

Every year, BirdLife Europe invites people to observe and learn about the fascinating bird migration during the first weekend of October. This year, EuroBirdWatch – BirdLife’s annual birdwatching event in Europe – happened during the week-end of the 1st and 2nd October and seduced thousands of people across Europe and Central Asia. BirdLife Partners and affiliate organisations from 37 European and Central Asian countries, from Portugal to Kazakhstan, Cyprus to Finland, participated, organizing 2,200 different events encouraging people of all ages to go out, observe, explore and enjoy birds. The aim is to raise the awareness on bird migration, promoting needed actions to save threatened bird species and their habitats, and also to give a good reason to bird lovers for meeting and practising birdwatching. For many BirdLife Partners the event provides an opportunity to reach new audiences and to attract potential supporters. Its common and further goal is to create more awareness within the European community for safer flyways and the stop of the loss of biodiversity. This year the events were mainly focusing on the protection of migratory birds in their breeding areas, on the flyways and in wintering habitats. 2011 was a big success for the European BirdLife Birdwatching Day, with spectacular observations and national events records! As usual, birds did not disappoint bird lovers: attendees counted close to five million birds of many different species passing overhead. Observed in many countries flying in huge swarms, starlings has been the most observed species during this year’s EuroBirdWatch. The second award goes to Little Bunting. In Hungary, a Little Bunting was ringed which marked the fourth record of this species in this country, while in Gibraltar the first national record of the same species was made. The third place belongs to cranes which were massively observed in Lithuania, Ukraine and Eastern Slovakia. The European Centre coordinated by SVS/BirdLife Switzerland, in charge of collecting the bird observations revealed that 2011 was the largest ever EuroBirdwatch referring to the national events. They counted the largest participation of countries ever and nearly the double of events compared with 2010, especially thanks to new participants like Azerbaijan, Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan. Moreover, this year, the event received a lot of media coverage. In Finland, the national TV channel reported about EuroBirdwatch on the main news. In Belgium the national TV interviewed the bird observers about the event. You can watch it [here](#). BirdLife Europe and BirdLife partners look forward to meeting bird and nature lovers next year for observing and explaining bird migrations and hope that the increased participation this year will continue for EuroBirdWatch 2012. For further information on EuroBirdwatch 11 please visit: www.birdlife-extranet.ch/ebw11