



## LISTA BIRD OBSERVATORY

Activity report 2024



By Aïda López, April 2025

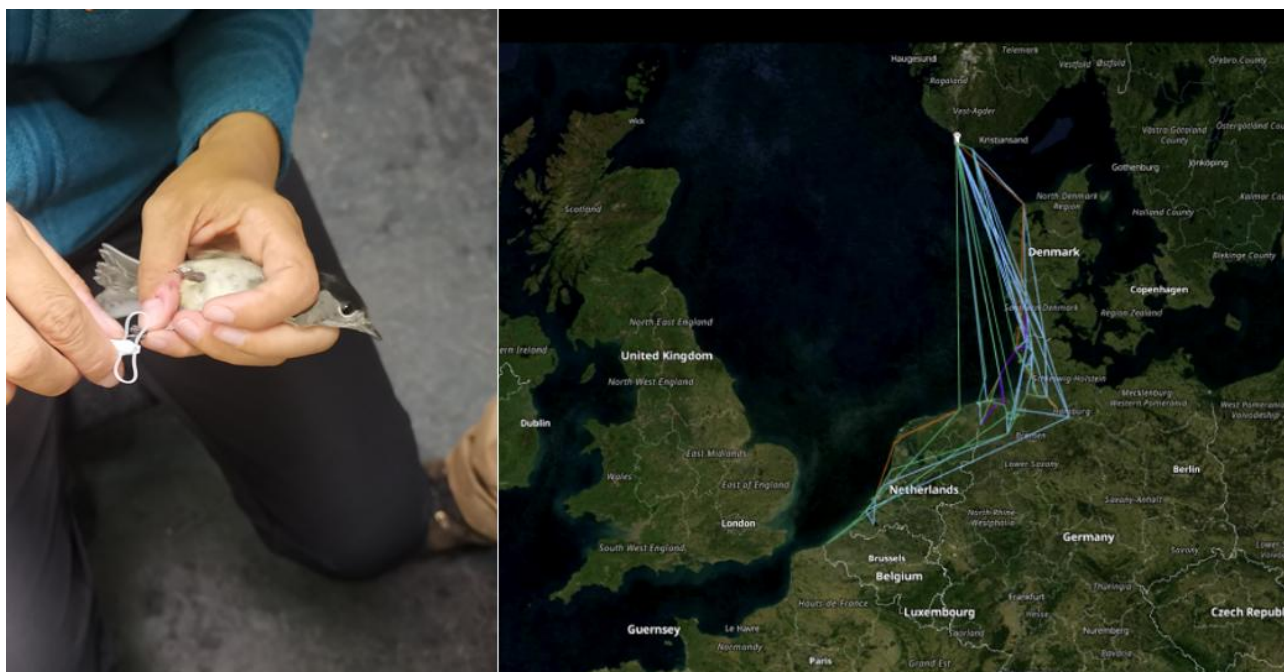


Foto from a nanotag (left) and the map (right) of the birds detected by MOTUS in 2024.

In 2024, Lista Bird Observatory carried out the monitoring of bird migration in the area at Lista Lighthouse in the same way as in previous years. The uninterrupted series of monitoring now counts 35 years. Standardized net trapping and migration counts took place as before from 15 March–10 June and 15 July–15 November. Most notable at the station in 2024 was the very early spring migration of many species, as well as low numbers of passerines in general. The standardized ringing numbers reached record low numbers since the monitoring started in 1990.

The 2-year fieldwork of the radar project was completed (2023 and 2024). The next two years of the program (2025 and 2026) will be used for data analysis, reporting and publication.

The first year of the 2-year radiotagging project was finished (2024). A total of 100 radio transmitters will be attached to passerines at Lista during the autumn of 2024 and 2025.

### **Standardized ringing**

The spring campaign was run by Benito Sánchez Castillo. Lista Bird Observatory completed in 2024 its 35th consecutive year of spring ringing campaign. During **spring**, the bird observatory was run for a total 88 days from March 15 until June 10. A total of 13 mist-nets were currently used on the standardized (138 meters) and the results were **34,1 % lower** than normal years with 538 birds of 48 different species. The average temperature was normal during March and April, but May was extremely hot and dry, with 4.9 °C above average. The month of March had precipitation levels above normal, while April had normal numbers, and May was much under normal.

