

COVID-19 and interacting with wildlife for the purposes surveying and mitigation works.

Anyone interacting with wildlife for the purposes of field survey and mitigation works in England should comply with the following advice.

A. General advice that applies:

1. As an ecologist or environmental professional, you may continue with outdoor work, including ecological surveying, provided you follow Public Health England guidelines on [social distancing](#) and guidance on [social distancing in the outdoor workplace](#).
2. If you or anyone you live with is showing any signs of COVID-19, you should not undertake any field surveying and must follow [guidance on self-isolation](#).

B. Precautions that should be followed when interacting with mammal species for the outlined purposes, are listed below:

The virus that causes COVID-19 has not been isolated from any of the UK's wild mammal species. Mammals are, however, potentially susceptible to coronaviruses so the following disease risk management precautions are advised to minimise the risk of accidentally transmitting COVID-19 from people to wild mammals:

1. Make efforts to keep your distance (at least 2 m) from live wild mammals at all times.
2. Limit capturing or handling live wild mammals to where this is necessary.
3. Avoid sustained close proximity (within 2 m) to known burrows, dens, roosts or other breeding or regularly used resting sites of mammals, where possible.

If it is not possible to follow the precautions set out above due to the nature of the activity then the following best practice advice applies:

1. Close proximity and handling of mammals should be kept to a minimum. This includes limiting the number of people that come into close proximity or handle the mammals.
2. Keep animals separate from other individuals, as much as reasonably possible.
3. Disposable gloves and a face covering should be worn when handling, and if you are in sustained close proximity to, any mammal.
4. Follow good hygiene practices and [wash hands](#) before and after close proximity or handling any mammal.
5. All equipment should be cleaned and disinfected before and after use. Any non-disposable gloves that have been used for mammal handling and face coverings should be thoroughly washed between uses. See [guidance](#).

Advice provided by Defra to Natural England on 28.05.2020. Users should continue to ensure they adhere to the latest COVID advice available on www.gov.uk.