

Licence No:

**GEN:WCA:017:2021**

Valid From:

**1<sup>st</sup> January 2021**

Expiry:

**31<sup>st</sup> December 2021**

**WILDLIFE AND COUNTRYSIDE ACT 1981 (AMENDED BY THE ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION ACT 1990)**

**Licence to take shrews (*Soricidae*) for scientific or educational purposes**

This licence, granted under Section 16(3) (a) of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (amended by the Environmental Protection Act 1990) by the Natural Resource Body for Wales otherwise known as Natural Resources Wales, hereby authorises persons with appropriate knowledge and experience or persons under the direct supervision of such a person to:

1. **take** for identification and immediate release by the use of appropriate live capture traps any species of **shrew (*Soricadae*)** throughout **Wales**.

This licence is valid for the period **as stated above** and is granted subject to compliance with the conditions as specified. Anything done otherwise than in accordance with the terms of the licence may constitute an offence.



Signed for and on behalf of  
**Natural Resources Wales**

Ffôn/Tel 0300 065 4974 / 0300 065 4921

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Croesewir gohebiaeth yn y Gymraeg a'r Saesneg

Correspondence welcomed in Welsh and English

**CONDITIONS****Definitions**

'NRW' is an abbreviation of the Natural Resources Body for Wales otherwise known as Natural Resources Wales

'EPS' is an abbreviation of European protected species

'Licence application' refers to the application form, method statement and any other supporting documents (where applicable).

97. Persons exercising this licence shall follow the methodology given in the 'Notes on Trapping Shrews' – see below. All reasonable steps must be taken to prevent the accidental deaths of shrews as a result of trapping.
98. Under section 14 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) it is an offence to release into the wild any animal included in Part 1 of Schedule 9 to the 1981 Act. Those species which are considered native in Wales: Grey Squirrel (*Sciurus carolinensis*), American mink (*Neovison vison*, also known as *Mustela vison*) must not be released or allowed to escape into the wild. It is preferable that these animals are killed in a quick and humane manner as soon as reasonably practicable after discovery. These animals may only be released under an individual licence obtained by Natural Resources Wales.
200. While engaged in activities under this licence the Licensee shall carry a copy of the licence and must produce it to any police constable or employee of NRW, or other person authorised in writing by NRW, on demand.
202. The activities hereby licensed are restricted to the Licensee, accredited agents and assistants as specified on this licence.
203. No accredited agent of the Licensee shall act under this licence unless they are in possession of a letter appointing them as the duly accredited agent of the licensee for the purpose of this licence. The accredited agent shall carry with them the said letter and a copy of this licence and shall produce them to any police constable or employee of NRW, or other person authorised in writing by the NRW, on demand.
204. Any assistants employed under this licence, whether employed to operate machinery or give advice, shall remain under the personal supervision of the Licensee or any accredited agent at all times.
205. The Licensee must assume full responsibility for the conduct of any assistants and accredited agents employed under this licence.
206. The activities and operations hereby covered are restricted to only those specified on this licence.
207. Any disturbance to animals shall be kept to the absolute minimum required, so animals are not prevented from normal feeding or rest, nor disturbed during breeding or hibernation; unless permission has been granted by NRW to do otherwise. All reasonable steps must be taken to prevent accidental injury to any protected species. Equipment must be of a kind and used in a way which will avoid distress or injury.
208. Unless specified otherwise this licence does not authorise the intentional killing, taking or injuring of any protected species.
209. Nothing shall be carried out under this licence on a National Nature Reserve or Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) except with the prior written permission from NRW's Regional Office in which the National Nature Reserve or SSSI is situated.
210. Possession of this licence confers no rights of entry onto land. Permission to enter land or premises must be obtained from the owner or occupier. NRW will not accept responsibility for failure or omission by Licensees to fulfil this obligation and will consider

immediate revocation of licences if complaints from owners or occupiers on these grounds are received.

