Guide to enter information about cormorant colonies and nest numbers on the homepage '*Cormorant counts in the Western Palearctic*'

This guide explains how you define a cormorant colony and enter count results on the homepage 'http://www.cormocount.eu/'. Overall there are three steps: 1) login, 2) find your colony or add it, and 3) enter the counts of the colony.

The three overall steps

Step 1: Login/become a user. As a cormorant counter you can use this web side to report your results from countings and observations. To do so you need to become a user of this website by registering yourself (see step 1.1: Login or register).

Step 2: The colony. Results from counts can be entered as soon as the colony has been 'created' and denoted with the relevant year. If the colony already exists in the database, the colony´s name will appear on the list of existing colonies, which can be found under 'Colonies'. If the colony was created in a previous year, you can reuse some of the old information (e.g. the geographical location and extension of the colony) and add new information relevant for the year in question (follow the steps given under sections 3 and 4). If the colony is not on the list, you have to create the colony (follow the steps under section 2.2).

Step 3: The count. When the colony is recorded for the relevant year, you can enter results from the count. As a minimum, you must enter the date of the count, the observer´s name and e-mail and the number of nests in the colony. There are further opportunities for describing counting methods and give other supplementary information. Remember so click 'Save'.

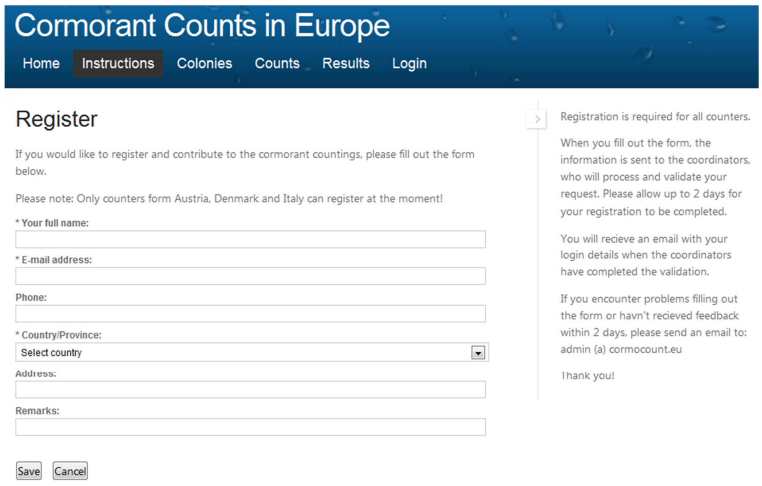
Step 1.1: Login or register

To enter information about colonies and counts, you must be registered as a user.

First, select 'Home' on the menu and choose 'Counters can register HERE', just above the photo.

As a minimum, fill in the marked information boxes in the form with your name and e-mail and for which country (or province) you are reporting counts. Save the information by selecting "Save".

NOTE: The personal information will not become visible to others and will only be used for identification in subsequent data processing.



1. The information will be sent to the count coordinator of the country, and you will receive an e-mail with a login. Note that this can take up to two days.
2. When you subsequently want to log on, do so via the menu item 'Login'. Here you can choose to let your computer remember the password when you login. Then you simply fill in your username and click in the password box, which automatically will fill in your password. When you close the web side you will automatically be logged out.

NOTE: We recommend that you later change your password via the link
http://cormorant.dk/login/change-password.aspx

You are now a registered user and have access to define colonies and enter results from counts.

Step 2: The colony

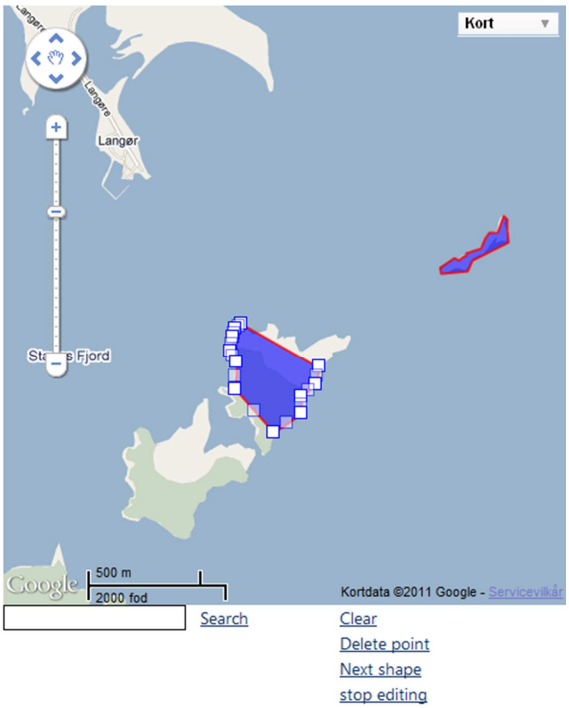
If you are logged in, you can enter counts once you have found the right colony.
Enter parts of the name of the colony or locality in the field 'Search for ..' or you can go through the list of colonies recorded on the homepage (below the Google map).