The autumn campaign was run by several ringers. During the **autumn**, the bird observatory was run for a total of 124 days from July 15 until November 15. The same 13 mist-nets were currently used on the standardized (138 meters). The results were **66,1% lower** than normal years with 1.130 birds ringed of 57 different species. **The ringing figures 2024 were by far the lowest since monitoring began in 1990.** The temperature was higher than normal throughout the autumn, with 0.6°C higher than normal from July until October, having an extremely warm early September and being October 1.6° C above normal. The precipitation was higher in June and July and lower in September, but in average ended up with normal levels.

The next table shows standardized bird ringing in spring and autumn 2024:

Species	English	Scientific	Spring	Autumn
1	Eurasian Woodcock	<i>Scolopax rusticola</i>	1	
2	Eurasian Sparrowhawk	<i>Accipiter nisus</i>		6
3	Eurasian Wryneck	<i>Jynx torquilla</i>	4	1
4	Great Spotted Woodpecker	<i>Dendrocopos major</i>		1
5	European Green Woodpecker	<i>Picus viridis</i>		1

Species	English	Scientific	Spring	Autumn
6	Red-backed Shrike	<i>Lanius collurio</i>	1	2
7	Common Magpie	<i>Pica pica</i>	1	
8	Coal Tit	<i>Pariparus ater</i>		10
9	Willow Tit	<i>Poecile montanus</i>		1
10	Blue Tit	<i>Cyanistes caeruleus</i>	2	152
11	Great Tit	<i>Parus major</i>	4	51
12	Barn Swallow	<i>Hirundo rustica</i>	2	5
13	Long-tailed Tit	<i>Aegithalos caudatus</i>		18
14	Yellow-browed Warbler	<i>Phylloscopus inornatus</i>		2
15	Willow Warbler	<i>Phylloscopus trochilus</i>	64	151
-	Willow Warbler (acredula)	<i>Phylloscopus trochilus acredula</i>	3	
16	Chiffchaff	<i>Phylloscopus collybita</i>	61	51
-	Siberian chiffchaff	<i>Phylloscopus collybita tristis</i>	1	1
17	Great Reed Warbler	<i>Acrocephalus arundinaceus</i>	1	
18	Sedge Warbler	<i>Acrocephalus schoenobaenus</i>	1	4
19	Blyth's Reed Warbler	<i>Acrocephalus dumetorum</i>	1	
20	European Reed Warbler	<i>Acrocephalus scirpaceus</i>	1	
21	Marsh Warbler	<i>Acrocephalus palustris</i>	4	
22	Icterine Warbler	<i>Hippolais icterina</i>	5	
23	Common Grasshopper Warbler	<i>Locustella naevia</i>		2
24	Blackcap	<i>Sylvia atricapilla</i>	28	33
25	Garden Warbler	<i>Sylvia borin</i>	3	4
26	Barred Warbler	<i>Curruca nisoria</i>		1
27	Lesser Whitethroat	<i>Curruca curruca</i>	11	10
28	Common Whitethroat	<i>Curruca communis</i>	10	16
29	Common Firecrest	<i>Regulus ignicapilla</i>	1	2
30	Goldcrest	<i>Regulus regulus</i>	39	102
31	Eurasian Wren	<i>Troglodytes troglodytes</i>	18	131
32	Eurasian Nuthatch	<i>Sitta europaea</i>		1
33	Eurasian Treecreeper	<i>Certhia familiaris</i>		10
34	Common Starling	<i>Sturnus vulgaris</i>	13	83
35	Song Thrush	<i>Turdus philomelos</i>	7	15
36	Redwing	<i>Turdus iliacus</i>	7	13
37	Common Blackbird	<i>Turdus merula</i>	27	88
38	Fieldfare	<i>Turdus pilaris</i>	3	3
39	Ring Ouzel	<i>Turdus torquatus</i>	1	
40	Spotted Flycatcher	<i>Muscicapa striata</i>	2	2
41	European Robin	<i>Erithacus rubecula</i>	75	53
42	Bluethroat	<i>Luscinia svecica</i>		1
43	Thrush Nightingale	<i>Luscinia luscinia</i>	1	
44	European Pied Flycatcher	<i>Ficedula hypoleuca</i>		6
45	Black Redstart	<i>Phoenicurus ochruros</i>	1	
46	Common Redstart	<i>Phoenicurus phoenicurus</i>	11	8
47	Whinchat	<i>Saxicola rubetra</i>		10
48	Common Stonechat	<i>Saxicola rubicola</i>		8
-	Stonechat (hibernans)	<i>Saxicola rubicola hibernans</i>		1
49	Northern Wheatear	<i>Oenanthe oenanthe</i>	6	26
-	Northern Wheatear	<i>Oenanthe oenanthe oenanthe</i>	2	
50	Eurasian Tree Sparrow	<i>Passer montanus</i>	2	23

