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#BOU2025

# Frontiers in ornithology

University of Nottingham & Bluesky

1 - 3 April 2025

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## Frontiers in ornithology

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### Welcome to #BOU2025 – the BOU's 2025 Annual Conference

Welcome to the annual BOU conference for 2025, which this year is on the theme of *Frontiers in ornithology*. This broad theme covers the use of emerging and emerged technology to further ornithological science. These advances in technology are generating new insights across the field of ornithology from the scale of DNA up through individuals to the migration of whole populations. Technology is also enabling processing and analyses of the vast volumes of data being generated, whether collected by other technologies or through traditional boots on the ground field work. In addition to advancing our knowledge of bird physiology and behaviour, technologies are being used to help understand how birds are responding to anthropogenic pressures, and looking at interactions between birds and humans, including diseases.

Each day has themed sessions with talks on similar areas and disciplines grouped together. The content of the conference reflects the BOU's mission to promote ornithological science across the international scientific community, support the individuals who contribute to that science, and grow understanding of that science among a wider community. Delegates and speakers come from around the world, and come from academia, research organisations, conservation organisations, in addition to independent researchers. BOU's own use of social media technologies – this being our first conference using Bluesky as our sole parallel platform - spreads the content to a wider community.

The conference is about more than sharing how technology is advancing ornithology. It's also about catching up with one another and make new links and collaborations. Early Career Researchers are especially welcome, and we hope that you leave with connections and enthusiasm irrespective of whether you are attending for your first time or are a returning delegate. Please engage and interact through questions and discussions as part of the scientific and social programme.

BOU is a community of active, interesting and interested researchers all of whom are linked through ornithology. We very much hope everyone will genuinely feel they belong in this community and will enjoy being at the heart of it over the next few days.



**Graeme Buchanan** | BOU President

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### Code of Conduct

We welcome everyone to BOU events, be these in person or online.

We work hard to engender and promote a welcoming environment that is collaborative, supportive and engaging for everyone involved. Our events provide opportunities to share, develop and broaden viewpoints in a safe and inclusive environment.

We celebrate diversity in all its forms and expect that all our participants are respectful and considerate of each other, that they provide supportive critique, and embrace the multitude of opinions that are on offer.

If you have any concerns, or feel that any participant of an event has breached this code, or have suggestions for how we can make our events more inclusive and productive, please contact any member of the BOU staff, BOU's Meetings Committee or event organisers (named contacts are listed in all event programmes).

During an event, please report any incident as soon as you feel able, to allow us to act upon your concerns. Any reports will be handled in confidence.

Your primary contacts for any issues that may arise during this conference are:



**Graeme Buchanan**  
BOU President



**Leila Walker**  
BOU Chief Operations Officer

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The **British Ornithologists' Union** (BOU), founded in 1858 by Professor Alfred Newton FRS, is one of the world's oldest ornithological bodies. The BOU's mission is to promote ornithological science across the international scientific community, support the individuals who contribute to that science, and grow understanding of that science among a wider community.

To help achieve this mission, the BOU organises conferences that facilitate the sharing of high-quality ornithological science, to as many of the global ornithological community as possible, overcoming barriers to attendance and enabling widespread knowledge exchange and sector strengthening.

The BOU further achieves its mission by the quarterly publication of our international journal, IBIS. Published since 1859 by the British Ornithologists' Union, IBIS is an international journal publishing innovative research in ornithological science, with special emphasis on the behaviour, ecology, evolution and conservation of birds. We publish peer-reviewed original papers, reviews, short communications and forum articles. Our international scope, authorship, and readership allows us to drive development and have impact in the field.

### ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

*Frontiers in ornithology*, a conference organised and delivered by Christine Howard (Durham University, UK), Ailidh Barnes (British Trust for Ornithology, UK), Claire Buchan (University of East Anglia, UK), Oliver Leedham (UK Centre for Ecology & Hydrology), Marius Somveille (University of East Anglia, UK), Ondřej Belfín (University of Groningen, Netherlands) and Natalia Zielonka (University of Kent, UK) on behalf of the British Ornithologists' Union. The BOU would like to thank Alice Risely (University of Salford, UK) and Karolina Zalewska (University of East Anglia, UK) for support during the conference and Graeme Buchanan (RSPB, UK), Sarah Deans (Lotek, UK), Jennifer Gill (University of East Anglia, UK), Ros Green (University of Liverpool & British Trust for Ornithology, UK), Oliver Metcalf (Lancaster University, UK) and Catriona Morrison (University of Iceland), for organising and running the pre-conference Early Career Researcher (ECR) workshops.

The BOU is grateful to the individual speakers and their respective organisations for presenting their work at the conference.

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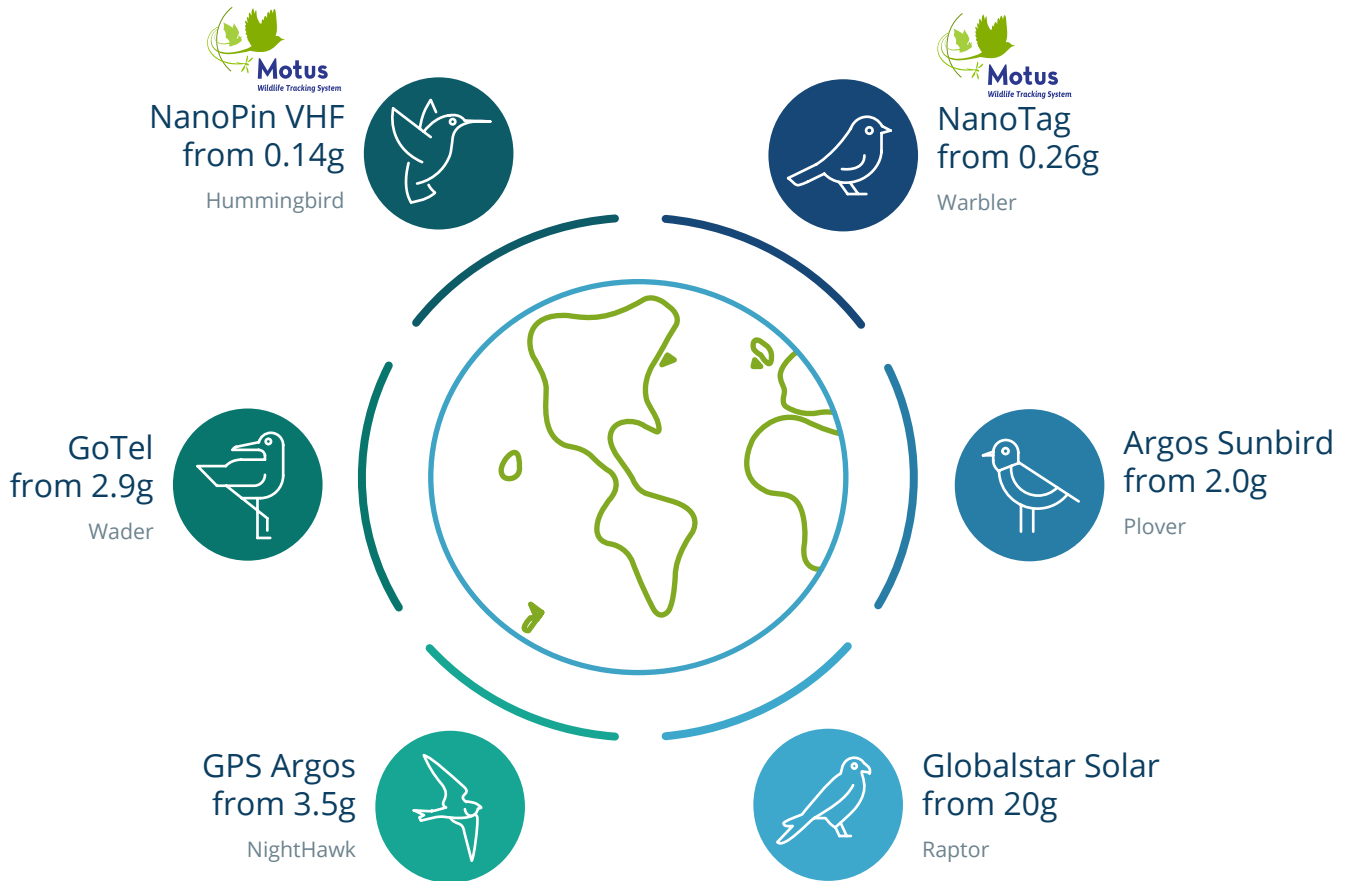
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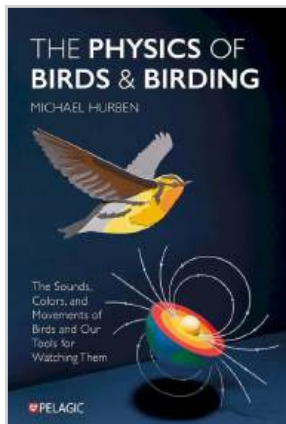
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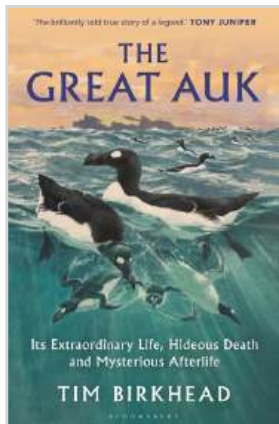
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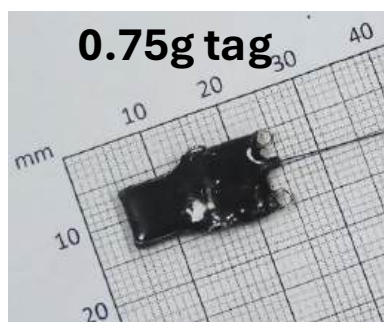




