

### SDOS Birding Walks Risk Assessment Form:

Assessor: Tony Benton : Date of Assessment 30/3/2022 and updated 23 May 22 by TB.

Location: Knepp estate (rewilding project) - this assessment suitable for all routes within the North and South blocks of the estate.

Brief Description: Park in the walkers car park or overflow car park, off Swallows Lane, Dial Post, RH13 8NN. A donation of £5 cash per car is customary. The routes are on a mixture of footpaths, some concrete tracks and minor public roads. All routes are level/flat but are generally not suitable for wheelchairs. The distances can be between 1km - 10km. Be aware, it can be **VERY** muddy after rain.

Suggested clothing: Warm, waterproof clothing depending on weather conditions; strong footwear or wellington boots after rain. It can't be stressed too much just how **muddy** Knepp can become.

Depending on the time of year, there may be **no** facilities of any kind open to the public.

Hazard	Who might be harmed	Evaluation of Risk	Risk mitigation measures	Comments
Bad weather	All participants	Low / Medium	Cancel or curtail walk	Monitor weather forecast
Lightning storms	All participants	Low/medium	Cancel or curtail walk	Monitor weather forecast
Snow and ice	All participants	Low	Cancel or curtail walk	Unlikely in spring and summer when Stork focused walks are planned - but always monitor the weather forecast
Darkness, cloud, fog	All participants	Low	Cancel or curtail walk	Monitor weather forecast
Hot weather	All participants	Low	Participants to wear suitable clothing and bring a drink.	Monitor weather forecast
Uneven walking surfaces	Might affect less mobile participants	Low	Participants might wish to bring a walking stick or walking pole. Participants need to exercise care.	Participants have to make judgements and take care
Muddy conditions	All participants	Low	Participants need suitable footwear and to take care if mud could result in slips and falls.	Monitor weather forecast - likely to be an issue after heavy or prolonged periods of rain

Standing water and flooding	N/A			
Slippery surfaces	N/A			
Steep slopes	N/A			
Trip hazards	N/A			
Stiles and gates	N/A			
Barbed wire, electric fences	N/A			Should not be encountered - but stick to paths.
Obstructive vegetation	All participants	Low	Stick to paths	
Stinging or thorny plants	All participants	Low	Stick to paths	
Falling trees or branches	N/a			
Biting insects	All participants	Low	Participants vulnerable to biting insects should take their usual precautions. Because of grazing animals, a slight possibility of ticks.	It is probably not wise to go bare legged on this walk- but participants choice. There is some possibility of ticks - any bites resulting in a rash should be referred to a doctor (consider Lyme's disease)
Snakes	All participants	Low	Suitable footwear mitigates any risks. Do not attempt to pick up snakes or approach too closely.	This is, in parts, a very wild area and participants must stick to the footpaths.
Farm or wild animals	All participants	Low/medium	Any animals must must be given a wide berth, especially if they have young.	Tamworth pigs, long horned cattle, exmoor ponies are all present. There are wild deer and great care must be taken in the rutting season. Do not approach wild animals.
Railway crossing	N/A			

Road and farm traffic	All participants	Low / Medium	Some routes involve short road sections, so participants must take care. Walk single file, and towards oncoming traffic.	Participants are expected to exercise care and attention on narrow public lanes. Cycles approaching from behind also need to be factored in.
If off the paths - on guided walks with Knepp staff, extra care with uneven ground and trip hazards.	All participants	Low	Good footwear and ability to walk up to two miles - participants to judge their ability and follow instructions from Knepp or Stork project staff.	SDOS sometimes organises special walking safaris - a reasonable level of fitness and balance is required. Possibility of ticks - check after the walk.