

SDOS Birding Walks Risk Assessment Form:

Assessor: Jenny Holter Date of Assessment 08/05/24

Location: Blackdown NT reserve

Brief Description: Short walk across mainly flat, sandy heathland. There is a slope up from the car park. There is a public car park at the site.

Suggested clothing: Sturdy footwear is recommended.

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		Cancel or curtail walk	Monitor weather forecast
Snow and ice	All participants	Low	Cancel or curtail walk	Very unlikely in summer. Monitor weather forecast
Darkness, cloud, fog	All participants	Low	Cancel or curtail walk. Participants may wish to carry a torch as the walk may finish after dusk.	Monitor weather forecast
Hot weather	All participants	Low	Wear suitable clothing. Including a sun hat. Use sun cream and bring a drink.	Unlikely to be a problem as this is an evening event.
Uneven walking surfaces	All participants	Low/	Advise participants to exercise care. Less mobile participants may wish to use a walking stick or pole.	Some paths may have tree roots beneath the surface.
Muddy conditions	All participants	Low	Avoid boggy areas if conditions are wet.	Monitor weather forecast and make use of local information about conditions. Most of the heath is likely to be dry in the summer.

Steep slopes	All participants	Low	Ask for assistance or pause for a rest if needed.	The regular route is mostly flat, but there is a slope from the car park.
Trip hazards	All participants	Low	Advise participants to take care.	Some paths may be uneven with tree roots beneath the path.
Stiles and gates	Less mobile participants	Low	Participants should ask for assistance with opening/closing gates as required.	There are no stiles.
Obstructive vegetation and Stinging or thorny plants	All participants	Low/medium	Participants should exercise care and wear suitable footwear and long trousers to protect against scratching, biting insects and the possibility of ticks.	Gorse or heather may occasionally encroach on the route.
Falling trees or branches	All participants	Low		
Biting insects	All participants	Low/medium	Participants to wear suitable footwear and clothing. Also to consider use of insect repellent.	Seasonal, but likely to be active on summer evening walks.
Farm or other animals	All participants	Low	Avoid any grazing animals. And give them a wide berth.	
Snakes	All participants	Low	Suitable footwear mitigates any risk. Keep to main paths.	