

# Chess Priority Pond Project

## Risk Assessment



This guidance note outlines best practices for health and safety when undertaking the Priority Pass Assessment and water sample analysis as part of the Chess Priority Pond Project. By accepting to survey for Chess Priority Ponds and FHT it is assumed that this risk assessment has been read, and that you will take all possible care to assess and avoid the hazards listed and perform the survey in a safe manner.

**In an emergency please contact the emergency services – 999**

### Your responsibility

As a participant in the Chess Priority Ponds Project, **you are responsible for your own health and safety and that of others around you.** Do not put yourself or others in danger. Participation is voluntary, and you are not obligated to visit any site if it is unsafe. Raise any health and safety concerns with Freshwater Habitats Trust at [info@freshwaterhabitats.org.uk](mailto:info@freshwaterhabitats.org.uk).

- **Make sure to read the risk assessment ahead of the site visit.**
- **Carry a charged mobile phone for emergencies.**
- **Ensure someone knows where you will be visiting during the survey and when to expect you back.**
- **Assess the site risks and hazards when you visit a site and consider any medical conditions that may expose you or people you are with to particular risks.**
- **Do not continue with the survey if you feel yourself or others will be at risk.**
- **Check weather forecasts and dress appropriately. Avoid or abandon outdoor activities in bad weather.**

### Access permission

Permissions will have been sought by Freshwater Habitats Trust prior to your pond surveys. However, do not continue with the survey if access permission is refused during your visit. In all cases, please abide by The Countryside Code [www.countrysideaccess.gov.uk](http://www.countrysideaccess.gov.uk).

### Parking

When visiting a site take care to park cars sensibly, preferably off-road, and do not block entrances. A notice in the car window can be useful to alert locals to your purpose and contact details (a car windscreen sign can be downloaded from our website).

### Equipment

For the survey, please take the following equipment:

- Appropriate walking shoes and outdoor clothing
- Charged mobile phone - with link to results submission form (link provided)
- Water quality testing kits and colour chart form (provided)
- Back up field sheet (provided) – in case limited signal to enter your results online
- Clean jam jar or plastic pot on string to collect water sample from pond if access to the water is limited by fencing, scrub or steep pond banks.

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Risk	Probability	Severity	Action to minimise risk	Risk after action
Trips and falls from uneven ground	High	Medium	Surveyors to wear sensible outdoor footwear and attention to be paid to ground conditions when walking. Avoid lone working if possible and ensure someone is informed of your whereabouts and return time.	Low
Steep banks and deep water	High	Medium	Surveyors should not approach steep pond banks, especially when collecting water samples from ponds. If ponds do not have a gentle slope, surveyors should use a pot hung using string, or tied to a long pole, to collect water samples. If this isn't feasible, do not collect the sample at all.	Low
Cuts from barbed wire	Low	Low	Surveyors to not climb over barbed wire to access ponds and to be careful where they place their hands. If access is not possible, surveyors should not continue with the survey	Low
Sun stroke	Medium	High	In sunny and hot conditions, surveyors to wear appropriate outdoor clothing, including sunscreen and a hat. Surveyors to carry and drink plenty of water.	Low
Hypothermia	Low	High	In cold and wet conditions, surveyors to wear appropriate outdoor clothing, including warm jumpers or coats and waterproofs.	Low
Trampling from livestock	Medium	High	Surveyors to immediately leave fields if livestock (especially cattle) come too close or appear anxious. Surveyors should not approach livestock, especially those with young. Do not enter fields containing bulls.	Low
Injury from agricultural machinery	Low	High	Surveyors to give a wide berth to any operating agricultural machinery. Surveyors should make their presence known to anyone operating machinery in the field they are undertaking the survey.	Low

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Injury from human confrontation or dogs	Low	High	Consider your personal safety when surveying within the vicinity of known or likely trouble spots. Avoid confrontation with landowners, land workers or members of the public. Carry Chess Priority Ponds documentation to evidence your activities. Be wary of dogs off leads. Disinfect any bites and seek medical attention.	Low
Cuts, bites and stings	Medium	Low	Surveyors to disinfect any cuts, bites or strings to prevent infection. Medical attention to be sought if surveyor suffers any severe allergic reactions.	Low
Infections from waterborne diseases (Weil's, hepatitis a, tetanus)	Low	High	Surveyors to cover any cuts and wounds prior to survey. Avoid ingestion. Surveyor to wash hands after survey, especially before eating or smoking. If surveyors feel unwell after the survey, medical attention should be sought and they should be informed of the survey activities.	Low
Infection from Lyme's disease from a tick bite	Low	High	Surveyor to check for ticks after the survey, in particular in crevices and where clothing is tight. Ticks to be removed as soon as possible to reduce risk of infection. If bitten by medical attention should be sought.	Low
Reactions following contact with reagent powder in water quality test kits	Low	Medium	Follow instructions for the test kit. Surveyor should take care not to damage the water quality test kits. If the reagent comes into contact with the user before the water sample is taken: Eyes – Rinse with water for 15-20 minutes Digested – Drink 1-2 glasses of water. Inhaled – Move to fresh air Contact with skin – Flush with water Seek further medical attention in any case.	Low

**DON'T TRANSFER  
ORGANISMS AND DISEASE  
BETWEEN FRESHWATER  
HABITATS IN MUD OR WATER**



Before and after visiting a site:

**CHECK - CLEAN - DRY**

- **CHECK** your equipment and clothing for live organisms, plant fragments or seeds, even the difficult to see spots.
- **SCRAPE** wet/dry mud off all footwear and equipment with a stiff brush (a screwdriver may be useful to clean shoe treads).
- **CLEAN** and wash all clothing, equipment and footwear thoroughly.
- **DISINFECT** equipment (e.g. footwear) in bleach solution, 1 part bleach (from a supermarket bottle containing 5% bleach – check the bottle label) to 16 parts water (e.g. for 5 litres of solution; add 300 ml of bleach to just under 5 litres of water).
- **DRY** all clothing and equipment, as some species can survive for days in damp environments. UV from sunlight can help to kill organisms, leave equipment to air dry completely in a sunny location before using at the next site.

**Further Information:**

- GB Non-native Species Secretariat:
- Check-clean-dry: [www.nonnativespecies.org/checkcleandry](http://www.nonnativespecies.org/checkcleandry)
- Non-native species factsheets: [www.nonnativespecies.org/index.cfm?sectionid=47](http://www.nonnativespecies.org/index.cfm?sectionid=47)
- Amphibian disease: [www.arc-trust.org/advice/amphibian-disease](http://www.arc-trust.org/advice/amphibian-disease)