

Wildlife (Northern Ireland) Order 1985 Code of Wildlife Photography

Issued to Persons Holding Licence Issued Under Article 18(1) of the
Above Order



1. The welfare of the subject being photographed must always take precedence over the desire or need to obtain a photograph. If the subject (animal or bird) shows any sign of distress then the project should be abandoned immediately, as it should if a nest or shelter containing young or eggs is the subject and is left unattended by the parent or is open to predation. In conditions of cold, high wind, or rain, great care must be exercised.
2. Photography must be undertaken in as inconspicuous a manner as possible. In particular, photography of nests or shelters should not be undertaken in localities where the attention of the public or a predator is likely to be drawn. Where hides are being used, they must not be erected near roadside situations nor within distance of accepted walking routes.
3. The permission of a landowner should, if at all possible, be obtained, and their instructions regarding access routes to be followed, etc must be obeyed.
4. Photography of more species, nests or shelters that can safely be managed in the time available is not advised. Hasty preparation and the moving up of hides, towards nests or shelters too quickly can greatly increase the risk of desertion.
5. The photographer must be able to satisfy himself that the subject accepts any particular stage of the operation before a further stage is commenced. In general this rules out the use of remote-control apparatus where acceptance cannot be checked; remote-control apparatus may be feasible in locations where acceptance can be checked using binoculars, but in all cases of photography at nests or shelters it is essential to demonstrate that both or all adults have accepted the apparatus.
6. Disturbance of the nest or shelter and its surroundings must be kept to an absolute minimum. No vegetation must be removed completely, although some may be tied back temporarily. At the end of each visit the site and its surroundings should be restored as closely as possible to their original state.
7. When using a hide an assistant is almost invariably necessary and only in the most exceptional circumstances must one not be present.
8. The frequency of nest or shelter disturbance (eg, changes of photographer in the hide) should always be kept to an absolute minimum. Remote-control apparatus which requires a visit to the camera after each exposure is unsatisfactory and must only be used after permission has been given by the Department.
9. Any on-site derived material used to construct or camouflage a hide must be removed or dispersed before leaving the area on the last occasion on which photography is undertaken. Old hides or associated debris must not be left.
10. In the case of birds, photography should not normally begin for several days after the clutch has been completed or until incubation is well under way in the case of these species which begin incubation before the clutch is complete. Where photography of young birds in the nest is concerned, it is usually advisable to wait until the young birds are at least 4 days old.
11. Photography of animals at their breeding site or shelter should not take place during the few days on either side of the birth of the young, except in the case of those species which will readily tolerate disturbance at the breeding site.
12. Do not attempt to photograph at the nest any species of bird or animal breeding in Northern Ireland for the first time or after an absence of several years whether or not it has been placed on Schedule 1 or Schedule 5 of the Order.
13. Avoid the photography at the breeding site of any species of animal or bird, which is on the extreme limits of its breeding range within the British Isles or in areas where it is especially rare.

If you require further clarification of this policy, especially paragraphs 12 and 13, please contact the Wildlife Inspectorate by telephone on **Belfast (028) 9056 9557**

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