2.1: The colony is already recorded

If the colony is already in the database you can add relevant information and edit the extension of the colony.

On the top right corner of the map, you can choose between a map based on satellite images or a map with roads and site names.

Select 'Edit polygon' for fine tuning the lines that define the extension of the colony. Now you see white squares on the red line. Drag the squares so that the line follows the correct boundary of the colony. Select 'Stop Editing' when adjustments have been made. See figure below.



We recommend that you use the field 'Remarks ..' for information about a) management/human intervention in the colony (legal as well as illegal), b) human disturbance, c) occurrence of predators, d) breeding performance (clutch size, brood size, breeding success). When using the field 'Remarks ..'

you should denote your name and the date of your entry of information. For example: "David Andersson 10-05-2011: Disturbance took place ….". You can write your supplementary information under 'Remarks ..' in the language of your own country.

2.2: The colony does not exist in the database

If you are logged in, you can create a colony.
Choose 'Colonies' on the menu.
Choose 'Add new colony' just below the map.

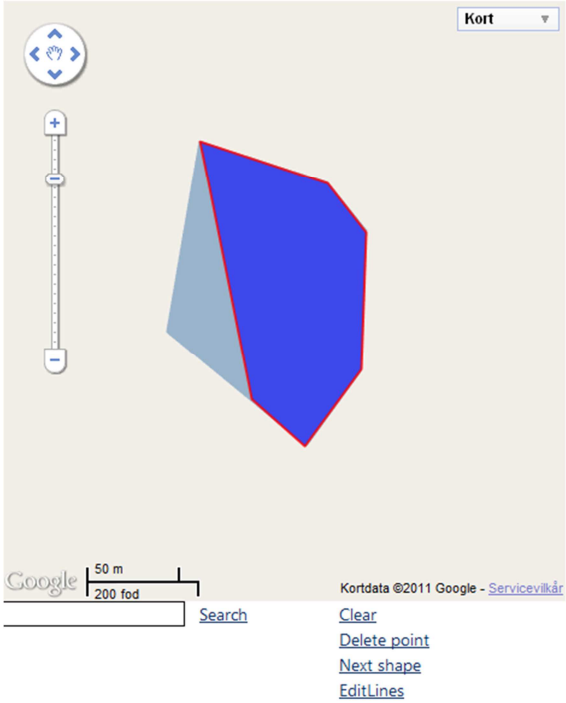
1. Select the country.

2. In the search box below the map you can enter a name and then click on 'Search', or manually zoom the map to locate the area where the colony is located. For more information about zoom click here.

3. If it is not possible to find the area on the map, or if you want to see it in more detail then modify the format of the map via the box located in the upper right corner. Select 'Satellite'. See section 4.2 for more information.

4. Define a colony on the map by selecting at least four points that surround the colony (see example on next page). A red line connects the points you select. While selecting the colony area, a blue marker is distributed over the area. The blue marker illustrates the colony´s location. As you select items that surround the colony, the blue marker will not necessarily follow the defined area exactly. But once you are finished selecting the colony area, then the blue marker adapt to the shape of the selected area. You must select at least four points to register a colony. For more information on the definition of colonies see section 4.

5. Click 'Save' to register the polygon showing the extension of the new colony.



6. Fill out the form to the left of the map. As a minimum, please denote the name of the colony and the year which your information refers to. In case you have the knowledge you are most welcome to denote (click off) which habitat type the nests are located in.

7. Human intervention in the colony. If you have knowledge about legal regulation of the colony or illegal disturbance/intervention, click off the box 'Colony exposed to managment'. If possible, write fuller explanations of these interferences in the box "Remarks..". This human inteference could be scaring off breeding cormorants, oiling of eggs, removal of nests etc..

8. Breeding performance. Notes on breeding performance are most welcome. E.g. give information on a) mean clutch sizes (only for nests with eggs, remember to denote sample size 'N='), b) brood size (only for nests with chicks within a certain age interval, remember to denote approximate age of the chicks and sample size 'N='), c) breeding success (defined as the number of young reaching the age near to fledging per initiated clutch).

9. Click "Save" to save all information.

10. You can now choose to add your counts by clicking "Add count".

Step 3: Enter count results

Check if the colony is established under 'Colonies'. If the colony has not been created then follow the instructions in section 2.2. But

1. If the colony has been established on the homepage, then go to the information about the colony (from the list, or after having searched for and found the name, or having found it on the map).

