

Lancashire Environment Record Network

Position Statement on Permission to Share and Use Existing Wildlife Data

Introduction

Existing wildlife data are important sources of information about the past and status of wildlife in the UK. These data are required by a wide range of individuals and organisations to support sustainable decision-making, education, research and other public benefit uses.

Data holders wishing to make current or historic wildlife data available to others should take reasonable and proportionate steps to gain permission from the original authors of wildlife records, or from the creators of data resources, who hold the relevant intellectual property rights. The effort employed to contact an author, or creator should be in proportion to the extent and nature of their creative interest in the data or information resource under consideration.

Position Statement

The Lancashire Environment Record Network (LERN) seeks to make the wildlife data resources it holds available for appropriate use by others. However, the resource has been created using records from a variety of sources. Most of these records were made over the last 100 years. Many of these records were submitted without a formal agreement governing their subsequent dissemination and use.

LERN was established with a clear role to collate and disseminate wildlife data to users. The LERN's partners are confident that most records were submitted on the understanding that they would be used to support conservation and, where appropriate, made available to others. However, LERN has decided to take the following measures to further clarify their authority to pass on and use the historic wildlife data acquired to create the resource.

Most records within the resource cover the last twenty years and have been contributed to LERN partner organizations by active recorders, some of whom were working for the LERN partner organizations when the records were made. Most of these recorders are well known locally and many are in regular contact with LERN or its partners. LERN will undertake a realistic and proportionate effort to contact those individuals who were not directly employed by LERN or its partners, to inform them of its intentions and seek their permission. Older records contained within the resource were derived from published literature, museum collections, and records submitted by individual recorders. LERN will ensure that the literary and museum sources of records incorporated within the resource are appropriately acknowledged.

LERN holds few contact details for recorders of older wildlife records used within the resource, and some may no longer be living. It would be difficult and time consuming to obtain contact details for all holders of intellectual property rights for older records. Accordingly, LERN considers it unreasonable and disproportionate to attempt to contact all such individuals directly.

Any individual who wishes to determine whether LERN holds records they have submitted should contact: lern@lancashire.gov.uk