



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.

How long does migration last?

The duration and speed of the migration journey depends on the bird species. The average duration of the migration journey is 4 weeks.

Word Search

Find and colour six migratory species that visit Cyprus during migration.

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

Why do birds migrate?

Birds migrate to go to places:

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



Little Egret © A. Stoeker

Cyprus and bird migration

Cyprus is on an important migratory flyway. Migratory birds come to Cyprus for three reasons:

Stopover: Some bird species stop in Cyprus to feed and rest, before they continue their migration journey.

Breeding: Some bird species come to Cyprus in spring and summer to nest, meaning to have their young.

Wintering grounds: Some bird species come to Cyprus to spend their winter, as winter in Cyprus is milder than in other countries.



Swallow © A. Stoeker



Bee-eater © A. Stoeker



Flamingo © A. Stoeker

What dangers and threats do birds face during migration?



- Bad weather conditions** make the migration journey of birds more difficult
- 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 reasons that lead to habitat destruction are:
 - Intensive farming
 - Housing/Touristic/Urban development
 - Golf courses and wind farms, when they are in or near important habitats as well as migratory flyways
 - Drought
 - Fires
- Poaching** (e.g. shooting protected species or hunting in protected areas) and illegal trapping of birds are also very important threats to birds. **Illegal trapping of birds** with mist nets and limesticks is an ecological disaster, because:
 - The trapper has no control over which bird species are trapped, meaning it is a non-selective bird killing method
 - It affects very large numbers of birds, meaning it is a large scale killing method.

Trapping with mistnets and lime sticks is illegal in Cyprus according to national legislation since 1974 as well as by the European Birds Directive and International Conventions.

Did you know...



The body of a bird, and specifically the wings, bones and lungs are specially adjusted to allow the bird to complete the long migration journeys!



Almost half the bird species found in Europe are migratory. More than two billion birds of more than two hundred European species, attempt the migration journey between Europe and Africa twice a year!



207 migratory species pass through Cyprus!



In spring birds cover the distance faster than in autumn!



Some bird species complete their migration in less than 4 weeks, which is the average, while other species need more than 8 weeks!



The Arctic tern, a bird quite a bit smaller than a pigeon, travels between the Arctic and the Antarctic twice a year, a distance of 35 000 kilometres, meaning it covers a distance of 70 000 kilometres every year!

How can we help birds?



Cyprus has important and beautiful landscapes that the birds, other animals, but also people depend on. These areas are important because they 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, play and relax.

- ✔ We love and respect nature and the environment
- ✔ We do not litter
- ✔ We do not disturb wild birds and animals and we never destroy their nests (for example barn swallows return to the same nest every year)
- ✔ 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 inform our friends and our family of the importance of wild birds and their protection
- ✔ When we see someone doing something that is not allowed, we inform the authorities
- ✔ We make nests in spring and put water out for birds, especially in summer
- ✔ 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



Akamas © M. Apostolidou



Cyprus Wheatear © A. Stoecker



Red-backed Shrike © A. Stoecker

What is Migration?



Roller © Lynne Dziewulski

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Σύνδεσμος Κύπρου



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