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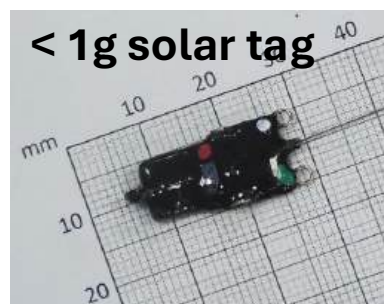
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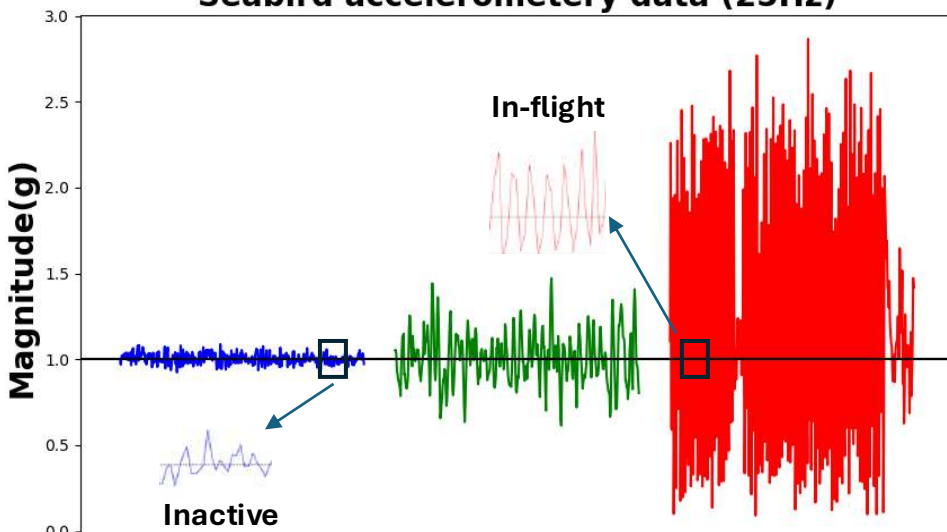
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# ABSTRACTS

Abstracts for the oral programme are in programme order. Poster and Bluesky-only abstracts (from page 36) are in alphabetical order by the surname of the presenting author.

