

SDOS Birding Walks Risk Assessment Form:

Assessor: Tony Benton : Date of Assessment 27 March 2024

Location: Steyning Downland Scheme, Steyning, West Sussex. For more information about the scheme see:

<https://steyningdownland.org/about/how-it-all-began/>

Brief Description and parking: Unless otherwise directed, meet at the beginning of Mouse Lane, Steyning. This is at the junction of High Street and Horsham Road (What 3 words = unfit.exonerate.cooking). There is a short stay car park on the High Street, free after 6pm. There is also some limited on-street parking on the High Street, close to the Star Inn, again free after 6pm. Bus number 2 connects Steyning with Shoreham and Brighton, approximately one bus per hour. The walk is on downland, can be muddy, and involves some slopes (a few steep but short).

Suggested clothing: Warm, waterproof clothing depending on the weather conditions; strong footwear or wellington boots after rain. This walk is most likely a spring and early summer outing, but can be interesting at any time of the year.

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	Medium	Cancel or curtail walk	Monitor weather forecast
Snow and ice	All participants	Low / Medium	Cancel or curtail walk	Monitor weather forecast
Darkness, cloud, fog	All participants	Low	Cancel or curtail walk	Monitor weather forecast
Hot weather	All participants	Low/medium	Participants should bring a drink and wear suitable clothing and consider the need for sunscreen	Monitor weather forecast
Uneven walking surfaces	All participants	Low	Suitable walking shoes or boots are recommended	Participants to ensure that suitable footwear is available to them

Muddy conditions	All participants	Low	Walking boots or wellington boots - some sections can be very muddy	Monitor weather forecast
Standing water and flooding	All participants	Low	Adjust route	Monitor weather forecast
Slippery surfaces	All participants	Low	Adjust route	A walking pole or similar might help some people.
Steep slopes	All participants	Low	Participants to judge their own capabilities. Depending on the route taken, a few short but steep slopes might be encountered.	
Trip hazards	All participants	Low	Participants to judge their own capabilities and take care	
Stiles and gates	N/a	No stiles.		
Barbed wire, electric fences	All participants	Low	This walk is likely to be beside electric fences.	Participants should avoid touching electric fences.
Obstructive vegetation	N/a			
Stinging or thorny plants	N/a			
Falling trees or branches	N/a			
Biting insects	All participants	Low	If wearing shorts or similar, be aware of very low possibility of ticks, especially in summer.	Consult a GP if a tick bite is suspected

Snakes	All participants	Not likley, but don't approach or prod if encountered.		
Farm or other animals	All participants	Low	Farm animals encountered should be given a wide berth and not cornered. Cattle are around for conservation grazing purposes. Dogs off leads likely.	Dexter Cattle will almost certainly be encountered.
Cycles (and possibly horses being ridden)	All participants	Low	The possibility of horses being ridden can't be ruled out, nor off-road cyclists.	