

SDOS Birding Walks Risk Assessment Form: Dungeness area

Assessor: Tony Benton **Date of Assessment:** 13 October 2024

Location: Dungeness area - including the RSPB reserve, beach, ARC pits and marshes. RSPB reserve is at Boulderwall Farm, Dungeness Rd, Lydd, Kent, TN29 9PN. What3Words: bulletins.resolved.arose. Grid ref TR06771847

Brief Description: This risk assessment covers a range of sites in the Dungeness area and participants need to be aware of this. It needs to be read carefully and the guidance from the outing leader(s) should always be followed on the day. If we are birding from public roads then be traffic aware.

Suggested clothing: Warm, waterproof clothing depending on weather conditions; strong footwear or wellington boots after rain. It can be **very cold** around Dungeness - the location is very exposed to the elements. In summer, sun hat and appropriate clothing for sunny/hot weather.

Fluids: Please bring sufficient fluids appropriate to the weather conditions.

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. Care with tripods.	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. The beach area is shingle and extra care is required.	Participants to ensure that suitable footwear is available to them

Muddy conditions	All participants	Low	Walking boots or wellington boots recommended.	Monitor weather forecast
Standing water and flooding	All participants	Low	Adjust route. In extreme conditions cancel the walk.	Monitor weather forecast
Slippery surfaces	All participants	Low	Adjust route	Monitor weather forecast.
Steep slopes	All participants	Low	Participants to judge their own capabilities	Mostly flat surfaces and few inclines expected.
Trip hazards	All participants	Low	Participants to judge their own capabilities and take care. Particular care is required on the beach and around the 'trapping area' where the terrain is more varied and uneven.	If trip hazards are known in advance, share knowledge with all participants.
Stiles and gates	N/a			
Barbed wire, electric fences	N/a			
Obstructive vegetation	N/a			
Stinging or thorny plants	N/a			
Falling trees or branches	N/a		If high winds are forecast and there is a risk of falling branches, consider cancelling the walk.	There are very few trees at Dungeness!
Biting insects	All participants	Low	If wearing shorts or similar, be aware of very low possibility of ticks	Consult a GP if a tick bite is suspected. Remember Lyme disease is not to be taken lightly.

Snakes	N/a			If snakes are encountered, leave well alone.
Farm or other animals	All participants	Low	Although unlikely, any farm animals encountered should be given a wide berth and not cornered	
Cycles (and possibly horses being ridden)	All participants	Low	These hazards are unlikely on the RSPB reserve but around the ARC pits and on the marshes extra vigilance and care must be taken.	Be very careful if birding from a public road.
Cars or other vehicles - including farm vehicles.	All participants	Low / Medium	Cars most likely encountered if we are birding from public roads.	Be alert and aware and do not step back into the road. Not all cars can be heard these days.
Walk leaders are not provided with First Aid kits, nor are they expected to be First Aid trained.	All participants must take this into account and must also bring with them any medication that might be required.			