G082 Species Data Standards

Guidance on species data standards for site surveyors	
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Introduction

As the capital's environmental records centre GiGL mobilises, curates and shares data that underpin our knowledge of London's natural environment. We work with a range of stakeholders to collate and verify data on London's natural environment, providing access to high quality data via services tailored to the requirements of those who need to make informed decisions in London.

This document sets out the species data collection standards that are recommended by GiGL for survey design and outputs. Though ecological expertise and local factors will dictate the most appropriate methods for a given survey, it is important that survey results are recorded consistently, enabling us to compare like with like to track changes over time. This will enable GiGL to incorporate local results into the London dataset without loss of local information, therefore improving the legacy value of survey results.

This will maximise the value of your investment, by ensuring the data are preserved in a format that supports efficient processing and valid analysis that will inform your current and future projects. Please notify surveyors prior to any survey of the available guidance and encourage them to follow the agreed data standards, as outlined in this document.

Please also see GiGL Site Survey Guidance (G021). If you have any queries about how to provide data, please contact the GiGL team.

Recommended survey standards

Metadata

Metadata is data that describes the provided dataset. It informs what the dataset consists of, what different columns and attributes mean and what categories were used. Metadata is highly important to avoid any misinterpretation or confusion of the data content.

The dataset provided should include the following metadata:
- A name or code for each field (attribute)
- A description of each attribute & the categories or typology used for each attribute. Note: if strictly using GiGL attributes and typologies as described in this document, it is only necessary to indicate that these are the standards being used.

In addition, each dataset should be accompanied by a document ('read me' file) listing:
- The date of the survey
- The scope of the survey e.g. a specific area of the borough or borough wide
- The organisation undertaking the survey and who the survey was for
- A lead contact at the organisation who is able to answer questions about the survey data if they arise
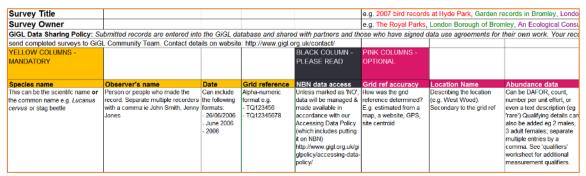- The reason for the survey and method used e.g. transect butterfly survey

Species data capture

All species sightings require the minimum information of 'what', 'where', 'when' and 'by who' to make a viable record for upload onto the GiGL Species database. In addition to these essential attributes there are a myriad of desirable attributes which help to add context and value to the record.

GiGL can provide a Species Recording Spreadsheet (https://www.gigl.org.uk/recording-spreadsheet/) which includes all of the essential and desirable attributes to complete when capturing species records. This excel spreadsheet is the most efficient and comprehensive way of uploading species records onto the GiGL Species Database.

Please follow the attributes listed in the Species Recording Spreadsheet if you need to provide species records in a different format.

Survey Title				e.g. 2007 bird records at Hyde Park, Garden records in Bromley, Londo
Survey Owner				e.g. The Royal Parks, London Borough of Bromley, An Ecological Consu

GiGL Data Sharing Policy: *Submitted records are entered into the GiGL database and shared with partners and those who have signed data use agreements for their own work. Your reco send completed surveys to GiGL Community Team. Contact details on website: http://www.gigl.org.uk/contact/*

YELLOW COLUMNS - MANDATORY				BLACK COLUMN - PLEASE READ	PINK COLUMNS - OPTIONAL		
Species name	**Observer's name**	**Date**	**Grid reference**	**NBN data access**	**Grid ref accuracy**	**Location Name**	**Abundance data**
This can be the scientifc name **or** the common name e.g. *Lucanus cervus* or stag beetle	Person or people who made the record. Separate multiple recorders with a comma ie John Smith, Jenny Jones	Can include the following formats: - 26/06/2006 - June 2006 - 2006	Alpha-numeric format e.g. - TQ123456 - TQ12345678	Unless marked as 'NO', data will be managed & made available in accordance with our Accessing Data Policy (which includes putting it on NBN) http://www.gigl.org.uk/giglpolicy/accessing-data-policy/	How was the grid reference determined? E.g. estimated from a map, a website, GPS, site centroid	Describing the location (e.g. West Wood). Secondary to the grid ref	Can be DAFOR, count, number per unit effort, or even a text description (eg 'rare') Qualifying details can also be added eg 2 males, 3 adult females; separate multiple entries by a comma. See 'qualifiers' worksheet for additional measurement qualifiers.

A screenshot of GiGL's recording spreadsheet, available to download here

It is recommended that photos are provided for any species which may be difficult to ID or is a surprising sighting for the time of year or location. This assists with the verification process. More information on verification can be found here: https://www.gigl.org.uk/verification/.

Further information

It is not the aim of this document to provide guidance on how to carry out species surveys but to provide advice on data capture. Specific survey methodology will be dictated by the species and type of survey being undertaken. It is recommended that more information be sought from recording schemes or societies if necessary. The GiGL website has a Links and Resources page which may be useful; https://www.gigl.org.uk/links-and-resources/.

Other data

GiGL provide a number of documents for specific guidance when surveying Open Spaces (G072), SINCs (G071) and habitats (G081). Please refer to these for additional details.

For full details of all the datasets GiGL hold, please refer to the GiGL Data Guide (H003).

As well as the core datasets, GiGL also manages other types of data, such as site facilities, urban greening features and street trees. Please check with the GiGL team if your surveys generate data that may be relevant.

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