Species	English	Scientific	Spring	Autumn
51	House Sparrow	<i>Passer domesticus</i>	10	9
52	Dunnock	<i>Prunella modularis</i>	3	24
53	White Wagtail	<i>Motacilla alba</i>	10	24
-	White Wagtail	<i>Motacilla alba alba</i>	4	2
54	Meadow Pipit	<i>Anthus pratensis</i>	11	17
55	Tree Pipit	<i>Anthus trivialis</i>		11
56	European Rock Pipit	<i>Anthus petrosus</i>		3
57	Common Chaffinch	<i>Fringilla coelebs</i>	2	10
58	Brambling	<i>Fringilla montifringilla</i>		2
59	Eurasian Bullfinch	<i>Pyrrhula pyrrhula</i>	1	
60	European Greenfinch	<i>Chloris chloris</i>	4	18
61	Common Linnet	<i>Linaria cannabina</i>	50	37
-	Common Redpoll/Lesser redpoll	<i>Acanthis flammea/cabaret</i>		1
62	Common Redpoll	<i>Acanthis flammea</i>	3	4
63	Lesser redpoll	<i>Acanthis cabaret</i>	4	5
64	Arctic Redpoll	<i>Acanthis hornemanni exilipes</i>		1
65	European Goldfinch	<i>Carduelis carduelis</i>	7	9
66	Eurasian Siskin	<i>Spinus spinus</i>	3	7
67	Yellowhammer	<i>Emberiza citrinella</i>		15
68	Common Reed Bunting	<i>Emberiza schoeniclus</i>	1	22
<b>Total</b>			<b>538</b>	<b>1330</b>

A Great Reed Warbler, a Blyth's Reed Warbler and three Firecrests were ringed in 2024.



This is the second Great Reed Warbler ringed in the standardized ringing program. The first was ringed in May 2009. The observatory has previously caught five Great Reed Warblers at Gunnarsmyra marsh from 1996-2008, when we had permission to catch there in the spring. All seven individuals were caught between 10th-30th May.

Foto: Lasse Heckroth

In the standardized ringing we have continued colour ringing Whinchat, Stonechat, Wheatear, White Wagtail and Rock Pipit.

Nine Stonechats were caught in the nets, all of them during autumn. This is the highest yearly number of Stonechats ringed at the station ever. In spring, there were two possible breeding pairs in the area and at least one of them got chicks. This is the fifth consecutive year with breeding pairs in the lighthouse area since our monitoring began in 1990.

### **Non-standardized ringing**

We have continued catching and colour-ringing Rock Pipits with playback and clap-nets with worms. Although the traps were settled several days, only 3 individuals were caught in the traps this autumn.

Owl's playback was used during the nights in autumn when weather was suitable. However, we did not catch a single owl on the non-standardized ringing.

The breeding Wheatears were poorly monitored in the station area in 2024. Less days were used on finding nests this spring. Based on the findings, we assume that it was a normal-good breeding season, having found 10 nests only in 2-3 days. A total of 13 adults and 25 chicks were ringed by the nests.