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TUES, 1 APRIL, 2030

## *Alfred Newton Lecture*



**Judy Shamoun-Baranes**

University of Amsterdam, the Netherlands

### **Synergies between ornithology, technology and movement ecology**

The first military radars were deployed in the 1930's, relational databases were developed in the 1970's, the global positioning system was opened for public use in the 1980's and smartphones were reaching consumer markets in the mid 2000's. It is incredible to imagine the speed with which these and other technologies have entered and influenced ornithological research and how ornithological research has taken these technologies to new frontiers. During my Alfred Newton Lecture, I explore synergies created between ornithology, technology and movement ecology. I will show how our demands for knowledge and the challenges posed by studying bird movement in the wild have pushed our scientific boundaries and technological development, facilitated through interdisciplinary collaboration. One example will be research on the movement ecology of birds throughout the annual cycle and the consequences of different movement strategies, demonstrated through long-term research on gulls where technological approaches and fieldwork provide essential and complementary information. A second example will be quantifying, understanding and modelling the mass movements of birds, where continuous monitoring of the airspace provides a different perspective of avian movement. Through these examples, I aim to show how team science and communication at the interface of ornithology, technology and movement ecology enables us to connect to diverse parts of society.

**Judy Shamoun-Baranes** is a Professor of Animal Movement Ecology and the head of the Department of Theoretical and Computational Ecology, Institute of Biodiversity and Ecosystem Dynamics (IBED) at the University of Amsterdam, the Netherlands. She attained a BSc in Biology and an MSc in Zoology from Tel Aviv University, Israel. After attaining a PhD in Zoology at Tel Aviv University in 2003, she relocated with her family to the University of Amsterdam. Judy leads interdisciplinary research on

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understanding how intrinsic and environmental factors influence bird movement at different scales in space and time and the consequences of movement strategies. Knowledge about avian movement is used to better understand human wildlife interactions and help develop solutions for wind energy development and aviation safety. Judy has worked closely with partners and stakeholders in meteorology, aviation safety, wind energy and governmental agencies. Her research integrates movement data collected using multi-sensor GPS tracking ([www.uva-bits.nl](http://www.uva-bits.nl)) or radar measurements, environmental data and different modelling approaches. Her team often works on developing methodologies for movement research and she has been championing the development of a European network for radar monitoring of bird movement for many years and invests in the development of e-science infrastructure to support collaborative research.

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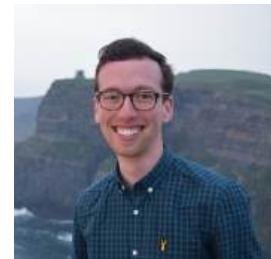
WEDS, 2 APRIL, 0905

### KEYNOTE

## **Bird migration through urban landscapes: challenges and opportunities**

**Benjamin Van Doren**

University of Illinois, USA



Avian migrations are spectacular natural phenomena, but human activities can pose acute threats to migratory birds. The urban habitats in which many migratory birds attempt to rest and refuel contain a variety of hazards, including light pollution, predators, vehicles, and reflective surfaces with which many birds collide. Ongoing efforts to address these challenges are hampered by a lack of information about how birds use not only the urban matrix, but also the airspace above it. This talk will highlight recent advances in our understanding of key threats to migratory birds in developed areas—with a focus on light pollution and bird-window collisions—and highlight how new, integrative approaches are shedding light on the link between aerial and terrestrial habitats. In recent years, modern machine learning tools have transformed movement ecology, unlocking the potential of global citizen science databases, continental radar networks and, increasingly, bioacoustic monitoring tools. When combined, these data sources allow us to characterize the distribution and behavior of migrating birds aloft, identify aspects of the built and natural environments that influence airspace usage, and link flight behaviors to collision risk and stopover habitat selection. Integrative approaches are also shedding light on poorly understood dimensions of movement ecology, such as the role of an individual's social environment during a migratory journey. These new insights are contributing not only to scientific knowledge, but also stimulating public interest and political will to take meaningful conservation action. A broad coalition of stakeholders is essential to meeting the urgent conservation challenges facing migratory birds, especially in urban areas.

