



GENERIC RISK ASSESSMENT FOR STAFF

TASK ASSESSED Mink Trapping & Monitoring by WRT Employees	ASSESSMENT DATE	ASSESSED BY
TASK LOCATION Waterside habitat		APPROVED BY

TASK HAZARD potential for harm to persons or property	Who's at risk?	PRECAUTIONS to reduce the risk level	Risk level	Who will do them?	When ? Before During
Risks associated with working at the water's edge:					
Risk of personal injury through falling on the bank – ranging from scratches and bruises to broken limbs and head injury.	Trapper	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ be aware of the area's topography ▪ wear appropriate stout footwear ▪ carry a first aid kit 	M	Trapper	Before/ during
Risk of drowning from falling into the water.	Trapper	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ be aware of the bank's topography ▪ be particularly cautious in areas where there is a strong current or deep water ▪ test depth of water with pole/stick ▪ keep clear of deep water if you cannot swim ▪ do not lean to the point of toppling when checking rafts ▪ use appropriate local support e.g. tree or raft pole when checking raft ▪ if a raft is not easily accessible or the bank is high, drag raft to bank before checking ▪ plan escape routes out of the water 	L	Trapper	Before/ during
Risk of hypothermia after falling into the water.	Trapper	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ as per "Risk of drowning..." plus ▪ carry a change of clothes with you when trapping in cold weather. 	L	Trapper	Before
Risk of contracting Weils Disease (leptospirosis) after contact with contaminated water and droppings.	Trapper	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ cover any cuts to the hands with plasters or waterproof gloves ▪ if handling soil, water or faeces during the activity, clean hands and forearms with antiseptic gel or antibacterial soap before eating, drinking or smoking and wash hands at end of activity. ▪ Be aware of the symptoms of Weil's disease¹. 	L	Trapper	Before/ during/ after
Risk of personal injury and unable to summon assistance.	Trapper	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Inform a responsible person of your whereabouts and expected time of return, and ensure they know what to do if you do not return at that time. ▪ Carry a fully charged mobile phone, preferably in a waterproof case. 	L	Trapper	Before
Risk of falling over, hypothermia, drowning while working in waders	Trapper	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Do not enter water if water is deeper than 75% wader height. 	M	Trapper	Before
Risks associated with controlling mink:					

Risk of mink bites while checking traps	Trapper	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Wear thick gloves while handling traps with captures Approach traps with caution Do not poke fingers through the bars of the trap. Do not release a mink before dispatch Carry traps only using the external handle. Leave traps <i>in situ</i> until ready to dispatch the mink Carry antiseptic 	H	Trapper	During
Risk of bites while releasing non-target species	Trapper	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Wear thick gloves when handling traps with captures Do not poke fingers through the bars of the trap. Carry antiseptic Release capture using a metal or wooden bar to lever up retaining bar and to open door 	H	Trapper	During
Risk of mammal bite becoming infected.	Trapper	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clean any bites immediately with an antiseptic wash. Go to a GP or to casualty to have the bite cleaned and dressed properly as soon as possible. 	L	Trapper	During/ after
Risks associated with handling dead mink					
Risk of injury through inappropriate use of dispatch weapons.	Trapper/ public	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use least powerful weapon available to humanely dispatch mink (Preference: Air > .410 > 12 gauge). We strongly recommend the use of a powerful (non FAC) air rifle of 8-11 ft/lbs. Dispatch weapon to be used only by experienced person following the BASC safe code of practice². Dispatch weapons to be used away from areas of public access and when other parties are at a safe distance. Ground under trap to be checked before dispatch for surface stones which could cause ricochets. Use safety specs when dispatching with air weapon. Dispatch weapon to be carried uncocked and unloaded. Do not use a rim-fire or centre-fire rifle as a dispatch weapon. Shotgun to be used only at a safe distance appropriate to that bore (see GCWT guidelines³) 	L	Trapper	During
Risks associated with handling dead mink					
Risk of a wild mink in GB being infected with Covid-19 or other transmissible disease is extremely low.	Trapper	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Good hand hygiene as for Weils disease (see above) should be adopted to minimise the risk from any disease. 	L	Trapper	Before/ During/ After
Risk of infection when taking a DNA tissue sample.	Trapper	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use disposable gloves if available and adopt good hand hygiene measures as for Weils disease above. 	L	Trapper	Before/ During/ After
Other risks associated with advice visits & working outside:					
Risk of contracting tetanus following cuts to the skin.	Trapper	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure tetanus vaccination is up-to-date. 	L	Trapper	Before
Risk of contracting Lyme disease following a tick bite.	Trapper	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reduce the risk of tick bites by wearing suitable clothing and gloves if handling mink with ticks. Remove any attached tick quickly and correctly. Be aware of the symptoms of Lyme disease and seek medical attention immediately if you are concerned (see government guidance⁴). 	M	Trapper	Before/ During/ After
Risk of exposure to extreme weather conditions, including sunburn, sunstroke, dehydration, hypothermia.	Trapper	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Carry enough drinking water to last for the activity. Wear a high factor sun cream and a broad rimmed sun hat when sunny. Wear appropriate outdoor clothing with a waterproof layer when the weather is cold. 	L-M	Trapper	Before
Risk of bee and wasp stings, triggering allergic reactions.	Trapper	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Be aware of personal allergies to bites and stings and carry appropriate medication. 	L	Trapper	Before
Risk of personal injury from dogs.	Trapper	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Treat all dogs with caution until sure they are friendly, do not provoke aggressive behaviour. 	L	Trapper	During
Risk to personal safety through meeting people in isolated places. Loan of traps and advice.	Trapper	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Carry a fully charged, switched on, mobile phone. Inform a responsible person of your whereabouts and expected time of return, and ensure they know what to do if you do not return at that time. Do not challenge the behaviour of aggressive and confrontational people. Call the police if behaviour becomes criminal activity. 	L	Trapper	Before/ during

Risk of vehicle driven off-road causing death, injury or damage through loss of control.	Public / trapper	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Drive at slow speed on tracks or trails. ▪ Plan route through potentially hazardous sections. ▪ Do not drive or park close to bank edges. ▪ Ensure driver and passengers wear seat belt. ▪ Ensure a seat belt cutter is to hand. ▪ Use extreme caution when reversing near bank edges, preferably engage a banksman. ▪ Drive on mud, ice or other slippery surfaces only with extreme caution. 	M	Trapper	Before
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¹The HSE leaflet on Weil's Disease (Leptospirosis) is available at: <https://www.hse.gov.uk/agriculture/zoonoses-data-sheets/leptospirosis.pdf>.

² The BASC safe code of practise for use of your air weapon is available at <https://basc.org.uk/codes-of-practice/air-rifles-code-of-practice/>

² The BASC safe code of practise for use of your shotgun is available at: <http://basc.org.uk/cop/shotgun-safety-code-of-practice/>

³The Game and Wildlife Conservation Trust Guidance on using and building mink rafts is available at:

<http://www.gwct.org.uk/wildlife/research/mammals/american-mink/the-gwct-mink-raft/> .

⁴The government guidance on Lyme disease is available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/lyme-disease-guidance-data-and-analysis>

Personal protective equipment needed by trapper / monitor:

- Thick gloves. Appropriate footwear. Waterproof clothing (in potentially wet weather).
- Change of clothes (in cold weather). Drinking water, sun cream, sun hat (in sunny weather).
- Antiseptic wipes and waterproof plasters. Mobile phone in waterproof case.