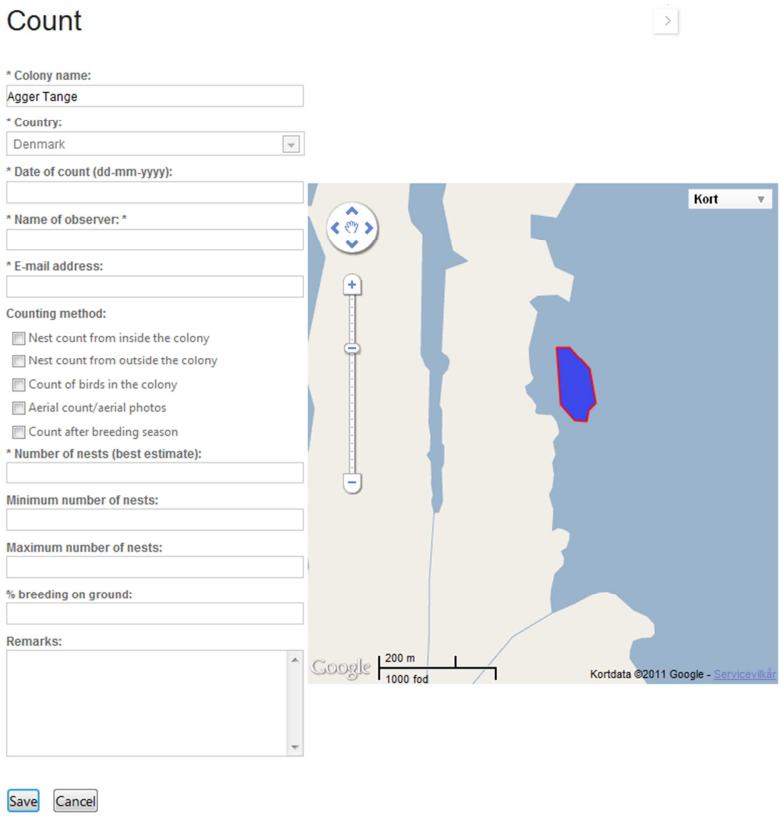
2. At the bottom of the 'colony page' select 'Add count'

3. Always state the colony´s name, date of count, the observer´s name and e-mail and your best estimate of the number of nests.

4. You are most welcome to give other information, e.g. about the counting method, the proportion of nests on the ground, remarks about the precision of the count etc.

5. Select 'Save' to save the information you have entered.

Your registration can now be seen (by you and the National Coordinator) under 'Counts'.



4: Other smaller guidelines regarding creating a colony

4.1: To zoom in on an area then do one of the following:

1. Double click on the area.
2. Role the wheel on the mouse forward/away from yourself
3. Drag the cursor up against the plus sign on the bar on the left side of the map.

Over the zoom-bar is a round tool. This tool can be used to move the image in the desired direction.

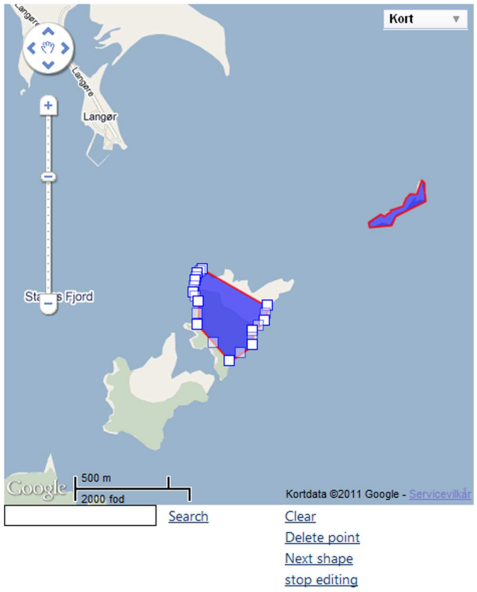
4.2: To get a more detailed map

Satellite images can be used advantageously in the following cases:

1. If the colony is located on a small islet that is not plotted on the map.
2. If you want to denote the extension of the colony precisely.

4.3: How to denote extensions of a non-continuous colony

We recommend that a colony is defined as a separate colony if it is isolated from other group(s) of nests by at least 2000 m. Therefore, a group of nests is defined as belonging to the same colony as the other groups of nests if it is located within 2000 m from the nearest neighbouring group of nests ('sub-colony').

If the colony is composed of two or more unconnected sub-colonies, first define the extension of one of the sub-colonies. Then select 'Next shape'. Now the second sub-colony is defined with its own polygon. However, all the polygons belong to the same colony.

1. If you select 'Clear', then delete the defined colony.
2. Select 'Delete point' to undo the previous action.
3. Select 'Edit polygon' for fine tuning of the lines. Now you see white squares on the red line. Drag the squares so that the line follows the correct boundary of the colony. Select 'Stop Editing' when adjustments are made.