211. Within four weeks after the expiry of this licence the Licensee shall submit to NRW details of the activities and operations undertaken by virtue of this licence on the official report form available to download from the official NRW website.
212. The Licensee shall advise NRW if there are any changes in their circumstances where such changes could invalidate this licence.
213. If any European protected species (EPS) are incidentally captured or killed as a result of exercising this licence then NRW should be immediately advised.
216. Any wild animal(s) taken under this licence shall be liberated at the site of capture as soon as its retention is no longer necessary. Handling should be kept to the absolute minimum necessary for examination.
217. This licence is issued for the purpose of survey to ascertain the presence of protected species. Any translocations must be coordinated with the appropriate Regional staff of NRW and will be subject to a separate licence based on a detailed method statement.

#### **NOTES**

- N2. The Licensee is reminded that, in relation to conditions relating to Nationally Protected Species, anything done that is not under and in accordance with the terms of this licence may result in a criminal offence being committed under sections 1, 5, 6 (3), 7, 8, 9 (1 – 2), 9 (4 – 4A), 11 (1 – 2) and 13 (1) of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981.
- N3. This licence may be modified or revoked at any time by NRW.
- N4. Nothing in this licence confers any exemption from any legal provision contained in any Act, other than the Act(s) under which this licence is issued. Where appropriate licences should be obtained from the Home Office to fulfil the requirements of the Animals (Scientific Procedures) Act 1986.
- N5. The Licensee may be accompanied by the owner or occupier of the land on which this licence is exercised. In such circumstances, it will be the responsibility of the Licensee to ensure that no additional disturbance is caused.
- N7. You agree to complete a licence report with details of required biodiversity records collected in association with this licence. We have your permission to store, copy, use, and release or publish any biodiversity records associated with the issue of this licence. Where our policy on public access to data states that the information is sensitive, publication and access will be restricted in accordance with both the Environmental Information Regulations (2004) and our guidance on access to data on sensitive biodiversity features. We may share the biodiversity records supplied with conservation organisations selected by us. Where our policy on public access to data states that the information is sensitive any such release will be under restrictive licence conditions in accordance with our guidance on access to data on sensitive biodiversity features. Please note that an inadequate return will prejudice future licence applications.
- N8. Biodiversity records associated with the issue of this licence must be as reliable and accurate possible and collected with all necessary permissions.
- N9. We acknowledge that biological records collected in relation to this licence, unless collected under a contract (with alternate provisions relating to Intellectual Property Rights) for us or a Third Party, remain the intellectual property of the licence holder. In all cases we will seek to acknowledge intellectual property and not use any biological records collected under licence beyond the purposes stated above.

- N10. **A biosecurity risk assessment should be prepared to evaluate potential risks at each site and relevant biosecurity precautions should be addressed according to the habitats and species present. The following notes should help to inform your working procedure and links to further information can be found below.**

On sites with freshwater, the transfer of amphibian and fish diseases as well as invasive non-native species should be minimised by undertaking cleaning and disinfection of equipment. All debris, plant fragments and mud should first be scrubbed off footwear and rinsed with water. Disinfection should comprise soaking in a bleach solution (1 measure of household bleach to 9 measures of water) for 15 minutes, or using Virkon solution (1mg/ml) for 1 minute. Fabrics can be washed on a 40° C cycle (with detergent, ensuring sufficient rinsing). Nets should be boiled for 10 minutes or, if the fabric allows, disinfected with spray bleach and rinsed thoroughly. Rinse with clean water and if possible, allow to dry before next use. Keep field gear (e.g. traps, net frames, buckets) inside plastic bags during transit and storage to reduce the likelihood of transmitting diseases. All used disinfectants should be disposed of appropriately. Sites considered to be 'infected' should be surveyed/visited last during any programme of work.

To minimise the risk of spreading *Phytophthora* when visiting heathland or woodland sites, scrub all visible soil and debris from footwear using water, spray with Propeller and leave until it has evaporated. Vehicle access along tracks should be kept to a minimum and mud should be cleaned from car wheels, wheel arches and foot wells of cars. This should be repeated at each site visited. *Phytophthora* disease control sites should be avoided if at all possible. Propeller can be obtained from Evans Chemical Supplies, 18B Barncoose Industrial Estate, Pool, Redruth, Cornwall, Tel. 01209 213643.