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**Benjamin Van Doren** studies the responses of migratory birds to environmental change. His research spans spatial and population scales and unites ecology, evolution, behavior, and conservation. Benjamin earned a PhD in Zoology from Oxford University, and he has received achievement awards from the American Ornithological Society, Linnean Society of London, and Zoological Society of London. Benjamin recently joined the University of Illinois, where he leads the Migration Biology Lab.

---

WEDS, 2 APRIL, 0935

### **Community movement ecology in the Wadden Sea: studying multi-species shorebird movement with WATLAS**

**Allert Bijleveld** (he/him/his)

NIOZ Royal Netherlands Institute for Sea Research, Netherlands

Movement is an important ecological phenomenon, and the field of movement ecology is rapidly growing due to technological advancements. High-resolution tracking has been made possible through GPS, however, trade-offs between tag weight and battery life limit its use to larger species. We have developed WATLAS, the Wadden Sea deployment of the ATLAS-system, capable of high-resolution tracking of small individuals. With WATLAS, we can study many different species in the same environment, one of the current frontiers in the field of ornithology. The Wadden Sea is a UNESCO World Heritage Site and a region of global importance for millions of shorebirds. Due to climate change and anthropogenic activity, understanding and predicting movement and space-use is increasingly important. In this presentation, I will introduce WATLAS and present preliminary community tracking results for nine shorebird species. This includes the Dunlin that was previously too small to tag.

**Allert Bijleveld** is a behavioural ecologist who studies how shorebirds adapt to the Wadden Sea's dynamic tidal environment. His focus is on animal movement, habitat use, and foraging tactics. Allert investigates how species and individuals differ in finding food and whether they can adapt to rising sea levels when mudflats become inaccessible.

---

WEDS, 2 APRIL, 0950 | ECR PRESENTER

### **Going through the world's roof? How Black-tailed Godwits negotiate the Himalayas in migratory flight**

**Delip K. Das** (he/him)

University of Groningen, Netherlands & Jagannath University, Bangladesh

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Co-authors: Theunis Piersma, University of Groningen & NIOZ Royal Netherlands Institute for Sea Research; Wouter M.G. Vansteelant, University of Groningen & University of Amsterdam

The Himalayas, known as the roof of the world, is considered a formidable barrier to migratory birds. At the same time, it is increasingly clear that migrant birds routinely fly at altitudes up to 5-6km above sea level; sufficient to cross the lower-lying regions of the Himalayas. We GPS-tracked three subspecies of Black-tailed Godwits from their sympatric non-breeding grounds in Bangladesh and asked: (i) whether their Himalaya-crossing behaviour differed depending on subspecies and breeding destinations, (ii) whether Himalaya-crossing Godwits fly above the 5-6km altitude limit recorded in other flyways. We found that individuals of the *melanuroides* and *bohái* subspecies avoided the highest parts of the Himalayas, staying within conventional altitude limits. However, individuals of the *limosa* subspecies crossed the roof of the world directly, reaching altitudes of 6-7.5 km, similar to the famous high-flying Bar-headed Geese. We suggest a multi-flyway approach to elucidate the causes of extreme-altitude flight.

**Delip K. Das** is a PhD student at BirdEyes-Centre for Global Ecological Change at the University of Groningen, the Netherlands. He is investigating wintering Black-tailed Godwits and their migration to and from Bangladesh. Delip is also an assistant professor of Zoology at Jagannath University, Bangladesh and conference coordinator of International Wader Study Group.

