

# Newport Area Environment Group – Camera Trap Usage Guide

**Enjoy the use of the NAEG camera trap and accompanying resources. Please read the following notes carefully before use.**

## 1. The 'Garden Safari' Kit

- \* Get a peek at the secret life of your garden with a state-of-the-art wildlife camera trap.
- \* Undertake a survey your garden or surrounding lanes and woods using our 'Garden Safari' guides, a set of wildlife field guides from the Field Studies Council. *How many different species can you record?*

**Please record what you find** on the West Wales Biodiversity Information Centre/LERC Wales app, which you can find here: <https://www.wwbic.org.uk/wildlife-recording/lerc-wales-app/> or on their online form (<http://record.wwbic.org.uk/>)

This information will help to inform conservation efforts at both local and national levels.

### Kit Contents

- 1 Browning Recon Force camera with mounting strap
- 1 x Mini Tripod **or** 1 x Tree mount
- 8 Rechargeable AA batteries - please recharge before returning the camera (**Note** – please do not use batteries not supplied with the camera)
- 1 x battery charger
- 1 x 128Gb data storage card
- 22 x Field Study Guides - **Please make sure they are all returned after use:**
  1. *Arweiniad i Blanhigion Coetiroedd*
  2. *Bees*
  3. *Bugs on Bushes*
  4. *Butterflies*
  5. *Ferns*
  6. *Flowers of Hills and Heathland*
  7. *Flowers of Walks and Waysides*
  8. *Freshwater Name Trail*
  9. *Garden Bugs and Beasties*
  10. *Grassland Plants 2*
  11. *Grasslands Plants 1*
  12. *Home and Garden Spiders*
  13. *Insects of the British Isles*
  14. *Land Mammals*
  15. *Non-Native Invasive Plants*
  16. *Park and Garden Birds*
  17. *Reptiles and Amphibians*
  18. *Summer Coastal Birds*
  19. *Winter Coastal Birds*
  20. *Tree Name Trail*
  21. *Woodland Plants*
  22. *Woodland Trees, Flowers and Fungi*

## 2. General notes

- Use for wildlife observation and recording only
- Use for private land only unless otherwise agreed with NAEG
- Please report and loss or damage to NAEG immediately
- Maximum loan period 2 weeks unless otherwise agreed with NAEG
- Please recharge the batteries before returning the camera
- Any photos shared with NAEG will only be used with the owner's permission

## 3. Settings, Batteries and Data Card

**Please read the Instruction Manual before use.** This will familiarise you with the camera and allow you to make any desired changes to the set-up should you wish (i.e. picture or video, multi shoot or single shot, or trigger speed.)

- Use Camera Set-up to choose from a number of camera settings – open camera, press MODE button, choose 'Camera Set-up', move through the set-up options using the 4 Programming Buttons (**see Instruction Manual** provided):

<b>Options:</b>	<b>Page</b>	<b>Current Setting</b>
Trail Cam/Video	p6	Trail Cam (still photos)
Picture Quality	p7	Ultra 24MP
Video Length	p7	20 secs
Video Quality	p8	Ultra
Photo Delay	p8	1 second
Single/Multi-shot/Rapid Fire	p9	Rapid Fire 5-shot
Trigger Speed	p12	Fast

- Please do not change the date/time settings or camera name.
- **Please only use the batteries supplied** – and please charge the batteries before returning the camera. (Note – the battery compartment does need a firm pull to open)
- The camera comes with a 128Gb memory card, which should be enough for your needs.
- Do remember to **delete your photos** before you hand the kit back to NAEG. (That said, feel free to leave any good shots for us to include on the website.)

