



Since 2006, our Ecology unit has provided expert independent tree, woodland and forestry related ecological advice. We have developed a selection of specialist services of benefit to a wide range of clients including Land Managers, Agents, Architects and Developers. Examples of our ecological services include:

- **Ecological Constraints Survey:** This service can be tailored to suit individual needs. Whether planning to develop an area of land, or being required to discharge an existing Planning Condition, this quick and inexpensive survey can help reduce potential delays and save costs.
- **Protected Species:** Surveys to confirm the presence of a wide range of protected species (e.g. great crested newts, otters, dormouse and badgers); production of on-site mitigation plans to satisfy planning conditions or Natural England Development Licences.
- **Biodiversity Audits:** Comprehensive review of existing ecological features (e.g. Ancient woodland, species rich grassland) with findings summarised in a report listing key recommendations for biodiversity enhancement and possible funding opportunities.

For a full list of our Ecological Services please contact **James Patmore or James Whiteford on 01536 408840.**

European Protected Species (EPS) Landscape Assessment

Introduction



Following the introduction of an amendment to the European Habitat Regulations (Conservation (Natural Habitat; &c.) Regulations 1994) on 21st August 2007, the following species are subject to enhanced protection:

- **All 17 species of bat**
- **Dormouse** *Muscardinus avellanarius*
- **Great crested newt** *Triturus cristatus*
- **Otter** *Lutra lutra*
- **Sand lizard** *Lacerta agilis*
- **Smooth snake** *Coronella austriaca*

The Amendment removed the 'incidental result' defence clause. This now means that **anyone** who, for example, "damages or destroys a breeding site or resting place" of an EPS (such as a bat roost in a tree) may be liable to prosecution, even if the damage or disturbance was the incidental result of a lawful activity or operation.

The strengthening of rules designed to protect these species has implications for land managers who are responsible for holdings and management works relating to features (e.g. ponds, trees) which may be attractive to these species.

Assistance for Land Managers

In order to assist land managers, we have developed the **EPS LANDSCAPE ASSESSMENT** which will inform existing management plans and operations and may reduce the likelihood of committing an offence.

Benefits of the **EPS LANDSCAPE ASSESSMENT** include:

- **Identification of key constraint areas:** Analysis of existing species records and aerial photographs to identify areas which may support EPS and therefore require an alteration in management practice to avoid contravention of the Regulations.
- **Audit Trail:** This document will form an important part of the evidence that all reasonable steps to comply with the amended Regulations have been followed.



Approach and Output

The **EPS LANDSCAPE ASSESSMENT** consists of **two components**;

- **Baseline** detailing the known species range and location of any EPS records close to land/areas of interest.
- **Bespoke response to these findings (by a professional ecologist)** and a range of supporting documents which will assist in quantifying and managing the risk that future operations may pose to these species.



Output: 2 x A4 bound reports, with accompanying plans printed at A3 (see below). Digital copies of the information (including geo-referenced points/polygons) could also be made available upon request.

The approach is based upon accepted Forestry Commission methodology and in our opinion represents a sensible method for assessing all operations which might impact upon EPS.



◀ **Overview Plans** – Detailing EPS locations in the local landscape.



◀ **Individual species records** – plotted on aerial photographs.

GREAT CRESTED NEWT RECORD SHEET		
SECTION A: SITE ASSESSMENT (intended to be used to complete SA & SA-AP-100 Checklist)		
Title:	Date:	
Client:	Ref:	
Site No.:	Tree species/age:	
Type of Survey Carried Out:	Yes/No	
• Daytime walk through:		
• Egg search:		
• Specialist survey: Bottle trap/ponding:		
Has a watercourse or stream crossed on site?	Yes/No	
• Sightings:		
• Ponds on site:		
• Ponds close to site:		
• Suitable seasonal site:		
• GCH confirmed on pond:		
• Lenses fitted by needs:		
• Timber stacks close to pond:		
Notes:		
SECTION B: LICENCE		
Further work/service requirements:	Yes/No	
Pre-assessor:	Signed:	Date:

Species checklists - to support in-field risk assessment by Land Managers. ▶

Cost Effective

- **Low cost:** As the information used to complete the **EPS LANDSCAPE ASSESSMENT** is already available in digital format, individual assessments can be prepared very cost effectively.
- For example a 1,000 acre Estate incorporating areas of woodland, grassland and agricultural land could be completed for approximately **£750 (exc. VAT)**. Fixed price quotes can be provided on request.

Contact Details

For further information about the EPS Landscape Assessment described above, or any other ecological services provided by Lockhart Garratt Ltd, please phone **James Patmore or James Whiteford on 01536 408840**

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