WildNet Data Entry Form Guidelines

Spatial and Wildlife, Information and Digital Science Delivery
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Security Classification: Unclassified

Contents

Background

The WildNet data entry form has been created for Queensland government staff, approved external organisations and suitably qualified individuals to supply basic wildlife data for Queensland in a standard format to the Department of Environment, Science and Innovation (DESI) for incorporation within corporate applications.

The wildlife records supplied using the form are incorporated into the WildNet database and, depending on access constraints agreed with the data providers, can be made available via internal systems, products and internet sites as well as being provided to Queensland government agencies and to relevant clients under agreements.

The data provided using this form will assist with the planning and management of Queensland's resources including:

- the conservation and management of specific wildlife;
- the management of areas such as national parks, state forests and marine parks;
- the maintenance of biodiversity through the provision of information to support planning and approval systems;
- research;
- education; and
- community awareness.

WildNet and its data are accessed by staff within the following Queensland Government agencies:

- Department of Environment, Science and Innovation
- Department of Resources, and
- Department of Agriculture and Fisheries.

WildNet's wildlife data contributes to a number of Queensland Government programs and products including Biodiversity Planning Assessment, Aquatic Conservation Assessment, State of the Environment reporting, Essential Habitat mapping, species habitat modelling, species assessment, management and recovery, reserve acquisition and management, Wetlands Program, The Species Recovery Information Gateway etc.

Currently the WildNet database delivers wildlife distribution data to external clients via a number of Queensland Government websites and products including:

- Species lists (formerly known as Wildlife Online) – generate species lists for protected areas (such as national parks), forestry areas (such as state forests), local government areas and areas defined using coordinates

- Species profile search - access species profiles and download records approved for publication (CSV, KML and GeoJson)

- Biomaps - view species records approved for publication and generate species lists for properties and drawn areas.

- WildNet wildlife records - published - Queensland - species records approved for publication (shapefile)

- Qld wildlife data API – access wildlife information and download species locations approved for publication (CSV, KML and GeoJson)

- Wetland*Maps* - view species records and survey locations approved for publication

- [Generalised distribution and densities of Queensland wildlife](#) - species distributions and densities generalised to a 10 km grid resolution (shapefile)

- [WildNet Koala Locations](#) – koala locations approved for publication (csv)

Wildlife records approved for release to external parties are provided to the Atlas of Living Australia (ALA) which is the Australian node of the Global Biodiversity Information Facility (GBIF).

Instructions

The Data worksheet includes drop lists and data validation to make data entry easier and minimise errors. If a field has not been completed correctly it will be highlighted in red and an error message is displayed.

Data may also be copied and pasted into the form (always use the Paste Special – Values option to avoid causing an error in the form), in which case any problematic records will be highlighted but no error message is displayed.

Drop list fields can be completed by either selecting the relevant code from the drop list, entering the code or by copying it from a completed field. The drop list fields are case insensitive (i.e. rf or RF can be entered for the vegetation code). All codes are displayed on the Codes worksheet.

A number of fields are mandatory and must be entered for the record to be valid. The mandatory fields are mentioned in the column heading notes (red triangles) and are highlighted on record rows on the form until completed correctly.

The form is locked to reduce users modifying it – this is because a data upload script has been written to process the completed forms for loading the data into the WildNet database. This can cause some issues relating to deleting rows in the spreadsheet. If you wish to remove a record just delete as many fields as you are able and write that the row is to be deleted in the Collection notes field.

Fields

A description of each field and how it should be completed is detailed below.

Number (max 15 characters): Enter the number used to denote the record for reference purposes. You may wish to number the records sequentially e.g. 1, 2, 3 etc.

Collector* (max 200 characters): Provide the full name of the person(s) responsible for the identification of the species.

Start date* (dd/mm/yyyy): Provide the date of sighting or the first date of the field period. Only dates after 1900 can be provided using this form.

End date (dd/mm/yyyy): Last date of the field period if it is more than one day in duration (dd/mm/yyyy).