---

WEDS, 2 APRIL, 1005 | ECR PRESENTER

## Understanding migratory birds' exposure to threats in the Afro-palearctic system

**Charlie Russell** (he/him)  
University of East Anglia, UK

Co-authors: Adham Ashton-Butt, BTO, Phil Atkinson, BTO and Aldina Franco, UEA

Combining movement, behaviour and the spatio-temporal distribution of anthropogenic threats is an important step in understanding the risk landscape birds navigate, particularly during dynamic life stages such as migration. During this period, birds are exposed to a broader portfolio of threats than in sedentary life stages due to their ranging behaviour and the concentration of intense activities like hunting around internationally important migration flyways. Using high spatio-temporal resolution tracking data from a range of species including Greater Spotted Eagles (*Clanga clanga*) in the Afro-palearctic flyways and knowledge of threats we quantify direct mortality risk from anthropogenic threats, exposure to habitat loss and the potential impacts of climate change. This framework allows

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us to identify key threat hotspots where migrants face exposure to population limiting threats to inform global prioritisation of conservation efforts across the flyways and make recommendations for local-scale mitigation approaches.

**Charlie Russell** is a PhD candidate at the University of East Anglia. His research primarily uses tracking data for migratory birds to understand how they are exposed to different environmental conditions and anthropogenic threats. Recently his work includes studying the impacts of the conflict in Ukraine on Greater Spotted Eagles.

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WEDS, 2 APRIL, 1020 | ECR PRESENTER

### **GPS tracking reveals intra- and interspecific differences in habitat use and selection along wader flyways**

**Tohar Tal** (he/him)

University of Amsterdam, the Netherlands & University of Aveiro, Portugal | [tohar-tal.bsky.social](https://twitter.com/tohar-tal)

Co-authors: João Belo, Camilo Carneiro, Afonso D. Rocha, Theunis Piersma and José A. Alves

During their annual cycle, migratory waders use wetlands ranging from temperate to arctic regions, which vary considerably in the habitats they present, as well as in the level of anthropogenic influence. As most individuals display high site fidelity, it is expected that they use the same sites throughout their lifetime, independently of the pace of conversion of natural into anthropogenic habitats. Here, we use GPS data from three wader species with different migratory patterns on the East Atlantic Flyway to quantify individual levels of variation on patterns of habitat use across their migratory range and assess the importance and selection of anthropogenic habitats. We found intra- and interspecific differences in habitat use along the species flyway, as some show higher dependency on anthropogenic habitats, while others are more associated with natural habitats. This may be of conservation concern given the ongoing degradation and conversion of natural wetlands.

**Tohar Tal** is an MSc student at the University of Amsterdam, the Netherlands, interested in avian movement ecology. His research focuses on understanding migratory behaviour and species-habitat associations across multiple ecological scales.

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WEDS, 2 APRIL, 1130

KEYNOTE

### **Advances, opportunities and challenges in acoustic monitoring of birds**



**Simon Gillings**

British Trust for Ornithology, UK | [simongillings.bsky.social](https://bsky.app/profile/simongillings.bsky.social)

Birds are among the most vocal of all taxonomic groups and many monitoring techniques place a strong emphasis on the detection of vocalising individuals. It is no surprise then that the emergence of affordable programmable acoustic recorders and advances in automated sound analysis have facilitated tremendous interest in passive acoustic monitoring (PAM) of birds, wildlife and environmental sounds. PAM provides opportunities to record sounds in impractical places, at unsociable times of day and over longer durations than possible with traditional human observers. Yet these logistical strengths can become costs when faced with countless hours of audio data needing to be processed to find signals of interest. Data derived from these signals may be probabilistic in nature and do not conform to traditional notions of biological records (who/what/where/when) creating challenges for downstream users. Nevertheless, there is growing evidence that PAM can provide valuable insights that complement traditional monitoring tools. In this talk I will review these and other advances, opportunities and challenges and attempt to show where we are and where passive acoustic monitoring could be in the near future.

**Simon Gillings** has worked at BTO for almost 30 years on various ecological and monitoring projects. He currently heads the Data Science and Bioacoustics team whose twin aims are the development of ornithological data products to benefit birds and people, and tools to support acoustic monitoring of birds and other wildlife. Simon combines his passion for birds and data analysis to help shape the Breeding Bird Survey, BirdTrack, Bird Atlases and the BTO Acoustic Pipeline.