A Red-throated Pipit stayed in the observatory's area from May 5 to 8. This is a rather rare species for the area in spring, with less than 10 sightings in May. Since most of them are only seen or heard as they fly, it is uncommon for the species to be documented, especially in spring. Therefore, this is the first documented spring sighting for the observatory.

Foto: Diogo Portela

The total number of birds captured in the standardized ringing was low in spring but even lower in autumn. 85% of the species that are usually caught in the nets in autumn were caught between 35% and 100% down average. Most of warblers such as Willow Warbler, Blackcap, Garden Warbler and Common Whitethroat showed in autumn the lowest trapping numbers since 1990. Only 2 out of the 46 most common trapped species, were caught in positive numbers. That is Eurasian Wren (13% above average) and Chiffchaff (42% above average).



## **Bird counts**

Lots of hours have been spent on covering the study area. A total of 239 species within the area have been seen in 2024, which is 5 less than the year before.

In spring it was particularly memorable the birding in the heatwave between the weather changes, from April 28th to June 2nd. This resulted in a new monthly record for the number of species in the observatory area, with a total of 188 species observed in May. The autumn was characterized by the very low numbers in most of the passerine species. Many of the observations showed similar results as the ringing numbers. Tits of most species were seen between 76% and 100% down average and warblers between 42% and 82% down average. Garden Warbler showed record lowest numbers with 17 observations (average 90). Song Thrush, Fieldfare, Spotted Flycatcher, European Pied Flycatcher, Common Redstart, Dunnock, Western Yellow Wagtail and Common Chaffinch were seen between 51% and 84% down average. However, many waders showed better results, while Whimbrel, Curlew and Black-tailed Godwit had record numbers. The Lapwing (which has shown a very strong decline since 2008 in the observatory area) had in autumn 2024 the second-best season since 2017.

There has been two new species for the observatory area, including a good number of uncommon/rare species: Bar-headed Goose, Green-winged Teal, Sandhill Crane(**1<sup>st</sup>!**), Ross's gull (**1<sup>st</sup>!**), Mediterranean Gull, White-winged Tern, Balearic Shearwater, White Stork, Great Egret, Little Egret, Pallid Harrier, Red Kite, Black Kite, European Bee-eater, White-backed Woodpecker, Red-footed Falcon, Woodchat Shrike, Yellow-browed Warbler, Greenish Warbler, Great Reed Warbler, Blyth's Reed Warbler, Common Firecrest, Rose-coloured Starling, Thrush Nightingale, Red-breasted Flycatcher, Siberian Stonechat, Citrine Wagtail, Two-barred Crossbill and Corn Bunting.



A Sandhill Crane was seen in Vågsvollmarka. This is the first record for Lista BO area and the second for Agder Fylke. Foto: Gunnar Gundersen



A migrating White-winged Tern was seen moving south on the sea outside Lista fyr. This is the 2nd record for Lista B.O. The first was in 1992. The record is the second earliest for Norway ever. Foto: Lasse Heckroth

At least 3 hours have been spent every morning on counting birds migrating on the sea. This equals at least 630 hours of counts during spring and autumn campaigns.

### **Volunteering project**

This year we have continued offering the opportunity for volunteers to stay at the observatory, especially those who were already involved in biological and ornithological activities. Our goal is to build significant connections with biologists, students and birdwatchers.

There has been a total of 4 volunteers (from Germany, France, Netherlands and Ireland) and several fieldworkers (from Portugal, Norway, Spain, Germany and Greece). Two of the four volunteers spent a whole season at the station.

In this way we are contributing to community education, public awareness and have opened our network of contacts which benefits Lista Bird Observatory in terms of national and international development.



Birthday celebration with the LIFU team in April 2024.

### **Media**

The reach of Lista Bird Observatory on social media, and Facebook in particular, continued to increase this year. The LIFU Facebook page has 3856 likes in March 2025. It has been posted 28 updates to the page in 2024, lower than recent years.

A total of 5 posts on the website have been published this year, which have been mainly reports, articles and advertisement for events or course offers.