Important note about recording location information

Location of observations may be captured in one of two ways:

1. Individual locations for each observation (recommended) – a GPS unit is used to record the location of every observation, and the precision value is the horizontal accuracy of the GPS unit. This method is used for observations over large areas, incidental records and transects.

2. Observations are collected within a 'site' – a GPS unit is used to record the centre of a site and the precision value is the radius of a circle that encompasses the site. This method is used for point bird counts.

Location* (max 240 characters): Provide a plain language description of the collection location. Ideally the description should include: a locality name, a distance and direction from a feature named on the gazetteer, and a broad region name (e.g. Peach Creek, 19km ENE of Mt Croll, Cape York Peninsula).

Name of the reserves should be included in the Location field such as Lamington National Park.

Latitude*/Longitude* (max 15 characters): Complete both of these fields or the UTM fields (i.e. Zone, Easting and Northing) **not both sets**. Provide the latitude in degrees, minutes and seconds or decimal degrees within the range of nine to 30 degrees South (e.g. -23 26 13 or -23.43694444). Provide the longitude in degrees, minutes and seconds or decimal degrees within the range of 138 to 156 degrees East (e.g. 152 15 42 or 152.2616667).

Zone*/Easting/Northing (max 2, 6 and 7 characters respectively): Complete all of the UTM fields (i.e. Zone, Easting and Northing), or the Latitude and Longitude fields **not both sets**. Provide the number of the Universal Transverse Mercator (UTM) Zone from 54 to 56. Provide the UTM Easting between 170110.00 to 813930.00. Provide the UTM Northing between 6677420.00 to 9003800.00.

Datum*: Select the code from the drop list indicating the horizontal datum used when recording the location co-ordinates. Codes and their descriptions are presented in the Codes worksheet. If the location was determined using a GPS check the unit's setup menu to determine the datum. If the location was determined using a map, check the map legend for the horizontal datum. The preferred datum to use is the Geocentric Datum of Australia 1994 (i.e. GDA94). If Google Maps is used to obtain the coordinates the datum is WSG84.

Precision* (max 5 characters): Provide the accuracy of the location coordinates provided in metres (do not include the units in the field i.e. m). This represents the horizontal accuracy of a point record or, for site collection, the radius of a circle which would enclose the collection area.

Figure 1.
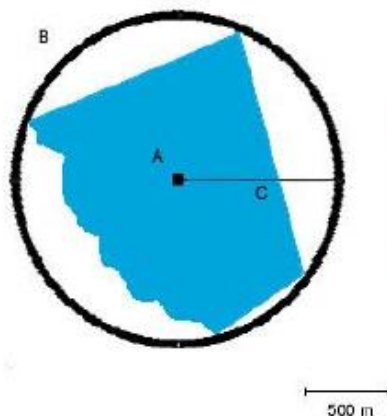
In this example, if the shaded area represents a property that has been searched, then the central point (A) is where the latitude/longitude or UTMs should be recorded, the circle (B) completely encompasses the area searched, and the line (C) represents the precision that should be recorded - 1000 m in this case.

Please note that if you collect observations from a large area (throughout a property for example) then using the site method decreases the usability of your data as observations can't be easily interrogated against environmental factors such as vegetation.

It is highly recommended that sightings records are provided with precision values < 2,000m. Precision values exceeding this figure are not included in the Species List application.

Altitude (max 5 characters): Provide the altitude of the site in metres (do not include the units in the field i.e. m).

Vegetation code: Select the code from the drop list indicating the vegetation predominant at the site. Codes and their descriptions are presented in the Codes worksheet.

Landform code: Select the code from the drop list indicating the small scale landform features predominate at the site. Codes and their descriptions are presented in the Codes worksheet.

Slope (max 3 characters): Provide the inclination of the land surface over a 20m interval expressed in degrees between $0°$ to $90°$.

Aspect (max 3 characters): Provide the direction the slope of the land surface is facing in degrees between $0°$ to $360°$.

