

Scottish Wildlife Trust

Information



Responsible recording and the collection of specimens

The notes below are designed to draw attention to key points to be aware of and do not aim to be exhaustive. For complete information, including which species should not be taken, please read the relevant legislation and the codes of conduct in full.

- Follow [The Scottish Outdoor Access Code](#) and seek the relevant permissions before accessing private land.
- Minimise disturbance to the site and any species present, remembering the interests of other naturalists. Be sensitive to incidental harm, such as to nesting birds and rare or fragile plants.
- Carry a reputable field guide with you and try and identify as much as possible in situ. If without guide, remember that many identifications can be made later from good quality photography.
- Avoid taking any species from the wild without good reason (i.e. if essential for scientific study or identification). Only take the minimum quantity of material (e.g. one leaf, single flower) or number of specimens required for your specific purpose.
- Always seek permission from the landowner or occupier before collecting on private land, nature reserve or protected site. Any byelaws affecting catching and collecting on nature reserves and protected areas must be observed.
- Catching or collecting must not contravene national or international legislation protecting species and sites. Special permission is required from Scottish Natural Heritage (SNH) to collect on sites with a statutory designation for high nature conservation value. Protected and other rare or localised species should not be taken.
- Always comply with any conditions laid down with the granting of access and permission to collect.
- All live specimens should be released at their site of origin as soon as possible after capture.
- Details of the species noted and any other relevant data should be supplied to those responsible for managing sites.
- Keep full and relevant data with all specimens, even if data is duplicated in databases, notebooks, or other media. Try to ensure the availability of any collection for study in perpetuity.

Codes of Conduct

Invertebrates

A code of conduct for collecting insects and other invertebrates - Invertebrate Link (JCCBI).

Also supported, adopted and /or endorsed by organisations including Buglife, British Dragonfly Society, Amateur Entomologists' Society.

<http://www.benhs.org.uk/resources/collecting/>

Code of practice on collecting dragonflies 2016-2021 - British Dragonfly Society (BDS)

<http://www.british-dragonflies.org.uk/content/members-code-practice-collecting-dragonflies-2011-2016>

Plants

Note that for the purposes of legislation, the term 'plant' includes algae, lichens and fungi as well as the true plants – mosses, liverworts and vascular plants.

Code of Conduct for the conservation and enjoyment of wild plants - Botanical Society of the British Isles (BSBI)

Also adopted by other organisations, such as the Wild Flower Society and other members of Plantlife.

<https://bsbi.org/download/8415/>

Code of Conduct for Responsible Collecting of Fungi for Research and Educational Purposes - British Mycological Society

<http://www.britmycolsoc.org.uk/mycology/conservation/code-conduct/>

A leaflet stating this code of conduct was produced with the help and advice from a number of people involved in the conservation and collecting of fungi including the following organisations: Forestry Commission, English Nature (now Natural England), The National Trust, The Woodland Trust, Association of British Fungus Groups.

Birds

The Nest Record Scheme (NRS) Code of Conduct - British Trust for Ornithology (BTO)

<http://www.bto.org/volunteer-surveys/nrs/coc>

Includes information that can be applied to minimise disturbance to nesting birds during any survey.