

Licence No: **GEN/WCA/017/2024**

Valid From: **1<sup>st</sup> January 2024**

Expiry: **31<sup>st</sup> December 2025**

## WILDLIFE AND COUNTRYSIDE ACT 1981 (AS AMENDED)

### Licence to take shrews (*Soricidae*) for scientific or educational purposes

This licence, granted under Section 16(3) (a) of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (amended by the Environmental Protection Act 1990) by the Natural Resource Body for Wales otherwise known as Natural Resources Wales, hereby authorises persons with appropriate knowledge and experience or persons under the direct supervision of such a person to:

- take** for identification and immediate release by the use of appropriate live capture traps  
any species of **shrew (*Soricidae*)** throughout **Wales**.

This licence is valid for the period **as stated above** and is granted subject to compliance with the conditions as specified. Anything done otherwise than in accordance with the terms of the licence may constitute an offence.

CONDITIONS	
1.	Any person intending to use this licence must ensure they have read and understood its terms and conditions prior to carrying out licensed action. (See note 30).
97.	Persons exercising this licence shall follow the methodology given in the 'Notes on Trapping Shrews' – see below. All reasonable steps must be taken to prevent the accidental deaths of shrews as a result of trapping.
98.	Under section 14 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) it is an offence to release into the wild any animal included in Part 1 of Schedule 9 to the 1981 Act. Those species which are considered native in Wales: Grey Squirrel ( <i>Sciurus carolinensis</i> ), American mink ( <i>Neovison vison</i> , also known as <i>Mustela vison</i> ) must not be released or allowed to escape into the wild. It is preferable that these animals are killed in a quick and humane manner as soon as reasonably practicable after discovery. These animals may only be released under an individual licence obtained by Natural Resources Wales.
100.	Under section 14 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) it is an offence to release into the wild any animal included in Part 1 of Schedule 9 to the 1981 Act. Those species which are considered native in Wales: Grey Squirrel ( <i>Sciurus carolinensis</i> ), American mink ( <i>Neovison vison</i> , also known as <i>Mustela vison</i> ) must not be released or allowed to escape into the wild. It is preferable that these animals are killed in a quick and humane manner as soon as

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[www.cyfoethnaturiolcymru.gov.uk](http://www.cyfoethnaturiolcymru.gov.uk) [www.naturalresourceswales.gov.uk](http://www.naturalresourceswales.gov.uk)

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Croesewir gohebiaeth yn y Gymraeg a'r Saesneg Correspondence welcomed in Welsh and English

	reasonably practicable after discovery. These animals may only be released under an individual licence obtained by Natural Resources Wales.
202.	The activities hereby licensed are restricted to authorised persons or those acting under their direct supervision as specified on this licence.
205.	All reasonable steps must be taken to prevent the accidental deaths of shrews as a result of trapping. The authorised person must assume full responsibility for the conduct of any person acting under their direct supervision when working under this licence.
207.	Any disturbance to animals shall be kept to the absolute minimum required, so animals are not prevented from normal feeding or rest, nor disturbed during breeding or hibernation; unless permission has been granted by NRW to do otherwise. All reasonable steps must be taken to prevent accidental injury to any protected species. Equipment must be of a kind and used in a way which will avoid distress or injury.
208.	Unless specified otherwise this licence does not authorise the intentional killing, taking or injuring of any protected species.
209.	Any person undertaking licensed action who is not the owner or occupier of the land on which the action is taken must have the authorisation of the owner or occupier to enter that land to carry out the licensed action.
210.	If any European protected species (EPS) are incidentally captured or killed as a result of exercising this licence then NRW must be advised of that fact as soon as practicable. NRW can be contacted on <a href="mailto:specieslicence@naturalresourceswales.gov.uk">specieslicence@naturalresourceswales.gov.uk</a> .
212.	This licence is issued for the purpose of survey to ascertain the presence of protected species. Any translocations must be coordinated with the appropriate Operational staff of NRW and will be subject to a separate licence based on a detailed method statement.
213.	Any wild animal(s) taken under this licence shall be liberated at the site of capture as soon as its retention is no longer necessary. Handling should be kept to the absolute minimum necessary for examination.
218.	No person convicted of an offence to which this condition applies may use this licence unless, in respect of that offence, either (1) they were dismissed with an admonition, or (2) they are a rehabilitated person for the purposes of the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 and their conviction is treated as spent. A person may also use this licence where, in respect of such an offence, a court has made an order discharging them absolutely. This condition applies to offences under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981, the Deer Act 1991, the Wild Mammals (Protection) Act 1996, the Hunting Act 2004, the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017, the Protection of Badgers Act 1992 and the Animal Welfare Act 2006 (all as amended).



