



Highland  
Biological  
Recording  
Group

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### *Searches on the HBRG taxon database*

The Highland Biological Recording Group (HBRG) holds the main database for taxa *other than higher plants and birds* for Highland, comprising over 330,000 taxon records.

HBRG taxon records are available to the public freely, and most are accessible through the NBN Atlas. Murdo Macdonald will undertake searches on behalf of HBRG in specified areas of search, and will charge a fee for the search. Any additional work (analysis, interpretation etc.) will incur additional charges at normal commercial rates.

*Please note that this is a taxon database only. We do not hold data on habitats. We cannot supply details of designated sites. For these, refer to <https://www.nature.scot/professional-advice/protected-areas-and-species/protected-areas>.*

*We do not routinely hold records of birds or vascular plants. Contact RSPB/BTO and BSBI respectively.*

*Other data sources (NBN Atlas, printed sources, etc.) may contain relevant records. These should be consulted separately - they are not included in the HBRG search, which only covers data held by HBRG.*

HBRG makes every effort to ensure the accuracy of records held in the database, but cannot be held responsible for errors, nor for any advice based on interpretation or analysis by others. Enquiries about individual records should be addressed to the Database Manager on [records@hbrg.org.uk](mailto:records@hbrg.org.uk).

#### *Conditions for data searches:*

- Provision of data by HBRG is neutral. HBRG must not be regarded, either explicitly or implicitly, as approving or opposing any client project informed by our data.
- A charge will be made for the search - data are free.
- A simple search will be charged at £90.00.
- A search in an extended or irregular area, or where an area is fragmented, may attract a higher charge. A quote will be given on application. For such an area the charge may be lower if a GIS file defining the area can be provided.
- As the charge is for the search, no advance guarantee is given that any relevant taxon records will be returned, particularly if the area of search is small.
- The client will be invoiced when the data are supplied.\*
- Settlement of fees is required within 30 days of invoicing.\*
- The resolution of the data provided will be at the level stored except where the data owner has requested otherwise, or where there is good conservation reason to withhold full location data.
- Area of search should be supplied by the client as either: a polygon drawn on a 1:50000 or better map with OSGR gridlines shown at 1km intervals; a central OSGR with radius of search; as the OSGRs of the NE and SW corners of a rectangle; or an ESRI .shp file accompanied by ancillary files (.shx, .dbf, .prj, .sbn and .sbx are normally required). If ESRI files prove incompatible, MapInfo (.MIF) files may be an alternative.
- Areas of search (unless defined by an ESRI file or rectangle) will normally be defined at a resolution of 1km, rounding to maximise the area covered. E.g. a 2km buffer will be defined as a 5x5km square.
- Results will be supplied as a file in MS Excel or other electronic format to be specified at the time of order.
- Records of internationally and nationally designated species and SNH Sensitive Species will be flagged.
- Other records referring to Invasive Non-native Species will be flagged.
- The old Highland district LBAPS have been superseded by the [Highland Nature Biodiversity Action Plan 2021 – 2026](#). Priority species lists are still to be finalised, but most will be covered by higher designations.
- The absence of a taxon from the list will not imply its absence in the area of search.
- SWT and RSPB reserves, LNRs, and NTS properties with wildlife relevance near the area of search will be identified.
- The Highland Biological Recording Group should be acknowledged as a data source in any report or publication.

*\* Clients who fail to settle fees on time will, in the event of future requests, be subject to one or more of the following sanctions: a) pay in full in advance of any work being done; or b) pay an excess of £25 on the normal search fee; or c) further requests for data will be refused.*

The format of the standard return of results is an Excel workbook with the following tabbed sheets:

Worksheet	Content
READ ME	Information on the search.
Designated spp.	All records of UK or internationally designated species, except for Badger, provided at capture resolution. Any on the SNH Sensitive Species List are flagged.
INNS records	This holds records of Invasive Non-native Species (INNS).
Other spp.	All records of species not included in the previous three worksheets.
Designations	A key to the abbreviated designations used in the worksheets, taken from the latest NHM/Recorder 6 dictionary TAXON_DESIGNATION_TYPE table.
SNH Sensitive species	Details of all species on the list, with the restrictions on publication that SNH declares are necessary.
SITES	A list of all Local Nature Reserves, SWT and RSPB Reserves, and NTS properties of wildlife relevance close to the area of search with links to the relevant web-pages; and links to pages with details of statutory sites.
INNS	A list of invasive aliens considered, with links to the relevant information pages.
Taxonomy	Details of taxa where uncertainty caused by changes in taxonomy or nomenclature may need to be considered.

The column headings in the green-tabbed sheets are:

Column heading	Content
Taxon group	The JNCC standard group name.
Recommended Taxon Name without Sub-genus	The Latin binomial.
Recommended Common Name/Taxon Group	The vernacular English name (if any).
Event Date	Date of observation (usually a day, sometimes more vague).
Event Location Name	Location of the observation.
Sample Spatial Reference	OS grid reference at capture resolution (usually 100m, but Badger at 1 or 10km).
Sample Altitude	Altitude in m if available.
Obs Abundances	Numbers, age, sex if reported.
Obs Comment	Any comment attached to the record.
Sample Recorders	Name of the observer.
Obs Determiner	Name of the determiner (who identified the organism).
Obs Record Type	Record type, usually field observation but occasionally a literature or museum record.
All Designations - Short Names	Abbreviations for any national or international designations applied to the species.
SNH Sensitive species ( <i>Designated spp. sheet only</i> )	A flag for any species on that list.
INNS ( <i>INNS records sheet only</i> )	A link for any species in the INNS worksheet.