



NORTHERN IRELAND ORNITHOLOGISTS' CLUB

Code of Conduct for Photographing Birds

- 1.** The object is to take photographs of birds without upsetting their normal pattern of behaviour. The well-being of the bird must, at all times, take precedence over photography.
- 2.** It should be noted that disturbance of all birds at or near their nest - including for the purposes of photography - is an offence, except under a license issued by the Environment & Heritage Service for Northern Ireland, or by the relevant authority elsewhere.
- 3** The use of a hide to photograph birds at the nest should only be attempted after experience has been gained of the difficulties involved.
N.B. Siting and erection of the hide should be in stages and, if the bird does not return to the nest within a reasonable period, having regard to weather and temperature, the hide should be removed.
- 4.** Visits to the nest should be as few and as short a duration as possible. Exposure of the nest, which should not include permanent change, may cause danger from predators and the weather. After each session the nest site should be returned to its original condition. Any cords used to tie back foliage or grass should be removed.
- 5.** Nest photographers should be accompanied to the hide by at least one other person and should on no account emerge from the hide except in the immediate presence of another person.
- 6.** Nests to be used for photography should be chosen so that the hide will not attract attention which might cause disturbance to the breeding birds.
- 7.** The hide should be removed and the nest site concealed immediately after all photography has been completed.
- 8.** The use of 300mm lenses, or longer, is recommended for nest photography so that too close an approach to breeding birds is avoided.
- 9.** Movement and noise should be kept to a minimum to avoid disturbance.
- 10.** Photographers should observe the practice of obtaining permission from the landowners before entering private property.