

# Minimum dataset standards

Minimum dataset standards are recommended for biological data to ensure field data collected for projects are in a consistent and accurate format.

The benefits of systematic field data collection are:

- All data collected contains the minimum information considered to make it useful
- Data may be incorporated into the state’s Biological Databases of SA (BDBSA).

The dataset below represents the recommended minimum for species observation records.

There are two BDBSA data entry templates based on the minimum dataset standards, the BDBSA Data returns template and the Electronic Load template. The BDBSA [Contributing Data Information Sheet](#) compares these options.

**NOTE:** The minimum dataset standards provide a starting point. Field staff may collect data in a manner best suited to their project requirements.

## Minimum dataset field descriptions

SURVEYNR (PROJECTNR)	Required	Assigned BDBSA project number. To <a href="#">register</a> for a new survey/project number, fill in the online <a href="#">Biological Project Metadata Registration Form</a> . Basic documentation about a project (metadata) must be filled out when a number is obtained.
ZONE	Required <i>Unless Lat/Long supplied</i>	Universal Transverse Mercator (UTM) projection zone number  Map zone must be recorded because South Australia has three zones (52, 53 and 54) where grid coordinates repeat in each zone.
EASTING	Required <i>Unless Lat/Long supplied</i>	UTM projection X-axis coordinate  An Easting (a grid coordinate) must be recorded as a full 6-digit number (i.e. 352678). Note that each value represents the number of metres from a fixed reference point, so rounding the last number (i.e. 352670 above) will degrade the accuracy of the position by up to 8 metres. Where necessary up to 3 decimals can be included.
NORTHING	Required <i>Unless Lat/Long supplied</i>	UTM projection Y-axis coordinate  A Northing (a grid coordinate) must be recorded as a 7-digit number (i.e. 6065469). Note that each value represents the number of metres from a fixed reference point, so rounding the last number (i.e. 6065460 above) will degrade the accuracy of the position by up to 9 metres. Where necessary up to 3 decimals can be included.



LATITUDE	Required <i>Unless East/North supplied</i>	Decimal Degrees, (e.g. -33.73651) if geodetic coordinate (Latitude and Longitude) was used as a primary coordinate system to capture data.
LONGITUDE	Required <i>Unless East/North supplied</i>	Decimal Degrees, (e.g. 139.29603) if geodetic coordinate (Latitude and Longitude) was used as a primary coordinate system to capture data.
LOCMETHODNR	Required	BDBSA code for the method used to capture the location coordinates.  See codes for Location Method in the <a href="#">BDBSA data returns template</a> worksheet.
LOCDATUMNR	Required	BDBSA code for Geodetic datum for the location coordinates - usually a GPS datum – e.g. WGS84.  The datum used to determine the coordinates must be recorded regardless of whether Latitude/Longitude (geodetic) or Grid coordinates are used. Without a recorded datum, a datum would need to be assumed when adding to the database and the accuracy of the record's location could be out by +/- 200 m.  It is recommended that a GPS's Datum: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Is set to <b>WGS84</b> (World Geodetic System, 1984);</li> <li>• Is checked at each new session, and reset to WGS84 if changed.</li> </ul> See codes for Location Datum in the <a href="#">BDBSA data returns template</a> worksheet.
RELIABNR	Required	BDBSA precision code indicating how accurately the location coordinates were determined, depending on the location method.  This field should be determined based on a combination of distance of the item to the point at which the coordinate is generated (e.g. the GPS), and error of the method used to determine the coordinate. Currently the accuracy of a Geographic Positioning System (GPS) is between 5 to 10 m.  See codes for Reliability in the <a href="#">BDBSA data returns template</a> worksheet.
SIGHTINGDATE	Required	The date of the observation or collection must be recorded as dd/ <b>mmm</b> /yyyy (e.g. 30/ <b>JUN</b> /20XX) to prevent confusion with the American date format ( <u>mm</u> /dd/yyyy).
DATEACCURACY	Required	The BDBSA code describes a date as being accurate to the Day(D), Month(M) (i.e. Day unknown but Month and Year certain), Decade(T) and Century(C).



OBSERVERNR1	Required	(First observer's name)  It is preferable that the full details of the observer's name be recorded, but as a minimum, the first and last name as well as any middle name initials should be recorded. Ideally, some note should also be kept of the observer's address or affiliated organisation.
OBSERVERNR2	Desirable	(Second observer's name, if any)  As Observer1
SPECIES TYPE	Required	Valid values are: A = AMPHIBIAN, B = BIRD, F = FISH, M = MAMMAL, P = PLANT and R = REPTILE
NSXCODE	Desirable	Unique BDBSA code for current species taxonomy  The BDBSA use unique codes (NSX codes) to describe a species. This is the preferred method for providing species scientific names. It enables better tracking of taxonomic changes since the code ties the record to the taxonomic entity valid at the time the data was collected. Current NSX codes may be obtained from the <a href="#">BDBSA Information sharing</a> web page ( <i>Official Taxonomy section</i> ) as this will assist in later integration of data into BDBSA databases.  Record a species comment if the identification was uncertain.
SPECIES	Required	Full scientific name of the species being observed.  Record the full scientific name of the species being observed. It is essential that the Genus and Species names be recorded but sub-specific names may also be recorded if appropriate. Common names are regarded as optional since they may vary considerably in common usage.
NUMBER OBSERVED	Required	Count of individuals observed (required for all species).  Valid values are numbers (eg 34), ranges (eg >1000), quantity descriptions (eg many).  If no count was performed on the individuals observed then record as 'present but not counted'.  If a species was searched for but no individuals were observed then record as 'none detected'. (Only available for projects using targeted survey techniques)  Zero, blank or null is invalid. Field can't be blank.
METHODNR (Fauna)	Required	(Fauna only)  BDBSA Code for observation / capture method  See codes for Collection Method in the <a href="#">BDBSA data returns template</a> worksheet.



LOCDESC	Desirable	Description of the location where the observation was made including site name if appropriate (especially if site will be subject to repeat visits). This information is highly desirable for validating coordinates.
SIGHTINGCOMM	Desirable	Comments or field notes relating to the sighting or other information that would add value to the record.
HABITATCOMM	Desirable	Brief description of the habitat where the observation was made.
SOURCEID	Desirable	Unique number assigned to each record in the original source if available.

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