### **Guiding and schools**

Besøksenter Våtmark Lista (Visitor Center) is responsible of the nature guidance for schools and families, together with the Bird Observatory.

It is unknown how many groups have been guided by Lista Bird Observatory in 2024.

### **Accommodation**

We currently offer 2 beds and the fee is 150 NOK per person and night. No guests have overnight in 2024 because the beds have been full booked by volunteers.

### **Ringing course**

We have continued this year offering a ringing course for beginners. It's a combination of 2,5h of theory and 10h practice in the field. Standardized ringing, identification, biometric measurements, age, sex, moult and bird cycle are some of the contents. A course was carried out in august with a total of 7 participants from all over Norway.



Participants from the ringing course in august 2024.



We have got very positive feedback and have already some bookings for the courses next year.

### **Lista Bird Festival**

We celebrated the festival with feast and activities throughout the first weekend of September. It was a successful weekend with social events. As usual, there was a bird race on Saturday and barbecue. The lecture was this time from Axel Thorenfeldt about his new book "Kystfugler". He talked about his relationship with coastal birds and what fascinates him most.

As in the previous years, the area for the Lista Bird Race was reduced to Lighthouse area and Slevdalsvann only. In total there were 6 teams and 115 species were seen that day.



Participants from the Lista Bird Race 2024.

After the lecture, it was time to choose the "Norwegian Birdwatching Champion 2024". The participants from the three teams at the top of the results list were taken to the quiz which consisted of a series of pictures of birds that had to be identified within a few seconds, a real test for real field ornithologists. As if that wasn't difficult enough, the entire quiz ended with five questions from the Lista Nature Museum from feather plates, wings and breastbones. It was very exciting and the winner was, as in 2017, Benjamin Grimsby from "Team 2K+", while Thiemo Karwinkel and Bjørn Penk took second and third place respectively.

On Sunday morning, people could participate in ringing and at 12:00 there was a guided bird walk in the lighthouse area, where Jonas Langbråten was the tour guide. In addition, Natur og Fritid was open on Saturdays for the occasion!



Several moments from Lista Bird Festival 2024.

## Research

**Radar:** Lista BO is collaborating with the Norwegian Institute for Nature Research (NINA) in a project called VisAviS, which will be carried out from 2022 to 2026. NINA is responsible for the project, which is funded by the Research Council of Norway.

The project aims to map the main migration routes and migration times for the various species in Norway. Such mapping of bird migration will be important for reducing conflicts with wildlife, as well as ensuring a more environmentally friendly location for wind turbines. In addition, it is necessary to ensure sufficient quality of impact assessments before development, it is explained on the NINA website.



Screenshot from the radar app, where big groups of Blackbirds (shown in purple) are coming in from the sea on November 8, 2024.



A radar was installed at Lista Lighthouse and the fieldwork was carried out in 2023 and 2024. Lista Bird Station had the main responsibility for ground verification of the radar tracks on Lista by registering species and the number of birds that migrated past and logging these. The last two years of the program (2025 and 2026) will be used for data analysis, reporting and publication.

**Radiotagging:** In 2024, the station started a collaboration with the University of Oldenburg, which is working on a bird research project. It is part of a large network (Motus Wildlife Tracking System), with base stations along the entire North Sea.

The purpose of the experiment is to study the potential effects of wind turbines on individual songbird species, and to look at the proportion of birds of a species that choose to fly offshore rather than take the coast/overland or the shortest route to land, and which weather conditions affect this proportion.

Using small nanotags attached to birds, the project can conduct a detailed study of spatial and temporal records of the flights of the tagged birds. This can be crucial for assessing the species-specific risk and possible mitigation measures. The wild birds are equipped with small, very light transmitters, which are attached like a backpack and fall off after a few weeks.

A total of 100 radio transmitters will be attached to passerines at Lista during the autumn of 2024 and 2025. 41 birds were tagged in 2024 and 33 of them (80%) were detected by antennas throughout Norway, Denmark, Germany, Netherlands and Belgium.



Two multidirectional MOTUS antennas are placed at the sea-watching hide, Lista Fyr.

