

Monitor game populations and habitats

Overview

This standard is about monitoring game populations and habitats in a wildlife management area. It relates to the work activities that you undertake to monitor game and its habitat.

This standard is aimed at those who work in game conservation on either a full- or part-time basis, and can be applied to any wildlife management area.

To meet this standard you will be able to:

- make assessments of game movements through direct observations and the interpretation of signs
- monitor and make accurate assessments of game habitat, in support of game management.

For you to fully understand the content of the standard, and the activities it describes, it is important that you are able to understand the terms used within the standard. See Glossary for some definitions that should help you with this.

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Performance criteria

You must be able to:

1. carry out work safely, in line with relevant health and safety requirements
2. observe game and other wildlife species to monitor the characteristics of the population
3. identify and use signs to establish game population characteristics including signs of pest and predator activity
4. recognise good game habitats and those that require improvement
5. recognise poor and damaged game habitats and determine what has caused them
6. carry out monitoring activities in a manner that minimises disturbance to game, wildlife and habitats at all times
7. collect information on game habitats
8. report to the relevant person all findings, including signs of ill health and predator activity and the need for habitat improvement

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Knowledge and understanding

You need to know and understand:

1. the relevant health and safety requirements associated with monitoring activities, including lone working
2. the methods used to monitor different game populations and habitats, including pest and predator activity
3. how to identify game and wildlife species common to the wildlife management area including their sex and age
4. the expected variations in the populations of the game during the annual cycle
5. how seasonal changes can affect game populations and habitats
6. how the characteristics of the wildlife management area can affect game populations
7. how to recognise the normal behaviour and condition of game populations and the signs that indicate ill health in game
8. the identity of the common habitat species found in the wildlife management area
9. the characteristics of good game habitat and how habitat can control the presence of different game species on an area of land
10. how to recognise habitat damage and the likely causes of damage
11. the management activities used to maintain game habitat
12. why it is important to minimise disturbances to game, wildlife and habitats while monitoring them
13. the importance of maintaining accurate records of the game population and the condition of the habitat

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Scope/range

Establish four of the following population characteristics for game and wildlife:

- species
- numbers
- health
- sex
- age
- location
- behaviour
- disturbance
- seasonality

Collect information on habitat in terms of three of the following:

- common plant species
- type of habitat
- interaction with game
- seasonal changes
- condition of habitat relevant to the season

Glossary

Game – Legal game quarry species

Wildlife management area – Any area of land used for the provision of game-shooting activities

Area characteristics – For example: topography, land usage, other activities, land type, drainage

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