

PROTECTED SPECIES MANAGEMENT

The activities on the site which aim to enhance access and safety for visitors will be carried out in accordance with the relevant legal Acts which protect specific species of animal. These include:

BADGERS

Legislation:

Badgers are protected under the Badgers Act 1992. This makes it an offence to wilfully kill, injure, take, possess or ill-treat a badger, or to attempt to do so; or to intentionally or recklessly interfere with a sett. Sett interference includes disturbing badgers whilst they are occupying a sett, as well as damaging or destroying a sett or obstructing access to it.

Management: The main sett is partially concealed by a scrub fence / dead hedge which includes an entrance arch along an original, established run. This should be maintained by adding new stakes and materials as required to keep the barrier in place.

Any felling or thinning within 20m of an entrance to the badger sett must only take place between August and November to avoid disturbance during the breeding season (December to June). Trees should be felled away from any holes, main badger runs or obvious latrines. Timber should be removed immediately after cutting or thinning. Containers of fuel, chemicals or other potentially harmful substances must not be used or stored within 20m of the sett, main runs or latrines. Main runs that are used around the site to link the main sett to outlying setts should remain covered by scrub if passing through an area of established scrub, to minimise the risk of disturbance.

BIRDS:

Legislation:

Statutory protection is given to nesting birds in the UK under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) which makes it an offence to intentionally kill, injure or take any wild bird or take, damage or destroy its nest whilst in use or being built, or take or destroy its eggs. In addition to this, for species listed on Schedule 1 of the Act, it is an offence to intentionally or recklessly disturb them while they are nest building or at or near a nest with eggs or young, or to disturb the dependent young of such a bird.

Management:

All tree felling and thinning work will be undertaken during winter months (October to February). Other urgent work to trees in spring and summer will only be carried out once an

assessment has taken place to identify any nests. Work can only proceed if the removal of a nest in a particular location would preserve public health or public safety. See Appendix 4 for General Licence information (Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981).

All heavy scrub management work will be carried out between November and February only. All bramble and vegetation-cutting must be carried out in a sensitive manner, so as not to completely remove scrub cover and food sources for foraging birds.

BATS

Legislation:

There are seventeen species of bats in the UK, all of which are protected by European law through The Conservation (Natural Habitats, &c.) Regulations 1994 (better known as the Habitats Regulations) making them 'European Protected Species'. Bats are afforded legal protection in the UK under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended by the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000) Schedule 5 Section 9, which protects bats from intentional killing, injuring or taking, and protects their roosts in England, Scotland and Wales.

Management:

Monitor effectiveness of mitigation, keep lighting to a minimum near roosts, mature trees and likely roosts to be assessed for potential to support roosting bats prior to any work / thinning / felling

SLOW WORMS

Legislation:

The six species of native reptiles within the UK are protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) and are all UK BAP priority species. The four most frequently encountered reptiles; adder, grass snake, common or viviparous lizard and slow-worm are protected against killing and injuring under Schedule 5 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981. Slow-worm is a UK, Avon BAP species.

Management:

The long-grassland habitats that slow worms populate on the site will be cut once per annum in October, to a height of between 50 and 150mm. These areas should be checked in advance of the main cut and any slow worms should be moved to a safe place. They should not be picked

up by their tail. Any works to old walls will require mitigation with reptile fence / clerk of works. The slow worm populations will be monitored on the site as much as is practicable.

OTHERS

Native bluebell is a UK BAP species and a protected species.

Management:

Spanish bluebell will be pulled out by the root when it is found and definitively identified, to remove the risk of the two species hybridizing; a process which is threatening the existence of the native bluebell.

Hedgehogs are now Red Data Book species and should be protected.