

SDOS Birding Walks Risk Assessment Form: Warnham local nature reserve (Version 2)

Assessor: Tony Benton and Sue Miles : Date of Assessment 13/4/2022 Updated: 20/02/2024 by Jen Holter

Location: Close to Horsham, off A24, at RH12 2RA. Large free car park, opens at 10 am.

Brief Description: A superb local nature reserve, ideal for beginners and very popular with photographers. Very good facilities, including toilets, a cafe (for hot drinks and limited snacks), a number of different hides. Bird feeders attract a wide range of birds during the winter months. Paths are flat, there is also a boardwalk. One path can be muddy after heavy rain, but this is an optional loop. £3 entrance fee, correct April 2022. This walk is very low risk.

Suggested clothing: Warm, waterproof clothing depending on weather conditions; strong footwear or wellington boots - or as required for a summer walk

Hazard	Who might be harmed	Evaluation of Risk	Risk mitigation measures	Comments
Bad weather	All participants	Low	Cancel or curtail walk	Monitor weather forecast
Lightning storms	All participants	Low	Cancel or curtail walk	Monitor weather forecast
Snow and ice	All participants	Low / Medium	Cancel or curtail walk	Monitor weather forecast - These conditions could well elevate the risk to high
Darkness, cloud, fog	All participants	Low	Cancel or curtail walk	Monitor weather forecast
Hot weather	All participants	Low	Participants to wear suitable clothing, bring a drink, and make a decision about sun screen	Monitor weather forecast
Uneven walking surfaces	Less mobile participants	Low	Some participants might choose to bring a walking stick or walking pole	The paths are very good
Muddy conditions	All participants	Low	Mud only on optional loop	
Slippery conditions	All participants	Low/Medium	Take extra care on board-walk	
Steep slopes	All participants	N/A		
Trip hazards	All participants	N/A		
Stiles and gates	All participants	N/A		

Barbed wire, electric fences	All participants	N/A		
Obstructive vegetation	All participants	N/A		
Stinging or thorny plants	All participants	N/A		
Falling trees or branches	All participants	Low	Assess in the context of route and recent high winds	Likely only a problem after gales
Biting insects	All participants	Low	If a likely hazard, participants to consider insect repellent and suitable clothing	Very unlikely unless someone is very susceptible to bites.
Snakes	All participants	Low / Medium	Suitable footwear where snakes are known	Snakes not known at this reserve
Farm or other animals	All participants	N/A	N/A	
Railway crossing	N/A	N/A		
Road and farm traffic	N/A	N/A	Nil	