Suffolk Wildlife Trust
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Terms & Conditions for Undertaking Surveys or Research on a Suffolk Wildlife Trust Nature Reserves.

1) Permissions & Approvals

- **Research/survey approval:** No fieldwork may commence without written approval from Suffolk Wildlife Trust (SWT) and any relevant statutory permissions are in place.
- **Licences:** Provide SWT with any licences/permits as required (e.g. Natural England licences for protected species, EPS licences, bird ringing permits, drone permissions under CAA, etc.). All statutory licences need to be in place before commencement of any research works.
- **SSSI consent:** In some circumstances SWT (as landowner) may require additional information to be able to apply for SSSI consent. This needs to be provided in timely manner. In other circumstances the applicant will be required to apply for their own SSSI consent. In which case a copy of this approved consent must be provided to SWT prior to commencement of any works.
- **Amendments:** Any change in methods, personnel, dates, or locations must be approved in writing by SWT before implementation.
- **Third Parties:** Contractors, students, and volunteers working under your project fall under these terms and must be named.

2) Site Access

- **Access:** Respect agreed access times, seasonal closures, and "no-go" zones (e.g., nesting areas, grazed areas with no public access, fragile dunes/wetlands).
- **Paths & Vehicles:** Use only agreed paths/tracks. Off-road driving, cycling, or use of ATVs is prohibited unless specifically authorised. The use of any vehicles needs to be agreed with SWT.
- **Supervision:** Reserve staff may accompany research activities.

3) Species & Habitat Protection

- **No Disturbance:** Minimise disturbance to wildlife—such as no flushing of birds, playback calls, spotlighting, or approaching haul-outs/roosts without explicit approval.
- **Handling & Sampling:** Animal handling, capture, ringing, tagging, or collection of specimens requires appropriate licences and ethical approval; the minimum necessary sample sizes must be adhered to.
- **Habitat Integrity:** Avoid trampling sensitive vegetation, compacting soils, or altering hydrology. No digging or installation of posts/equipment without written consent.
- **Biosecurity Control:** Clean and disinfect footwear, tools, nets and boats between sites to prevent spread of known invasive species or disease.
- **Chemical Use:** The use of chemicals (e.g. anaesthetics or marking substances) must be agreed with SWT prior to use.

4) Equipment & Drones

- **Equipment List:** Declare all equipment for SWT approval (e.g., trail cameras, acoustic recorders, pitfall traps, mist nets, eDNA kits, boats, drones).

- **Training & Calibration:** Any equipment used should be appropriately maintained and calibrated and researchers trained fully in its appropriate use.
- **Placement & Retrieval:** Mark locations on a map; set durations and retrieval dates. All equipment must be removed at project end. Any placement of equipment on grazed areas must be discussed and agreed with SWT.
- **Drones/UAS (Unmanned Aerial System):** Require prior approval and compliance with CAA rules; additional restrictions may apply.
- **Noise & Light:** Avoid generators, bright lights, or noisy operations in sensitive periods unless authorised.

5) Health, Safety & Insurance

- **Competence:** Researchers must be competent in field safety relevant to terrain, tides, livestock, machinery, and weather.
- **Insurance:** Depending on the nature of the research SWT may in some cases ask for evidence of current public liability insurance to an appropriate value and where applicable, professional indemnity insurance.
- **Incident Reporting:** Report accidents, near-misses, wildlife distress, pollution, or hazards to SWT as soon as possible.
- **Lone Working:** Incorporate lone-working protocols; carry communications and emergency contact details. Notify SWT staff when entering and exiting SWT reserve.
- **Risk Assessment:** Applicants must carry out a risk assessment of planned survey or research, identifying known hazards and mitigating the risk and provide to SWT prior to the start of survey or research work.
- **Method Statement:** If required by SWT, submit a method statement to include a timetable and site map of locations.
- **Tidal & Weather Constraints:** for personal safety and habitat protection note that coastal and intertidal zones may have additional restrictions during high tides or storm surges.
- **Spills & Pollution:** Prohibit fuel decanting on site; report and remediate any spill immediately.
- **Dogs & Livestock:** No dogs on research or survey visits. Do not disturb, feed or approach any livestock (sheep, cattle, ponies).

