



Data requests - Guide for Students

Don't leave the data request until the last minute!

When devising your project, think about what data you may need. Once you have decided please send your data request in as soon as possible. As student requests are normally provided for free, we are unable to prioritise them over other data enquiries. Whilst we will try and deal with them within 10 working days, it may take longer during busy periods (April to October).

Specifying a search area

- Be as specific as you can. Terms such as the 'whole of Gower', 'South East Wales' are too broad and will produce too many records to deal with. Ideally please provide a grid reference and buffer size, e.g. 500m, 1km, 2km, or a map with a clear boundary (this can also be buffered). Nb. Grid references must include two letters and an even number of digits, e.g. ST 1234 5678.
- If you are studying a site that is very popular with recorders (e.g. Crymlyn Bog, Kenfig NNR, Newport Wetlands NNR, Cosmeston Lakes), please be aware that we may hold hundreds of thousands of records for the site. Therefore, in order to receive data that is useful to you, try to be as specific as you can when choosing species categories (e.g. 'All Priority & Protected Species' or 'All Plant Species', rather than 'All Records') – see below for further information.
- You may wish to consider having records from the last 10 years, rather than all historic data.
- Consider whether you need to have *full records* (data includes species name, grid reference, date, count, recorder, location, comments, and source), or will a *species list* (data includes species name, status, last date recorded, and number of records) suffice? A species list is usually much quicker and easier to produce, than a report with full records.

Selecting a buffer

We hold a very large number of species records – over 2.5 million records! Think about the time you have available to analyse the data. If we provide you with over 10, 000 records, do you have the time to analyse that amount of data? If not, reduce the search area to receive something more manageable.

Selecting species categories

- Think about what you are studying. Do you really need all species data (including the very common species) if you are only studying one particular taxonomic group? If specifying a group of species, please be aware that we may not be able to use your term directly. For example, '*aquatic macro-invertebrates*' is not a term that we can use to search our database. This is because within our database the species data is ordered taxonomically, and some orders and families contain both aquatic and terrestrial species. We could however search for 'all invertebrates' or a list of insect families or orders.
- Remember that we can search for single species (eg. otter, great crested newt, dormouse), and some groups of species (eg. birds, bats, invertebrates).
- We can limit the data to records from the last 10 years only.
- We can also provide a *species list* (data includes species name, status, last date recorded, and number of records) rather than *full records* (data includes species name, grid reference, date, count, recorder, location, comments, and source).

Habitats & Ancient Woodland

- We can provide extracts from the Phase I habitat data layer and the Ancient Woodland Inventory.
- Phase I data will be provided as a list of habitats within your search area, and as a GIS plot displaying the habitats using the standard Phase I codes. A key to the codes can also be provided if required. The Ancient Woodland Inventory will be displayed as a GIS plot.
- Keep the search area and buffers to a sensible size.

Designated Sites

- We can provide details about *International Sites* (Ramsar, SPA, SAC), *National Sites* (NNR, SSSI, AONB), and *Local Sites* (LNR, Wildlife Trust Reserves, and Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINCs)). Nb. SINCs are not available for all local authority areas in South Wales (please ask for further details).
- Keep the search area and buffers to a sensible size.

Output Options

Think about how you intend to use the data, and what technology is available to you to interrogate the data we provide.

Species Data:

- Word (or PDF version) report
- Excel report
- GIS plot JPEG/PDF
- GIS files – MapInfo or ESRI Shape

Phase I Habitat Data

- Phase I habitats will be listed in the report (Word, PDF, Excel)
- GIS plot JPEG/PDF

NB. GIS files are unavailable. You should contact NRW (<http://naturalresourceswales.gov.uk>) for further information.

Designated Sites Data:

- Sites will be listed in the report (Word, PDF, Excel)
- Sites will be displayed on a GIS plot (JPEG/PDF)
- Some sites may be available as GIS files – MapInfo or ESRI Shape. Please ask for further details.

Charging

Student data requests are usually free unless it takes an unreasonable amount of time to undertake. If we need to charge to cover our time, we will provide you with a quote before undertaking the work.

Referencing SEWBRc in the project

You should ensure that you comply fully with the Terms and Conditions outlined on page 2 of the Data Enquiry & Release Form, and be aware that full details of confidential data should **not** be published in your dissertation/thesis/report. Please ensure that SEWBRc is acknowledged in any publications or reports, which are produced, using data we supplied (including species records, habitat data, maps, and GIS files).

Examples of how you might list SEWBRc in the reference section of your dissertation/thesis/report:

- Source: South East Wales Biodiversity Records Centre (SEWBRc) (www.sewbrec.org.uk), 2013.
- Species and Habitat Data/Map Source: South East Wales Biodiversity Records Centre (SEWBRc) (www.sewbrec.org.uk), 2013.
- All data, maps and GIS files were provided by the South East Wales Biodiversity Records Centre (SEWBRc) (www.sewbrec.org.uk), 2013.

Check with your supervisor in case there is a particular style or university/college guidelines that you should follow.

Sharing your data

If you are confident about the identification of species during any field work, please consider sharing your data with us so that we can continue to improve our data holdings and the understanding of biodiversity in South East Wales. We can accept data in any format, but it is most useful as Excel. Please speak to SEWBRc staff for further details.

If you have any further questions about submitting a data request at SEWBRc, please do not hesitate to get in contact:

SEWBRc, 13 St Andrew's Crescent, Cardiff, CF10 3DB. Tel: 02920 641110.

Email: info@sewbrec.org.uk Web: www.sewbrec.org.uk