---

WEDS, 2 APRIL, 1200 | ECR PRESENTER

### **Bioacoustics as a tool to monitor European Storm Petrels**

**Sophie Bennett** (she/her)

British Trust for Ornithology, UK | [bennett-sophie.bsky.social](https://bsky.app/profile/bennett-sophie.bsky.social)

Co-authors: Lucy Williamson, Miguel Hernández-González, Tom Denton, Rob Laber, Zoe Deakin, Mark Bolton, Ethan Manilow, and Linda J Wilson. Affiliations: RSPB Centre for Conservation Science,



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Obtaining measures of population size and productivity is key to understanding how and why species' populations change over time. Quantifying such metrics may prove difficult in some species however due to their remote location and/or ecology, as in burrow-nesting seabirds. Alternatives to observer-based methods such as bioacoustics may offer a solution to this in vocal Procellariiform species. Studies investigating the utility of bioacoustics to monitor seabird populations are few, however. We investigated whether bioacoustics could yield indices of population size and breeding success comparable to those derived from concurrent observer-based methods in a breeding population of European Storm Petrels, *Hydrobates pelagicus*, on Mousa, Shetland. Following the development of acoustic classifiers, we found clear positive relationships between bioacoustic- and observer-based measures of both population size and breeding success. Consequently, we demonstrate the utility for bioacoustics to provide relative measures of both population-level parameters in seabirds for the first time.

**Sophie Bennett** is a senior research ecologist at the BTO working primarily on seabird tracking projects. She has a particular interest in using emerging technologies to investigate key knowledge gaps in seabird behaviour and population ecology.

---

WEDS, 2 APRIL, 1215

### **Quiet and close or loud and far away? Estimating call amplitude and distance in birds**

**Oliver Metcalf** (he/him)

Lancaster University, UK | [ollie333.bsky.social](https://twitter.com/ollie333)

Autonomous recording units have become popular for monitoring bird populations, but estimations of population abundance remains challenging. Distance estimation methods can be conducted with single-recorder arrays and appear to be a promising approach for a wide range of species but require the amplitude of target species calls. I present the results of our study estimating the call amplitude of five neotropical passerine species using Audiomoths and a laser rangefinder, highlighting a range of practical challenges and tips, including the use of thermal cameras, to facilitate collecting suitable bird calls. Unexpectedly, we find that call amplitude is remarkably consistent between call events, individuals and across males and females. Furthermore, variation in forest density appears not to have a major impact on sound attenuation, whilst background noise levels can be accounted for during sound processing – meaning that recorded call amplitude can be a reliable method for estimating bird distance from recording units.

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**Oliver Metcalf** is a postdoctoral research associate at Lancaster University, specialising in ecoacoustics, ornithology, and tropical forest ecology. He has spent the last 7 years using passive acoustic monitoring to assess the impact of forest degradation in Amazonia.

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WEDS, 2 APRIL, 1230 | ECR PRESENTER

### **Linking bird diversity, soundscapes and tour satisfaction in English vineyards**

**Natalia Zielonka** (she/her)

University of East Anglia & University of Kent, UK | [natbzielonka.bsky.social](https://bsky.app/profile/natbzielonka.bsky.social)

Co-authors: Dr Simon Butler (UEA), Dr Lynn Dicks (University of Cambridge), Victoria Tubman (UEA)

Sounds like traffic, wind and birdsong are all around us and collectively they form 'soundscapes', which play an important role in our experience of the outside world. Advances in passive acoustic monitoring and acoustic data analyses have permitted us to study soundscape over time and space and to understand the drivers of their properties, such as complexity and volume. Birdsong is a dominant feature of temperate soundscapes and so it is expected that changes in bird communities would be reflected in soundscapes, and for these changes to alter our experience of nature. To better understand these relationships, we studied bird communities and soundscapes in English vineyards, and through experimental soundscape enhancement, we measured the effect that soundscapes have on human experience of spending time in nature. Our findings show how conservation actions could be optimised to benefit bird communities, create accessible opportunities for nature engagement and enhance human wellbeing.