## 4. Where to place the camera

- For ground level shots use the tripod, preferably on a sturdy and stable platform (a paving slab, wooden box, etc)
- The camera is supposed to water resistant (**NOT waterproof**) – if heavy rain is forecast do not use the camera outside or at least ensure it is covered well.
- Try to avoid moving vegetation in shot – this can trigger the camera and provide 'null' shots (as well as using up the batteries.)
- **Distance from object** – Around 3–10 metres away is a good option – the camera has a good detection and flash ranges but resist the temptation to place the camera too far from your

target - the resulting images and videos can still be frustrating if the animal passing is too far away to identify.

- **Height** – this will obviously depend on what your target is, but many things will be at ground level so place the camera at about knee height unless targeting specific features such as nest boxes or bird feeders, etc.
- As rule, animals prefer to be close to cover so aim the camera along edges of lawn and flower beds, hedgerows, etc.
- Look for pathways that may have been made by animals such as foxes, badgers, hedgehogs, etc. - most animals will follow pre-existing footpaths – look for obvious bottlenecks or gaps in hedges that animals are likely or have to use.
- Look out for droppings, footprints – sure signs an animal has passed that way.
- **Livestock** - Cows (and sheep) like to chew straps and rub up against cameras, dislodging placement and potentially damaging the camera. ***Please do not set up the camera where there are likely to be livestock***

## 5. Ethics and the Law

**Be mindful and aware** – It is important to remember that camera traps should be used with wildlife and ethics in mind:

- Do not disturb your target subject (or other species)
- Seek a landowner's permission before you deploy a trap (see above, **General Notes, bullet 2**)
- Avoid deploying in places that will invade privacy, such as along public rights of way and public spaces (see above, **General Notes, bullet 2**)
- **Security** - Set your camera up in a place that is out of sight, so that it doesn't get taken by an opportunist (see above, **General Notes, bullet 2**). Also, be careful of publicising your use of the camera on social media.

**Be aware of the law** - three key areas of legislation to be aware of in the UK (from [https://naturespy.org/help-articles\\_item/things-to-know-before-setting-out-your-trail-cam/](https://naturespy.org/help-articles_item/things-to-know-before-setting-out-your-trail-cam/))

- **Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981**: Be wary of causing any disturbance particularly to nesting birds, otter holts and any other protected species.
- **Protection of Badgers Act 1992**: Disturbance of badger setts is illegal, and disturbance could be classed as just being present on a badger sett, so be mindful of this when placing camera traps.
- **CCTV & GDPR**: Broadly, camera traps can be classed as CCTV so you need to be aware of this before placing cameras on any sites with public access. As a rule, you can put cameras on fully private land without warning signs but do check the guidelines on the Information Commissioner's Office if unsure (<https://ico.org.uk/for-the-public/domestic-cctv-systems/>).

## 6. Tips

A good introduction can be found here: [https://naturespy.org/help-articles\\_item/how-camera-traps-work/](https://naturespy.org/help-articles_item/how-camera-traps-work/) and <https://www.nhbs.com/blog/trail-camera-tips-and-troubleshooting-part-2>

- **Be patient** – it may take several days to capture your garden wildlife.
- **Have faith in the habitats you've created** – set the camera up around your log pile or pond/water source.

- **Use during the day as well** – We tend to think of camera traps as nighttime things so don't forget use set it up for daytime viewing too, at bird feeders, nest boxes, water sources/bird baths, etc.
- **Try to eliminate all unwanted movement** from the field of view – this will stop the camera tripping constantly, wasting battery life and using up the data card:
  - Remove all waving vegetation
  - Fix bird feeders to stop them swinging in the wind
- Tempting though it maybe, if you are leaving the trap in a single place for a few days, resist the temptation to check the card every day – each time you disturb the area to leave scent and signs of disturbance.
- A note on feeding stations:
  - Only use recommended bird feed or, in the case of hedgehogs, cat food – Do not feed birds or hedgehogs bread and milk – contrary to popular belief these are not good for wildlife and should be avoided.
  - Don't forget to provide a source of drinking water.
  - Be aware of encouraging rats to the garden.
  - Clean feeders and water containers regularly to reduce risk of spreading disease.