Signed for and on behalf of  
**Natural Resources Wales**

<b>NOTES</b>	
1.	Failure to act within the terms of this licence or failure to comply with any of the licence conditions may mean that the licence cannot be relied upon and an offence may be committed. The maximum penalty in the Magistrates' Court for an offence under the Act is an unlimited fine or a six month custodial sentence or both.
2.	The actions authorised by this licence may be carried out within a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) without the owner/occupier of the land in question needing to obtain consent under section 28E of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981, as substituted. However consent under section 28E of that Act may be required for any actions which are carried out in association with the exercise of this licence but not expressly authorised by it, for example the use of a vehicle in an SSSI. Any person using this licence in an SSSI is responsible for obtaining the necessary consent for any such associated.
3.	This licence may be modified or revoked at any time by NRW.
4.	Nothing in this licence confers any exemption from any legal provision contained in any Act, other than the Act(s) under which this licence is issued.

5.	The authorised person may be accompanied by the owner or occupier of the land on which this licence is exercised. In such circumstances, it will be the responsibility of the authorised person to ensure that no additional disturbance is caused.
10.	<p>Any work undertaken must take account of biosecurity risks and measures must be put in place to ensure that you don't introduce or spread invasive non-native species (INNS), pests or disease. This <a href="#">biosecurity risk assessment</a> should help you to understand and mitigate the risks on your site, and those posed by your activities.</p> <p>Information, data and free <a href="#">e-learning</a> on <a href="#">non-native species</a> and <a href="#">biosecurity</a>, including for <a href="#">people working in the environment</a>, can be found on the <a href="#">GB Non-Native Species Secretariat website</a>.</p> <p>You can access information about the location of invasive non-native species (INNS) by using the <a href="#">NBN Atlas Wales INNS Portal</a> (a <a href="#">guide</a> on how to use the portal is available).</p> <p>Data on plant and tree specific pests and diseases and biosecurity is available on <a href="#">NRW website</a>, the <a href="#">Defra website</a> or at <a href="#">Forest Research</a>. Free e-learning is available from the <a href="#">Forestry Commission</a>.</p> <p>Ensure you follow the <a href="#">Check Clean Dry</a> or <a href="#">Keep it Clean</a> principles.</p> <p><u>Licencees must</u> ensure that all equipment (vehicles, tools, boots etc) that come to site, arrive clean, and are cleaned again before leaving site – this applies to all sites, not just those where an invasive non-native species (INNS), pest or disease has been previously identified. High risk sites should be surveyed / visited last during any programme of work.</p> <p><b>Check</b> your equipment, clothing and boots and remove any plant or animal 'hitchhikers'.  <b>Clean</b> equipment, clothing and boots thoroughly, remove all mud, leaves and plant debris. If it is not possible to clean on site, securely bag items and clean at a suitable location where risk of transfer of diseases is minimised. Wash vehicle tyres and wheel arches if muddy and park on hard standing if possible.  <b>Dry</b> thoroughly any equipment or PPE that has been in freshwater or the marine environment; some INNS can live on damp items for weeks.</p> <p>You will also need to use disinfectant if you are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ accessing farmland with stock</li> <li>○ coming into contact with known pathogens</li> <li>○ moving between medium / high risk sites in the same day</li> <li>○ unable to <b>effectively</b> dry (&gt;48hrs) equipment that has been in contact with pathogens</li> <li>○ working during a notifiable disease outbreak situation as notified by Welsh Government.</li> </ul> <p>Information on disease control and disinfectants can be found on the following websites: for <a href="#">tree disease</a>; for <a href="#">amphibians</a>; for <a href="#">agricultural</a>; and for <a href="#">fisheries</a>.</p> <p>If you need any further help, please feel free to contact our <a href="#">INNS and Biosecurity</a> team or our <a href="#">Tree Health</a> team.</p>
20.	A licence to photograph (including filming) dormice is not required if the photography is an incidental part of other licensed work and it causes no extra disturbance above that caused by the licensed activities.
30.	<b>Any person intending to carry out activities under this licence are advised to print, sign and date a copy and retain it for inspection.</b>

