



**HAZARD & RISK ASSESSMENT
FOR FIELD EVENTS & ACTIVITIES
(For group and solo participants)**

INTRODUCTION

This document is to highlight the hazards which may be encountered when undertaking entomological recording, surveying and collecting in the field (i.e. generally outdoors, though may include indoor activity on occasions – e.g. surveying hibernation sites) in association with or on behalf of DaNES. Actions for mitigating and minimising the risks associated with these hazards are included. The current version is always posted on the DaNES website. Electronic or paper copies are available on request from the DaNES secretary.

Everyone attending a DaNES field event should read this document prior to the event taking place, and adhere to the advice given. Potential attendees must therefore be informed/reminded of the document in all notices or invites about the field meeting, and advised where a copy can be viewed.

Please note:

1. Every DaNES member and non-member participating in a DaNES event or activity is responsible for his/her own safety. DaNES cannot be considered liable for the consequences of obviously unwise or unsafe practices carried out by participants at an event or activity.
2. Any person under the age of 18 years must have an adult member of the group responsible for their welfare. Whilst their engagement is to be positively encouraged, young people may be less appreciative of all the hazards described below.
3. Whilst care has been taken, the hazards and associated risks and mitigations given in the tables below cannot include every possible situation that might be encountered when undertaking fieldwork, the nature of which can often lead to unpredictable or unthought-of situations. A large degree of common-sense must therefore be exercised by everyone participating in an event or activity so that the adverse effects of likely, or unexpected, hazards met are minimised.
4. Event leaders, organisers or nominated contacts should always attempt to avail themselves of local knowledge by site specialists e.g. wardens, rangers etc. who may be acquainted with specific site hazards.
5. Event leaders and organisers should be prepared to modify or suspend an activity for reasons of safety.
6. Additional specific risk assessments may be required for some sites. For those where access is generally restricted e.g. railways, airfields, prisons, MOD land etc. or for under-water activities, work on cliffs or quarry rock faces, this will often be a requirement before access is permitted.

RISK ASSESSMENT: Generic Fieldwork Activities

HAZARD	RISK(S)	MITIGATION(S) Numbers relate to risk numbers
WEATHER CONDITIONS	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 Exposure to heavy rain or cold. 2 Exposure to lightning 3 Sunburn and heatstroke. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 Wear appropriate clothing, headgear and footwear. 2 Avoid exposed sites if thunderstorms expected. Cancel the event if the risk is considered too great. 3 Apply sunscreen, especially during hours 11am to 3pm and/or wear suitable hat/clothing. Cloudy and hazy conditions may be as hazardous as direct sun. Carry water and keep hydrated.
TERRAIN Uneven ground Steep inclines Rocky slopes River and lake banks Tracks and roads Boggy ground Low tree branches Potholes / animal burrows	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 Slips, trips and falls. 2 Walking into objects. 3 Encounters with public and private (eg farm) traffic and equipment. 4 Unsuitability for disabled participants eg wheelchair or powered scooter access 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 Leader to describe terrain and accessibility at start of event or activity. 2 Look where you are going! 3 Avoid areas where road maintenance or farm activities are being carried out, or busy road verges. 4 Know your capabilities ie don't work in areas you might have difficulty in negotiating.
WORKING AT HEIGHT eg tall trees, cliffs or quarry faces	Falls from height resulting in serious injury or death.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Avoid, if practicable, by using long reach equipment, binoculars etc. • If elevated access with ladder is required, ensure minimum 2 persons, with one footing the ladder. Tie off at top when in position. • For extensive work, consider use of mobile elevated working platform eg cherry-picker, or use trained rope workers. • Specialist climbing skills and equipment required for access to rock faces.