6) Cultural Heritage & Community

- **Archaeology & Heritage:** Do not disturb archaeological features, historic structures, or artefacts; report finds to staff.
- **Community Knowledge:** Where applicable, seek proper consent for use of local ecological knowledge.

7) Data, Privacy & Reporting

- **Data Sharing:** Provide a copy of raw data (with metadata), GIS layers, and final results to SWT ideally within *60 days* of project/research publication unless otherwise agreed. Note that any data received may be shared with Suffolk Biodiversity Information Service (SBIS) and statutory bodies e.g Natural England
- **Sensitive Data:** Locations of protected/sensitive species or habitats are confidential; do not publish precise coordinates without SWT consent.
- **Attribution:** Acknowledge SWT and landowner where appropriate in outputs and presentations using agreed wording.
- **Publications:** Notify SWT of planned publications and share any open-access links or PDFs of the publication where permissible.

8) Intellectual Property & Ownership

- **Researcher IP:** Intellectual property in analyses and manuscripts remains with the researcher unless otherwise contracted.
- **SWT Rights:** SWT may use shared data for conservation management, reporting, and statutory obligations. SWT reserves the right to share data with SBIS.
- **Embargoes:** Embargo periods can be agreed where necessary; sensitive data may carry permanent restrictions.

9) Compliance
- **Legal Compliance:** Researchers must comply with all applicable restrictions associated with legislation and designations (e.g., SSSI/SPA/SAC by-laws, Marine Protected Areas, wildlife protection laws).
- **Recognised Methods:** Any studies/research undertaken should follow approved and recognised methods of research, consistently to UK nationally approved standards. Where this is found not to be the case then permission may be withdrawn with immediate effect.
- **Permission Revocation:** SWT may suspend, or revoke permission at any time for breaches of safety, ecological integrity or Code of Conduct.
- **Penalties:** Unauthorised activities will result in termination of research permission and may include reporting to authorities and potential civil/criminal action.

10) Fees & Costs
- **Access/Administration Fees:** SWT may charge administration, access, or supervision fees; these must be settled prior to fieldwork starting. Any costs will be agreed at time of granting permission.
- **Damage Costs:** Researchers are responsible for covering costs arising from damage or restoration resulting from their activities (see 5).

11) Confidentiality & Media
- **Media Conduct:** No media statements, filming, photos or social media posts without SWT approval.
- **Visitor Privacy:** Do not photograph identifiable visitors, volunteers or staff without their consent.

12) Project Close-Out
- **Decommissioning:** Remove all equipment and if necessary and in agreement with SWT, restore any minor works to original condition.
- **Exit Check:** Confirm with SWT that all obligations are met.

Code of Conduct

- **Professionalism:** Researchers are expected to conduct themselves in a professional and respectful manner at all times, ensuring their actions reflect positively on both their organisation and Suffolk Wildlife Trust. They should maintain courteous interactions with reserve staff, volunteers, visitors, and other researchers, avoiding any behaviour that could cause disruption or conflict. Any conduct that is not seen as being in line with this will be considered a breach.

- **Local Engagement:** Be considerate to visitors, neighbours, and local groups; do not impede public access.

- **No Littering:** Remove all waste such as flagging tapes, cable ties, and markers.

- **Fires & Camping:** No fires BBQ's or camping. Please make sure all cigarettes /smoking equipment are fully extinguished and removed from site.

- **Ethical Standards**: Research must be conducted in accordance with relevant ethical guidelines, ensuring integrity, transparency, and accountability in all activities.
- **Communications:** SWT does not tolerate any form of aggression to our staff, volunteers or visitors under any circumstances. Any breach of this will lead to immediate revoking of permission.