



General Licence information for England as of the 1st January 2021

DEFRA has released the new set of General Licences for England that come into effect on the 1st January 2021. Be aware that there are separate licences for operating in Wales and Scotland.

The **three main** English Licences are GL40, GL41 and GL42. Additionally, GL33 gives you the conditions for trapping birds in Ladder and Larsen type traps and using and caring for live decoys.

You do not have to apply for the General Licences but you do have to read, understand and adhere to the conditions contained in them. It is important that you understand which licence each species can be controlled under and why.

Each licence has specific rules about its use on or near listed protected sites. Each listed European Protected site has a buffer zone around it, and you must comply to the additional conditions if you are using this licence on a European site or in its buffer zone. The list of the protected sites, the additional conditions and their buffer zones can be seen in all of the licences in Condition 5, Table 2.

Species Control at a glance

Licence	GL40 Conservation			GL41- Public Health/Public Safety			GL42- Prevent Serious Damage				
Control Purpose	Conserving Endangered Wild Birds	Conserving Flora	Conserving Fauna	Slips and Falls	Spread of Human Disease	Issue with Birds Nesting	Livestock Direct Attack	Livestock Feedstuff and spreading disease	Crops, Fruit and vegetables	Fisheries	Inland Waters
Carriion Crow	Yes	No	No	No	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No
Magpie	Yes	No	No	No	No	No	Yes	No	No	No	No
Rook	No	No	No	No	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No
Jackdaw	No	No	No	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No
Jay	Yes*	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No
Wood Pigeon	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	Yes	Yes	No	No
Feral Pigeon	No	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	No	No
Canada Goose	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
Egyptian Goose	Yes	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	Yes	No	No
Monk Parakeet	Yes	No	No	No	No	Yes	No	No	Yes	No	No
Ring Neck Parakeet	Yes	No	Yes	No	No	No	No	No	Yes	No	No
Indian House Crow	Yes	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	yes	No	No
Sacred Ibis	Yes	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No

GL40

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/wild-birds-licence-to-kill-or-take-for-conservation-purposes-gl34/valid-from-1-january-2021-general-licence-gl40-to-take-or-kill-certain-species-of-wild-birds-to-serve-endangered-wild-birds-or-flora-and-fauna>

Allows you to kill or take certain species of wild birds to conserve 'red' or 'amber' listed endangered wild birds, or Flora and Fauna. If you are using this licence for conserving endangered wild birds, follow the link below to see a full list of birds that are of conservation concern:

https://www.bto.org/sites/default/files/shared_documents/publications/birds-conservation-concern/birds-of-conservation-concern-4-leaflet.pdf

***Jays** can only be controlled under GL40 to conserve endangered woodland birds, to see a full list of endangered woodland birds, go to:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/wild-birds-licence-to-kill-or-take-for-conservation-purposes-gl34/list-of-endangered-woodland-birds>

GL41

Allows you to kill or take certain species of wild bird to preserve public health or public safety – Slips and Falls, Spread of Human Disease or Issues with Birds Nesting.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/wild-birds-licence-to-kill-or-take-for-public-health-or-safety-gl35/valid-from-1-january-2021-general-licence-gl41-to-kill-or-take-certain-species-of-wild-birds-to-preserve-public-health-or-public-safety>

GL42

Allows you to take certain species of wild birds to prevent serious damage to - Livestock Direct Attack, Livestock feedstuff and the spreading of disease, Crops, Fruit and Vegetables, Fisheries and Inland Waters.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/wild-birds-licence-to-kill-or-take-to-prevent-serious-damage-gl36/general-licence-gl42-to-kill-or-take-certain-species-of-wild-birds-to-prevent-serious-damage>

GL33

If you are using under the above licences a walk in Multi-catch, Larsen, Larsen Mate (Clam trap) or a Larsen Pod traps, GL33 includes the conditions that need to be adhered to for trapping birds and using decoys in these traps.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/standard-licence-conditions-for-trapping-wild-birds-and-using-decoys-gl33/valid-from-1-january-trapping-wild-birds-standard-licence-conditions-wml-gl33>

General Licences

If, having studied the General Licences, you believe that what you want to do in terms of bird control is not covered by them, then you will need to apply to Natural England for an Individual Licence. For example, if you look after a population of wild breeding Pheasants or Redleg Partridges, you could not control crows and magpies under GL40 to conserve them because neither gamebird is 'endangered' (ie. red or amber listed as a bird of conservation concern) and therefore GL40 does not apply. You would have instead to apply to NE for an Individual Licence. But control of crows and magpies to prevent serious damage to livestock IS allowed under GL42, so if you were culling them for that purpose, you would not need an Individual Licence. This is why it is so important to study the licences and make sure you know what each one allows.

To recap

General Licences do not have to be applied for but, you need to read and understand which licence is specific to the pest control operation that you are carrying out. You must adhere to all of the terms and conditions of the relevant licence in the links above. It may be wise to print out the relevant licence and keep it with you to show that you have read and understood how the licences work.