## ANNEX 1 - Notes on Trapping Shrews

### Background

Under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) all shrew species (*Soricidae spp.*) are listed under Schedule 6 making it an offence to take them using certain methods. Shrews are insectivores and need to feed every 3-4 hours. Long periods of capture in traps can lead to high mortality rates unless certain precautions take place.

In the view of Natural Resources Wales (NRW) the use of **unmodified traps** to capture shrews would require licensing to cover their intentional trapping. Use of modified traps where there is no intention to capture shrews would not need licensing. NRW issue licences for scientific, educational, research or conservation purposes, including ringing and marking. See the "Apply for a permit" section of our website for the relevant application form.

### Modified traps

If you do not need to catch shrews, a shrew escape hole 13mm in diameter can be drilled in the trap nest-box. A brass washer should be glued around the hole to prevent gnawing by rodents. The brass washer should be glued to the body of the trap. There is a small risk of mortality of animals that are too large to escape through the hole and small or juvenile rodents will be able to escape as well as shrews.

Some live capture traps allow for the sensitivity of the treadle to be adjusted. In practice this is not sufficient to prevent shrew capture. It is not practical to modify pitfall traps. If pitfall traps are used to catch shrews, food and bedding should be provided as suggested below.

### Unmodified traps - shrew welfare precautions

Appropriate live-traps are those that are designed, set and operated in such a manner as to avoid death or injury. These should be provided with a nest-box containing suitable nesting material.

- **Trap placement**

Ensure traps are stable and that the nest chamber of Longworth traps, where used, is sloped to prevent water running into the bedding.

- **Food**

Leave plenty of suitable food in the trap. Blowfly larvae or pupae (*Calliphora spp.*; also known as 'casters') are best. Use in sufficient numbers to provide 10g per trap. Replace food regularly.

- **Bedding/cover**

Leave dry bedding (preferably clean hay) to provide insulation. Cover Longworth-type traps with surrounding vegetation or other material, to insulate against extremes of temperature.

Pitfall traps should be covered with a board (larger than the diameter of the trap) raised above the ground on stones to keep rain out

- **Trap inspection**

Inspect the trap at suitably frequent intervals. If ample food and bedding are provided, 12 hourly inspections (dusk and early morning) will be sufficient.

If food can not be provided, shrews are likely to die if left for more than 3-4 hours. In such situations visits must be at least every four hours. Note that frequent trap visits will cause disturbance to the habitat and this may affect trapping success.

If shrew deaths occur, adjust the amounts of food and bedding or the frequency of inspections, as

appropriate. If despite this deaths continue, suspend trapping and seek advice.

Do not trap in very cold or very hot conditions, or where such conditions can reasonably be predicted.

The pre-bait door catch should be activated when traps are temporarily out of use.

- **Pitfall traps**

When using pitfall traps for invertebrates, frequent inspection will normally be the only reasonable safeguard against accidental shrew deaths.

Lids should be placed on pitfall traps when traps are temporarily out of use.

**Further information:**

The Mammal Society booklet *Live Trapping Small Mammals – A Practical Guide* by J Gurnell and J R Flowerdew (2006). Available from The Mammal Society, 18 St John's Church Road, London. E9 6EJ. Tel. 02380 010981, [www.mammal.org.uk](http://www.mammal.org.uk)