International cooperation and standardization make it possible to create a global network. This means that not only one scientific team benefits from each station that is set up, but the knowledge benefits the entire community of bird researchers.



## Radio-receiving station for birds

These antennas are used to receive radio signals from birds with transmitters. This helps to track and research the migration routes of songbirds and ultimately contributes to their protection. GPS-transmitters are still too heavy for them to carry, so radio tracking remains the best way to research their flyways.

For more info visit:  
[www.motus.org](http://www.motus.org)

*All necessary authorisations have been obtained. This station does not send any radiation.*

**Please do not touch.**

Gefördert durch:



Bundesministerium für Umwelt, Naturschutz, nukleare Sicherheit und Verbraucherschutz



Bundesamt für Naturschutz



## Radiomottaker-stasjon for fugler



Disse antennene brukes til å motta radiosignaler fra fugler med sendere. Dette bidrar til å spore og forske på trekkrutene til sangfuglene, og i siste instans bidrar det til å beskytte dem. GPS-sendere er fortsatt for tunge for dem å bære, så radiosporing er fortsatt den beste måten å undersøke trekkrutene deres på.

Rødstrupe med radiosender



For mer informasjon besøk:  
[motus.org](http://motus.org)

*Alle nødvendige tillatelser er innhentet. Denne stasjonen sender ikke ut noen stråling.*

**Vennligst ikke ta på den.**

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Two antennas were placed at Lista fyr and two at Lindesnes. On the picture it is possible to see the informative sign placed by every antenna.

## Grants for the operation of the station in the period 2024

The subsidy of NOK 300,000 in 2024 from Agder Fylkeskommune have mainly covered parts of the annual costs related to salaries, compensations, equipment and travel expenses for daily management at the station as well as to those volunteer ornithologists who participate in the work at the station. In January 2025 we submitted a report for the past year to Agder County Council.

In 2024, the subsidy from Miljødirektoratet for the S-Norway Migration Survey at Jomfruland and Lista was NOK 629,000. Lista B.O. receives half of the amount.

The observatory received NOK 105,000 from Statsforvalteren i Agder as "Measures for wildlife" (tilskudd til vilttiltak).

## Management

The management of the station has been run by Aïda López, head of Lista Bird Observatory and Jan Erik Rør in her absence. Her main tasks have been keeping updated the facebook page and the BO website, providing accommodation/compensation to volunteers, training volunteers and ringers, hiring the fieldworkers of the station, bird-ringing and birdwatching especially under standardized frames. She has been responsible for that the cover page from



logs 1994 was introduced on the website, as well as to continue the Wheatear project, the Rock Pipit's trapping, co-work with the Visitor Center, hold one ringing course, publish the autumn report for 2024 (spring is missing). Some of her main tasks from previous years, were not possible to perform this year such as completing winter/summer logs 2024, guiding schools and families and organizing the Lista Bird Festival. Jan Erik has covered some important issues during Aida's absent periods and updated facebook as well as co-writing the annual report for 2024.

## **Aknowledgements**

There is a long list of people I would like to thank for their collaboration this year. Thanks to Benito for taking care of the ringing, working hard and taking care of the rest of the team. Thanks to Diogo Portela for taking care of our daily logs, the radar project, the migration counts and being always open to help when needed. Thanks to Lasse Heckroth and Antonin Chesneau for helping cover the counts during the whole spring campaign and using endless hours in the field. Thanks to Kjell Solem for being available when we needed two extra hands and taking care of some ringing days so others could take a rest. Thanks to David Santos, Torborg Berge, Landelin Winter, Jan Erik Røer and Christina Ninou for covering part of the ringing campaign in autumn. Thanks to the volunteers and anonymous birdwatchers for providing valuable information and covering part of the counts within the study area. Thanks to our funders including Miljødirektoratet, Agder Fylkeskommune, BirdLife Norge and Natur og Fritid, our work would be impossible to carry out without their contributions. Thanks to Gunnar Gundersen for providing help and experience on the field whenever is needed. And at last, thanks to Jan Erik Røer for being more present this year when there was lack of personnel and being always helpful with positivism and diligence despite the distance.