bird survey techniques;
- Point counts of singing and calling birds in a range of woodland types;
- Surveys for lekking species, such as black grouse;
- Surveys for nightjar, including estimation of territories and studies of ranging behavior;
- Use of boat and land-based survey for estimating breeding waterfowl numbers in freshwater habitats;
- Species specific surveys for Schedule 1 (Wildlife and Countryside Act) species such as barn owl, black redstart, stone curlew, some raptors (such as merlin and hen harrier) and divers;
- Winter field-by-field surveys to map the distribution of waterfowl (such as swans and golden plover) and establish their habitat preferences at the local landscape level;

- Counts and mapping of non-breeding waterfowl distribution in wetland environments such as estuaries, the open coast and on freshwater pools and reservoirs;
- Surveys to establish numbers of communally roosting non-breeding raptors and waterfowl;
- Thermal imaging survey for a range of nocturnal bird species using hi-spec company-owned cameras.

Ornithological Data Analysis and Presentation

We use GIS to ensure that ornithological data is accurately analysed, accessible, transferable and readily visualised and understood including identifying breeding bird territories and assessment of collision risk (for wind farm developments). BSG Ecology can also produce heat mapping of waterfowl, to show concentrations of birds on inland water bodies and in estuaries.

Consultancy Services

Our consultancy services include:

- Desk-based ornithological studies and consultation;
- Preliminary ornithological appraisals of proposed development sites;
- Stakeholder liaison;
- Advice on the implications of legal protection afforded to birds and assistance with understanding how key terms in legislation or guidance may be interpreted;
- Creation of opportunities for birds in new and existing buildings (integration of biodiversity in the design process);
- Method statements to ensure legislative compliance and minimise ornithological effects;
- Ornithological Impact Assessments (and other reports to inform planning applications);
- Appropriate Assessment / Habitats Regulations Assessment advice;
- Production of management plans for both development and conservation led projects; and,
- Development and implementation of monitoring protocols.