Instructions for use of the HOS Recording Forms (HRF2020 v3 and HRF2020 abridged v3).

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BTO, Living Record and eBird online recording apps complement the HOS recording form. These do not need to be duplicated on an HRF submission as we receive regular downloads from the app owners. If using any of these apps, please include as much detail as possible: e.g. do ensure you state the number of birds, pairs, or nests present. In addition, please use where available, the pinpoint GR, sex and age of the birds, time of day fields. Above all, please make notes that will support your observations in writing the Hampshire Bird Report and descriptions where required (see Guidelines for the submission of records available on the Web Page).

For users of the HRF form. Please do not use the old format form which was written 13 years ago. We record data in a rather more advanced way today and for example have completely revised codes for breeding evidence to align with BTO practice. Early in 2020 a revised form was made available for download but only for 2020 records. The forms now available for download HRF2020 version 3 can be used for your 2020 records, the current and future years to 2025. If you are in the process of completing a recording form for 2020 records you do not have to transfer data onto the new form we will accept older formats but only for 2020 records.

Please download now the HRF2020 version 3 form on this Web page to your PC or HRF2020abridged version 3 for Apple Mac users, complete as required (preferably at 3 monthly intervals). Complete the **My Details** page first and note when completed the email address for your return. Please fill in your name and all forenames so we can identify you against your HOS Records database name and code, or assign you one if you are new to records submission. The form will hold up to 1000 records.

Each record must be placed on a separate row, with all relevant information completed for every row. Information such as species, locality and observer can easily be repeated by highlighting a cell, pointing the cursor to the bottom right hand corner of the cell until a black + sign appears, and dragging down to fill the necessary number of cells. Be careful: this will not work with information such as grid reference, arrival date and number which contain numeric characters. However, these can easily be copied by highlighting the cell, pressing ctrl C and then pressing ctrl X for each cell you wish to copy the information into. Records can be entered in any order; do not leave any lines blank.

SPECIES: An upside-down triangle "button" appears against each species data entry cell. Use this button if you are unsure of the spelling or it is long e.g. Mediterranean Gull just click the species. Next time you want to refer to this species you will get a prompt when you type the first few letters e.g. Med (just click to accept). If the name is easier to type than using the drop-down menu e.g. Jay, then do so. If you are unsure how to scroll thru the species list, point to the slider and click and hold up or down to move thru the list. If you make an error, you will be prompted back to a start position. For PC users the HRF2020 form species drop down menu includes all species on the Hampshire List at June 2020. For Apple Mac users the HRF2020abridged form has a shorter drop down menu of all regularly occurring species but not vagrants. Instructions for adding these are included on the form.

LOCATION: Please use recognised site names. Download the HOS website Gazetteer or the Going Birding Dictionary for reference. At large sites, particularly the eastern harbours, the Beaulieu Estuary, and the Lymington to Hurst area, it is useful to use the large site name in the LOCATION column and include reference to a local feature or name within the NOTES column.

Examples:

LOCATION			NOTES
Lymington_Hurst			One or combination from Keyhaven Marsh, Normandy, Fishtail Lagoon etc
Langstone Harbour			The Kench, South Moors etc but note by exception Farlington Marshes and Hayling Oysterbeds can be shown in the LOCATION column
Blashford Lakes			Preferably not used; instead use the individual lake/pit name as the LOCATION and for woodland areas: HIWWT centre
Ibsley Water			Tern Hide

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Local patch records are welcome, for example home gardens, particularly important at the time of writing with the countermeasures in force to combat Covid-19. When using local, to you, sites please ensure still that the location and grid reference conform to the standards just cited (consult the Gazetteer or the Going Birding Dictionary).

GRID REF: We need to know the four-figure grid reference of the 1 km square or monad where your recording area was located or, if your area extends for several monads, then the dominant or central square. For planning purposes and breeding season records you should pinpoint your observation to six figure accuracy, thus referencing a location area of 1 hectare (2.5 acres) - just larger than a football pitch. Ensure that grid refs are in the format: SUxxyy, SZxxyy, SUxxxyyy or SZxxxyyy (no spaces). When writing a six figure GR a useful tip is to write down the four-figure square reference first, thus SUxx_yy_ and then fill in your estimate of the final figures from your printed, or screen, map. Web sites such as DEFRA MAGIC provides an 8-fig GR which requires concentration to copy without error. An 8-fig GR could be copied into NOTES, as this precision is relevant for ecology reports related to planning consents or contests but use the six-figure contraction for the GRID REF column. Some GPS devices provide 10-fig read-outs, but you need to import these electronically, as manual transcriptions always lead to errors, even for the most diligent. Our county database records system CoBRA only stores 6-fig GRs but your 8 or 10 figure GRs will be stored in the NOTES column.

DATES: You only need to type in the day of the month as 1 or 2 digits and select the month from the drop-down menu. Only one date field is displayed. For multiple dates, associated with one species at one locality, you can either enter two records for first and last dates or one record with a reference to the last date or more dates in the notes column. Exceptionally, for special purposes you may wish to have first and last dates as separate fields (columns); please write to the data manager (see below) for a bespoke form for that purpose.

COUNT: Numbers only, with no commas between digits. Combinations such as c. 200, 200+ or 2-300 cannot be entered. just enter digits in the COUNT column and include information in the NOTES section to convey any qualification such as *approx.* or *circa.* If your count is of territories, pairs and/or singing males, please indicate this in the NOTES column and indicate the appropriate code in the Breeding Evidence column.

MOVEMENT: Only to be entered for passage or weather movements. The 16 points of the compass are to be used: N, NNE, NE, ENE, E etc. You may wish to complete a separate record for birds moving in different directions or give details in NOTES.

Breeding Evidence

Breeding Season: Learn from the explanatory sheet the BTO breeding codes and then select from the drop-down menu when prompted. Use U for noting no breeding evidence gathered.

Out of Season: please use a non-breeding code as listed at the bottom of the drop-down menu. If left blank the data logging software will default to code X.

NOTES: Include information about times of observation, age, sex, number of pairs/singing males/territories, further location details, 8 or 10- fig precision GRs, additional observers and any other relevant information. If prompted, include brief notes or complete an Unusual Record Form, downloadable at https://www.hos.org.uk/home/news-recording/bird-recording/

OBSERVER: These details are transferred automatically from your **My Details** entries to set up your formatted HOS Records name. For local coordinators entering records from a group please request a bespoke form for that purpose from the Data Manager.

Please email me if you need any support with your submission and we can arrange a telephone call if your queries require this.

Alan Cox

HOS Data Manager

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