Scientific name*/Common name* (max 240 characters): Provide either the full scientific name for the species e.g. *Acacia concurrens* or record the common name for the species. Where wildlife is only identified to the genus for plants just provide the genus name e.g. *Acacia* and for animals provide the genus name followed by sp. e.g. *Litoria* sp..

Separate records should be provided to detail different types of records for the same species at a site relating the other fields such as age, sex, breeding, identification, vetting stage and specimen details e.g. individuals that are collected and incorporated within curated collections at museums and herbaria (vetting stage = specimen) or retained (vetting stage = collected) versus individuals that are observed. For example, for a plant species at a location (e.g. *Cycas megacarpa*), you may provide three records for the species detailing that two specimens were prepared and sent to the herbarium, one specimen was collected for a personal field herbarium and it was estimated that 150 plants were observed at the site.

Count (max 6 characters): Provide the number of individuals encountered at a site. If a number is provided, a Count type must also be provided. If a species is not evident at a site but was actively searched for a 0 can be recorded and Z (True zero) must be selected for the Count type code.

Count type: Select the code from the drop list indicating the relevant count codes if a count was provided. The description of the count codes are:

- Accurate (A) - the actual number of individuals present.
- Estimate (E) - the number of individuals calculated to be present using an estimation technique.
- Rough count (C) - an approximation of the number of individuals present when an accurate count is not possible.
- True zero (Z) - stating that no individuals were present but were actively searched for.

Age code: Select the code from the drop list indicating the age class of the individual(s) if known. Codes and their descriptions are presented in the Codes worksheet.

Sex code: Select the code from the drop list indicating the sex of the individual(s) if known. Codes and their descriptions are presented in the Codes worksheet.

Breeding code: Select the code from the drop list indicating the reproductive condition of individual(s) or evidence of breeding if known. Codes and their descriptions are presented in the Codes worksheet.

Identification method: Select the code from the drop list indicating how the species was identified. Codes and their descriptions are presented in the Codes worksheet.

Collector code (max 20 characters): Provide the collector's identification code for the individual e.g. tag number.

Specimen registration (max 20 characters): Provide the registration number of the specimen stored at a museum/herbarium.

Specimen location (max 60 characters): Provide the name of the museum or herbarium where the specimen is stored.

Collection notes (max 240 characters): Provide any notes associated with the species record including samples collected, identification notes, behaviour observed etc. If the species identification was confirmed by another person or organisation details should be provided in this field e.g. ID confirmed by Queensland Herbarium.

Vetting code*: Select the code from the drop list indicating the reliability of the taxon identification for this record. The descriptions of the vetting codes are:

- Specimen (S) - a specimen-backed record, which has been identified by an expert and lodged in the collection of a formal institution. Examples would include Queensland Museum and Queensland Herbarium specimens.
- Collected (K) - a specimen-backed record, which has been identified by an experienced observer but is not lodged in the collection of a formal institution. Examples would include material held in regional herbaria, local reference collections and material awaiting registration in formal institutions.

- Verified (V) - an observational record which has been made or confirmed by a recognised expert in that taxonomic group. For example, all frog records submitted by Keith R. McDonald would be labelled as Verified as he is a nationally recognised expert on frogs.
- Confirmed (C) - an observational record which has been made or confirmed by an experienced observer. This would typically include people with training in wildlife identification and experienced naturalists, such as university students, environmental consultants, and members of bird clubs and similar organisations.
- Unconfirmed (U) - an observational record which has been made by a novice observer or by an experienced observer outside their area of expertise, or any observational record made beyond the expected range of a species. All records submitted without Vetting stage codes or by people of unknown or limited experience are assigned to this class.

Submission

Completed forms should be emailed to the WildNet Team (WildNet@des.qld.gov.au) for processing.

Support

For further information about the form, providing data for uploading into the WildNet database or using WildNet Program systems or products, contact the WildNet Team (WildNet@des.qld.gov.au.