

# RBBP data access policy — 2002

## Objectives

1. The RBBP collates records of the rarest breeding birds species occurring in the UK. The aims of this activity are:
  - (a) to maintain a historical record/archive (to the greatest degree of completeness possible) of breeding by rare native and non-native birds in Britain;
  - (b) to monitor annual changes in the size and distribution of rare native and non-native bird populations and to report this information as part of the overall surveillance of Britain's birds;
  - (c) to use the data to help effect positive conservation actions for rare native birds through various means, including the designation of protected sites and other targeted activity; and
  - (d) to use the data to help address conservation issues arising from the status of populations of rare non-native birds.

## Data uses

2. The Panel will allow the use of data held within its archive for conservation and research purposes under appropriate circumstances and by bona fide named individuals.
3. All recipients will be discreet about the disclosure of data and information in any more detail than is required for particular conservation purposes and will be sensitive to local feelings about such use of data.
4. Recipients of data supplied from RBBP will be asked for written confirmation of agreement of these data access conditions. Main elements of this policy include:
  - The day-to-day security of the records. This means keeping site-location data secure in a safe place accessible only to themselves. Electronic versions of site-location data must be pass-worded and access given to other users only with explicit permission of the Panel.
  - Reciprocation of data supply, through making available, on a regular basis, to the Panel any relevant data in the possession of recipients which are missing from the Panel's records.
  - The expectation of support of the Panel's objectives in their dealings with volunteers and planning of professional or other surveys.
  - The need to use site-location data wisely to promote and secure the conservation of critical sites and species and for no other purposes without the explicit approval of the Panel.
5. The Panel recognises that conservation activity, especially that related to the designation of protected sites, usually requires placing into the public domain necessary supporting data and information. This enables these important sites to be

subject to appropriate regimes of management and protection. At the same time, it recognises the particular sensitivities regarding the data entrusted to it. It is anticipated that there will be a presumption against the public release of certain, highly sensitive data under most circumstances without express permission of the Panel. Highly sensitive data include those:

- for rare birds whose populations number just a few pairs which are in the early stages of colonising Britain, the release of information on which could jeopardise the success of future population development;
- giving locations of rare birds breeding very significantly outwith their existing range either within the British Isles or within Europe; and
- for rare birds that are particularly vulnerable to persecution, disturbance by bird-watchers, egg-collecting or chick-stealing.

Data in the above categories will normally be released only on a need-to-know basis following the agreement of both the Panel's Secretary and Chairman, in some cases in consultation with the whole Panel, and after consideration of details of the specific data request.

6. In order to assess the uses made of Panel data and in order to monitor its security, the Panel will maintain a log of which records have been supplied to whom and for what purpose.
7. Those being supplied with significant amounts of data on a regular basis for agreed conservation uses will be required to make an annual return to the Panel at the end of each calendar year detailing the uses of these data.
8. Recipients of Panel site-location data may be asked to seek formal permission to use the data after an agreed period. In view of the undesirability of the maintenance of parallel datasets for the same species, reciprocation of data exchange with some users will be important.
9. The Panel will use its discretion in termination of its arrangements with any individual or organisation that fails to uphold these data supply terms. It reserves the right to require the return of any data supplied in the event of the conditions not being met.
10. All reports and records supplied by the Panel, in whatever form, will carry the name of the recipient and a summary of these conditions with which the recipient has agreed to abide.
11. Full acknowledgement to the Panel will be made on all relevant reports and publications using Panel data or derived information.
12. The Panel should be notified of all reports and publications made using Panel data and should be provided with one copy for their archive.