

Agreement between the Scottish Orienteering Association and the Capercaillie Biodiversity Action Plan Steering Group on the use of capercaillie forests for orienteering competitions and training

This agreement aims to assist compliance with the current legislation regarding responsible access to the countryside for non-motorised recreational purposes covered by the Land Reform (Scotland) Act 2003 and the accompanying Scottish Outdoor Access Code, and the need to protect vulnerable habitats and species as covered by the Nature Conservation (Scotland) Act 2004, specifically in relation to capercaillie. Capercaillie are listed in Annex 1 of the EU Birds Directive (1979) and consequently protected under European law.

This agreement will cover the breeding and brood rearing period of 1st March - 31st August of the years 2015 and 2016, at which point it will be reviewed. During the period of this agreement the sites where restrictions apply will be reviewed on an ongoing basis, using the latest capercaillie distribution data.

The Capercaillie Biodiversity Action Plan Steering Group (Capercaillie BAP Group), via the Capercaillie Project Officer, will advise the Scottish Orienteering Association (SOA) of the most sensitive areas within the species range – currently limited to Deeside/Aberdeenshire, Moray, Easter Ross, Perthshire and Strathspey. A list and map of areas will be supplied to the SOA for restricted circulation to the orienteering clubs who may be affected. This information will be reviewed annually by the Capercaillie BAP Group and the SOA advised of any changes.

The SOA or its affiliated clubs wishing to hold orienteering activities within the listed areas should initially approach the land manager responsible for these areas. The land manager should advise the club on the extent of any capercaillie presence in the area based on local knowledge. Within the period 1st March to 31st August clubs should seek additional advice from the Capercaillie Project Officer.

If any specialist advice or surveys are required this will be requested from the Capercaillie Project Officer.

Generally, restrictions will be as follows:

- Forest blocks with leks – no orienteering between 1 March and 31 August
- Forest blocks with known or probable capercaillie nesting and brood rearing – no orienteering between 15 April and 31 August.

The Agreement does not advise a blanket ban on orienteering in capercaillie woods.

The Capercaillie Project Officer will apply consistent advice based on capercaillie biology, but will seek site-specific opportunities to minimise any restrictions that are imposed e.g. in areas of forest where there are unlikely to be capercaillie broods due to proximity to settlements or unsuitable habitat. The SOA and its affiliated clubs will abide by these restrictions or negotiate on a case by case basis.

If any new areas are being considered for orienteering within the capercaillie core zones, but not identified or specifically named in the list, then the SOA will pass a copy of the OS map, highlighted with the exact area under consideration, to the Capercaillie Project Officer requesting information on whether restrictions apply. If capercaillie are present, the Capercaillie Project Officer will provide an Ordnance Survey map marked up with restricted areas e.g. zoning. The Capercaillie Project Officer will inform the appropriate land managers of any suggestions made regarding areas within their ownership. The area will be added to the list.

Should the situation change regarding the location or presence of capercaillie, either within already identified areas or into new areas which are to be used for orienteering, then the Capercaillie Project Officer will inform the SOA and appropriate advice given to the SOA and land manager.

SOA clubs should contact the Professional Officer in the first instance for advice on the list of areas affected.

Training: The SOA, through the Training Coordinator for the World Orienteering Championships, will advise international squads visiting Scotland for orienteering training purposes that access to areas is restricted over

the breeding and brood rearing period. Permits, maps and map files will only be issued for areas agreed with the Capercaillie Project Officer.

Agreed by:

.....Gareth Marshall.....

.....Colin Matheson.....

NAME: 

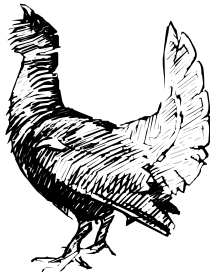
for and on behalf of Capercaillie BAP Group

NAME: 

for and on behalf of the SOA

Date: 11/03/2015

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http://www.capercaillie-life.info/htm/capercaillie_bap_group.php

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