

Wader Scrapes

Specification extract · Pages 59–61

What this document is

This is an extract of the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine (DAFM) document “ACRES Co-operation Non-Productive Investments Specification”, Version 2.2, July 2026. It contains the pages covering the Wader Scrapes action (pages 59–61 of the full specification).

Because the specification runs each action straight into the next, the first and last pages of this extract may also show the end or beginning of a neighbouring action. The section for this action starts on page 59 (the printed page number matches the page number in the full document).

Always check the current version

DAFM updates the specification from time to time. The full document is the authoritative version and should be consulted before undertaking any work. It is available from:

Full specification (PDF, opens at this action):

https://assets.gov.ie/static/documents/f8e2ccf8/NPI_specifications_July_2026_2.pdf#page=59

ACRES NPI page on gov.ie:

<https://www.gov.ie/en/service/f5a48-agri-climate-rural-environment-scheme-acres/#non-productive-investments>

About this action on the ACRES CP website

<https://acresireland.ie/action-projects/npi-wader-scrapes/>

- Farmers can participate in recording sightings of swifts here at [Ireland-Spring Alive](#)
- A video on the importance of buildings for supporting wildlife can be found on [BirdWatch Ireland](#).



Picture 3: [Swift Conservation Ireland](#) Two swifts at nest box site – Copyright © Martin Leak

Wader Scrapes

Objective:

To create opportunities for waders to feed and to support aquatic insects through the creation of small, shallow, and often seasonal pools.

Background:

Small, seasonal pools support a wide range of invertebrates and provide feeding opportunities for waders and other bird species alike. Wader scrapes are shallow pools which can be created to increase the area of wet feature edge. They are typically located in naturally low-lying areas. Wet flushes occur when the water table is high and/or there is low soil permeability.

Site Suitability:

- This action can only be selected on parcels with an Eligible hectare > 0.
- This action is available on CP parcels only that will be claimed by the participant for the remainder of the ACRES contract.
- This action can only be selected on fields that have a scorecard submitted and is only available the following scorecard types: Grassland, Rough Grazing, Coastal, Peatland (restricted to cutover), Low Input Peat Grassland and Breeding Wader.
- Wader scrapes should not be located within 250m of a wind turbine.
- Wader scrapes should not be located within 30m of major roads, such as motorways and busy national or regional roads due to risk of collision of birds with traffic.
- Wader scrapes should not be located within 10m of watercourses as there is a risk during times of high rainfall or flooding of run off and water quality impacts.
- Do not locate wader scrapes within 30m of scrub, hedgerows, woodland or forestry which could provide cover for predators.

- This action cannot be selected within an archaeological monument buffer.

Requirements:

1. Select the LPIS parcel for the wader scrape, each point drawn on GLAM represents one wader scrape. Each wader scrape applied for is only eligible for one NPI payment and once claimed must be maintained for the remainder of the ACRES contract.
2. Create a scrape with a minimum surface area of 48m² by the end of February in the year following year of approval or by the 31st of December in the final year of the ACRES contract. The wader scrapes should be no larger than 225m².
3. Works must not take place during the bird nesting season (March 1st to August 31st).
4. Edges must have a gently sloping bank and soil must not be banked around the perimeter.
5. Scrapes must not be fenced off as grazing around the edges can help improve accessibility for waders.
6. Only one claim for payment is allowed per approved NPI-Annual Works Plan. This action can only be claimed for payment once delivered in accordance with NPI Specification.

Additional Guidance:

- Long linear shaped wader scrapes are preferable (7.5m W x 30m L). Contact the CP team for further advice.
- It is recommended to have a varied depth to increase biodiversity with a maximum depth of 50cm to 100cm at the centre.
- Choose naturally low-lying areas where the water table is anticipated to be near the surface and will retain water within the field. Consider the location of a scrape with the practical management of the field in mind. Machinery access, movement of livestock and other factors should be considered.
- Additional guidance and useful waterbird identification tips and survey information can be found on [BirdWatch Ireland](#).

Picture 4: Example of a Wader Scrape (7.5m width x 30m length).



Source: ACRES West Connaught

Wild Bird Cover Plots

Objective:

To support pollinator species during the summer months, to provide a source of insects for small birds to feed their chicks and to supply cover and feeding opportunities for birds and small rodents during the winter. In turn this provides hunting opportunities for Barn Owl, Hen Harrier and Kestrel.

Background

The absence of tillage from upland areas and from most high nature value farmland reduces the feeding opportunities for many species at critical times of the year. Wild Bird Cover can compensate for this by introducing small areas of high value crops to otherwise largely grazing based agricultural systems.

Site Suitability

- This action can only be selected on parcels with an Eligible hectare > 0.
- This action is available on both CP parcels declared as arable and on Non-CP parcels, therefore not available on any CP Parcel that has a scorecard assigned.
- In Non-CP parcels this action is not available on areas that are SAC/SPAs, NHAs, pNHAs or Annex 1 Grasslands.
- This action is not suitable immediately adjacent to watercourses or drains. If within a Freshwater Pearl Mussel catchment or within a high-status water objective