



## What is migration?

Bird migration is the movement of bird populations from one place in the world to another twice a year, in **spring and autumn**. Some species travel thousands of kilometres above seas and over continents during migration.

## Why do birds migrate?

Birds migrate to go to places:

- Where they can find food more easily
- That are good breeding grounds

In spring, migratory birds travel north, towards their breeding areas where they will nest. And in autumn they migrate south towards their wintering areas, where they will spend the winter.

## Word Search

Find and colour in six migratory species we can find in Cyprus

T	E	W	I	Z	A	R	F	A	C	O	P	F
W	R	E	A	S	B	O	T	D	P	R	U	L
S	S	A	X	W	H	L	G	E	N	I	O	A
G	T	X	P	I	G	L	N	B	P	T	Y	M
I	O	O	Y	F	O	E	Y	I	O	E	I	I
N	R	B	N	T	I	R	O	N	P	X	S	N
A	K	Y	P	X	B	J	N	F	B	H	O	G
Y	X	H	O	O	P	O	E	A	Z	I	B	O
F	K	A	F	I	B	S	W	A	L	L	O	W

## How long does migration last?

The duration and speed of the migration journey depends on the bird species, the condition of the bird, as well as the weather conditions. The average duration of the migration journey is 4 weeks.



Little Egret © A. Stoecker

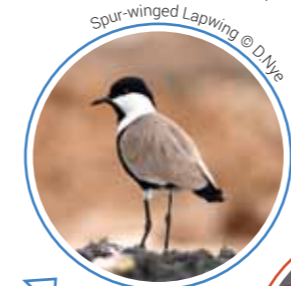
## Cyprus and bird migration

Cyprus is on one of the four main migratory flyways between Europe and Africa. Migratory birds come to Cyprus for:

**Stopover:** Some bird species stop in Cyprus to feed and rest, before they continue their migration journey to their final destination. Among these are the Kingfisher, the Blackcap and the Bee-eater.

**Breeding:** Some bird species come to Cyprus in spring and summer to nest, meaning to have their young. Among these are the Roller, the Spur-winged Lapwing, the Swallow and the Cyprus Wheatear, which is an endemic species and breeds only in Cyprus and nowhere else in the world!

**Wintering areas:** Some bird species come to Cyprus to spend the winter, as here it is milder than in other countries and they can find food easier. Among these are the Robin, the Song Thrush and the popular Flamingo!



Spur-winged Lapwing © D. We

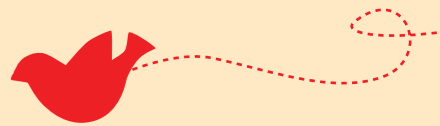


Bee-eater © A. Stoecker



Flamingo © A. Stoecker

## What dangers do birds face during migration?



Birds face many threats on their migration journey, some are natural and others man-made. Only the fittest survive.

- Habitat loss**, meaning the destruction of areas where birds find food, water and build their nests, is the most important threat that birds face. Some of the things that lead to habitat destruction are:
  - Golf courses, large hotels and wind farms, when they are in or near protected areas or migratory flyways
  - Housing, touristic, urban development in or near protected areas
  - Intensive farming
  - Drought
  - Fires
- Poaching** (e.g. shooting forbidden species or hunting in protected areas) and illegal trapping of birds are also very big threats to birds. Trapping of birds with mist nets or limesticks is an ecological disaster and is illegal because:
  - They are non-selective methods**, meaning the trapper has no control over which bird species are trapped. As a result, 155 of the 400 species recorded in Cyprus are caught in mist nets or on limesticks.
  - They are large scale bird killing methods**, meaning they affect a very large numbers of birds. As a result, hundreds of thousands of birds are killed every year in Cyprus by trappers.

## Did you know...

- The body of a bird, and specifically the wings, bones and lungs are specially adjusted to allow the bird to fly. The shape of the wings and body of a migratory bird help it complete the long migration journeys!
- In preparation for their migration some species eat so much they nearly double their weight! They use the fat as their fuel, which is necessary for their long journey!
- Different migratory bird species follow different routes and cover different distances.

**5** It is estimated that in spring 100 million birds pass through Cyprus and in autumn 150 million birds!

**4** In spring birds cover the distance faster than in autumn. This is because they're in a hurry to get there first, to choose the best areas for their nests!

**6** Approximately 300 of the 400 bird species recorded in Cyprus are migratory and we can find them in Cyprus at different seasons.

**7** The Common Swift, which is bigger than a Swallow and looks all black when it is flying, in its lifetime covers a distance equal to four trips to the moon and back! You will hear its characteristic high-pitched call when it comes to Cyprus to nest every summer.

# How can we help birds?



Cyprus has important and beautiful landscapes that the birds, other animals, but also people depend on and for this reason we must protect them. These areas are important because healthy natural systems offer us clean air and water, soil to cultivate, they regulate the temperature and protect from floods. They also offer us a beautiful environment to take walks in, play and relax.

- ✔ We love and respect nature and the environment
- ✔ We constantly learn new things about birds, biodiversity and nature and how we can protect them
- ✔ We download on our smartphone or tablet the free application 'Feathered Journeys' and we try to complete the migration journey as a bird! With the same app we can learn about 49 different bird species we can see in Cyprus
- ✔ When we are somewhere for birdwatching, we do not make a lot of noise, we do not disturb and we do not go close to the birds and their nests. We enjoy birds from afar using binoculars or telescopes and listening to their beautiful song. For more information on birdwatching visit our website
- ✔ We inform our friends and our family of the importance of wild birds and their protection
- ✔ We do not disturb wild birds and other animals and we never destroy their nests (for example barn swallows return to the same nest every year)
- ✔ When we see someone doing something that is not allowed, we inform the authorities
- ✔ We put up nest boxes before spring and put water out for birds, especially in summer
- ✔ We do not litter
- ✔ We do not forget that birds are a shared heritage, so they do not belong to anyone, and it is therefore important that we all protect them
- ✔ We support BirdLife Cyprus



Word Search answers:

The six migratory species are  
Flamingo, Swallow, Swift,  
Hoopoe, Roller and Stork.



Become a member today and support BirdLife Cyprus!



Hoopoe © A. Stoecker



Cyprus Wheatear © A. Stoecker



Kingfisher © A. Stoecker



Akamas © M. Apostolou

Let's learn about bird migration!



Roller © Lynne Dziewulski



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