Biosecurity advice on ash dieback disease, *Chalara*, can be found at <http://www.forestry.gov.uk/forestry/infd-6abl5v>

More information on Phytophthora can be found at

<http://www.fera.defra.gov.uk/plants/plantHealth/pestsDiseases/phytophthora/>

Amphibian workers should read the ARG-UK advice note 4: amphibian disease precautions – a guide for UK field workers (<http://www.arguk.org/advice-and-guidance/view-category>)

Information and advice on invasive non native species can be found at <https://secure.fera.defra.gov.uk/nonnativespecies/home/index.cfm>

## Notes on Trapping Shrews

### Background

Under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) all shrew species (*Soricidae spp.*) are listed under Schedule 6 making it an offence to take them using certain methods. Shrews are insectivores and need to feed every 3-4 hours. Long periods of capture in traps can lead to high mortality rates unless certain precautions take place.

In the view of Natural Resources Wales (NRW) the use of **unmodified traps** to capture shrews would require licensing to cover their intentional trapping. Use of modified traps where there is no intention to capture shrews would not need licensing. NRW issue licences for scientific, educational, research or conservation purposes, including ringing and marking. See the "Apply for a permit" section of our website for the relevant application form.

### Modified traps

If you do not need to catch shrews, a shrew escape hole 13mm in diameter can be drilled in the trap nest-box. A brass washer should be glued around the hole to prevent gnawing by rodents. The brass washer should be glued to the body of the trap. There is a small risk of mortality of animals that are too large to escape through the hole and small or juvenile rodents will be able to escape as well as shrews.

Some live capture traps allow for the sensitivity of the treadle to be adjusted. In practice this is not sufficient to prevent shrew capture. It is not practical to modify pitfall traps. If pitfall traps are used to catch shrews, food and bedding should be provided as suggested below.

### Unmodified traps - shrew welfare precautions

Appropriate live-traps are those that are designed, set and operated in such a manner as to avoid death or injury. These should be provided with a nest-box containing suitable nesting material.

- **Trap placement**

Ensure traps are stable and that the nest chamber of Longworth traps, where used, is sloped to prevent water running into the bedding.

- **Food**

Leave plenty of suitable food in the trap. Blowfly larvae or pupae (*Calliphora spp.*; also known as 'casters') are best. Use in sufficient numbers to provide 10g per trap. Replace food regularly.

- **Bedding/cover**

Leave dry bedding (preferably clean hay) to provide insulation. Cover Longworth-type traps with surrounding vegetation or other material, to insulate against extremes of temperature.

Pitfall traps should be covered with a board (larger than the diameter of the trap) raised above the ground on stones to keep rain out

- **Trap inspection**

Inspect the trap at suitably frequent intervals. If ample food and bedding are provided, 12 hourly inspections (dusk and early morning) will be sufficient.

If food can not be provided, shrews are likely to die if left for more than 3-4 hours. In such situations visits must be at least every four hours. Note that frequent trap visits will cause disturbance to the habitat and this may affect trapping success.

If shrew deaths occur, adjust the amounts of food and bedding or the frequency of inspections, as appropriate. If despite this deaths continue, suspend trapping and seek advice.

Do not trap in very cold or very hot conditions, or where such conditions can reasonably be predicted.

The pre-bait door catch should be activated when traps are temporarily out of use.

- **Pitfall traps**

When using pitfall traps for invertebrates, frequent inspection will normally be the only reasonable safeguard against accidental shrew deaths.

Lids should be placed on pitfall traps when traps are temporarily out of use.

**Further information:**

The Mammal Society booklet *Live Trapping Small Mammals – A Practical Guide* by J Gurnell and J R Flowerdew (2006). Available from The Mammal Society, 18 St John's Church Road, London. E9 6EJ. Tel. 02380 010981, [www.mammal.org.uk](http://www.mammal.org.uk)