<p>SITE NAVIGATION</p>	<p>Getting lost and inadvertently encountering unexpected hazards.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have a map of the site. • Mobile phone recommended. • GPS tracker recommended (useful for data recording too).
<p>INFECTION AND DISEASE</p> <p>SEEK MEDICAL ATTENTION IF SUSPECTED</p>	<p>1 Lyme disease (Lyme borreliosis) from tick bites.</p> <p>2 General insect/spider bites and stings.</p> <p>3 Soil and water-borne infections eg Weil's disease (leptospirosis) and hepatitis A</p> <p>4 Infections from animal remains and faeces.</p>	<p>1 Body check for ticks at end of fieldwork, especially if working in long grass.</p> <p>2 Can't usually avoid, but insect repellent advisable on exposed skin. If susceptible carry appropriate measures against extreme reactions eg anaphylaxis.</p> <p>3 - Keep cuts/abrasions covered. - Wear rubber gloves if practical, especially when working in water. - If no gloves, wash hands on site or clean with antiseptic wipes. - Avoid touching mucous membranes eg eyes.</p> <p>4 As 3. Take care when searching for invertebrates in dung.</p>
<p>PEOPLE</p>	<p>1 Some may question and criticise what you are doing, possibly aggressively.</p> <p>2 Other hazardous activity may be taking place on site eg shooting, rallying.</p> <p>3 Illegal activity may be taking place eg poaching, fly-tipping, theft.</p>	<p>1 Be prepared to explain what you are doing as politely and succinctly as possible. Avoid confrontation.</p> <p>2 Be prepared to modify the activity or suspend it if required.</p> <p>3 Avoid confrontation, though take details if safe to do so. Do not leave valuable equipment unsecured or unattended.</p>
<p>DOMESTIC ANIMALS</p> <p>Livestock eg cattle</p> <p>Dogs - pets</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - guard dogs - other working dogs 	<p>1 All livestock</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - bites and other direct injuries. - infection from animal remains and faeces (See Infection and Disease section above). <p>2 Dogs - trips and bites.</p>	<p>1 - Avoid getting close to livestock, especially larger animals such as cattle and those with young.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Avoid fields with bulls at all times. - Dogs should usually be kept on leads when near livestock, but there can be exceptions (see Countryside Code for further advice). Note - dogs may not be allowed at some field meetings. <p>2 Avoid aggressive dogs.</p>

<p>EQUIPMENT AND TOOLS</p>	<p>Examples include:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 Falling from ladders. 2 Electric shock when using generators or other electrical equipment. 3 Light trap bulb heat <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) Risk of burns if touched. b) Risk of cuts if bulb shatters on exposure to rain. 4 UV light from light traps can be harmful to the eyes, and from broken MV bulbs is highly dangerous, causing serious eye and skin injury. 5 Serious burns if fuel ignites whilst refuelling generators. 6 Tool accidents eg from hammers, saws, knives 	<p>Know your equipment.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 If using a ladder for placing traps at height see 'Working at height' section above. 2 Examine all electrical equipment before use Protect electrical equipment from water when using in wet conditions. Use appropriate earth protection 3 If using a light trap <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) Let bulb cool before handling. b) Protect bulb with rain guard in wet weather or if rain expected. 4 If UV emission bulb in use, avoid looking directly at the light, especially if glass is broken; wearing eye protection with UV filter is recommended. 5 Follow supplier instructions for refuelling generators. 6 Take extra care if using sharp or cutting equipment. Eye protection and gloves may be required.
<p>DEEP WATER eg rivers, ponds and lakes (on a boat or on shore)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Drowning • Infection or disease (see above) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A personal flotation device (eg life jacket) must be worn at all times. • Avoid working alone on water. • Avoid working from a boat in high winds or during a thunderstorm.
<p>WILDLIFE Small mammals Large mammals (eg rutting deer) Snakes (Adder) Insects and spiders Injury-causing plants (eg thorns)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bites and stings. • Cuts/grazes. • Serious trauma from large animals. • Infection from animal remains and faeces – see Infection and Disease section above. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Avoid the hazard. • Do not walk near large animals especially where they may have young or during mating times. • Do not reach into burrows or areas without clear visibility unless suitable protective gloves worn.

<p>PHYSICAL ACTIVITY</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tiredness • Injury - strains, sprains, fractures etc • Possible aggravation of existing medical conditions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Know your limitations. • Avoid heavy weights without assistance (eg turning large logs and stones etc.)
<p>MOTORISED TRAFFIC eg on Roads and roadsides Farmyards Farm tracks Public amenity / park maintenance tracks</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collision with vehicles eg • Cars • Tractors • Trucks • Agricultural machinery • Roadside mowers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stay alert • Avoid working close to roads or where vehicles are operating. • If working near to roads/vehicles is necessary, working with a partner is advised and wearing high-vis clothing.
<p>NIGHT-TIME WORKING (includes crepuscular)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All of the above apply, plus many of the risks are enhanced after dark, especially in difficult terrain and near water. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be extra vigilant • Carry a strong torch with spare batteries. Using a head torch (in addition) is advised. • Avoid working on own if possible, otherwise ensure a contact is aware of expected time of return. • Carry a phone or other means of contact.

NOTE

Suggestions for improvements to this document are welcome.
Please advise the event contact or any DaNES committee member.

This document is based on a risk assessment published by the British Entomological and Natural History Society (BENHS). DaNES wishes to express its gratitude to BENHS for permission to use this resource.

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