**Natalia Zielonka** has recently joined DICE at the University of Kent as a Research Fellow and before this she worked as a Conservation Scientist at the RSPB after completing her PhD at the UEA. Nat is also BOU's Social Media Support Officer and a member of the Engagement Committee.

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WEDS, 2 APRIL, 1315

### **WILDLIFE ACOUSTICS WORKSHOP**

#### **Bioacoustics as a research tool for birds: from data collection to analysis**

**Paul Howden-Leach**

Wildlife Acoustics

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A workshop looking at bioacoustics as a research tool for the study of birds. The workshop will look at the potential of bioacoustics in general followed by a walk-through of some equipment and potential deployment options to fit in with a variety of standard and non-standard protocols. Case studies will be used, and attendees own specific deployment needs will be addressed to design the most appropriate schedule for their potential study. Following on from this the workshop will move on to data analysis using Kaleidoscope Lite and Kaleidoscope Pro. This element of the workshop will focus on signal extraction, rapid data analysis, and building species classifiers. No previous experience in bioacoustics is needed.

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WEDS, 2 APRIL, 1415

### KEYNOTE

## **“Avian anthropologists” and cultural crossroads in lively cities**

**Nishant Kumar**

University of Oxford, UK & Wildlife Institute of India



Globally, multiple opportunistic taxa, such as kites, macaques, street dogs and livestock, often partake of the human niche, showcasing variable adherence to human norms and practices. Most humans (~65%) now reside in urban centres, which collectively comprise <4% of the total landmass on Earth. Paradoxically, human activities impact >70% of the global terrestrial environment. This situation gives rise to a complex and multifaceted web of human-bird interactions, often characterised by tensions and conflicts. Our research in Delhi focuses on the eco-evolutionary processes underpinning such cross-species co-cultural ties. We are studying how avian scavengers like black kite exploit food-subsidies that are predictably dispersed in the form of garbage and ritual feeding sites. Our research aims to understand how this predictable distribution of resources along the urban gradient influences behavioural innovations in these birds. These interactions often involve significant adaptations or co-option of behavioural and morphological traits, influencing social dynamics and demographic structures. Tropical cities, where urbanisation is a continuous process, offer quasi-experimental opportunities to examine shifts in population- and species-specific socialities of avian scavengers with humans. Historically, these interactions have resulted in wildlife providing important services to humans. Unfortunately, however, such interactions can also easily turn negative, such as when actions aimed at promoting birdlife lead to conflicts, loss of property and invaluable lives of all contestants, and the spread of zoonotic diseases. Interestingly, human-avian scavengers' coexistence in South Asia represents a distinctive fusion of adopted Western infrastructure and unique Indian ethos. Through this keynote address, I will emphasise why transdisciplinary methodologies are indispensable to comprehend coexistence, while designing and administering vibrant and 'animated' tropical cities.

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**Nishant Kumar** is a faculty member at Dr. B. R. Ambedkar University Delhi, and a DBT/Wellcome Trust UK India Alliance Fellow at Oxford University's Biology Department (overseas host), where he completed his D.Phil. His team, THINKPAWS, studies resident and migratory commensals/wildlife in Delhi to understand human-animal interactions and zoonotic disease risks using a One Health approach. Nishant also promotes open science and innovative public engagement with science. He integrates natural and social sciences with humanities to address global challenges, fostering cross-disciplinary collaboration for human-animal coexistence.

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WEDS, 2 APRIL, 1445

### **Foraging movements and habitat use of the vulnerable Sooty Falcon (*Falco concolor*) in Saudi Arabia**

**Licia Calabrese**

Red Sea Global - Red Sea Zone

The vulnerable Sooty Falcon breeds in the middle east and North Africa and the movements of few individuals have been documented only during migration and non-breeding season. Foraging ecology and habitat use during the breeding season are still poorly understood. In 2021, 2022 and 2023 GPS tags were deployed on adults breeding in the Al Wajh Bank IBA (Saudi Arabia) to investigate important areas for foraging and resting and identify threats and constrains. Individuals nesting on islands close to the shore with low mangrove coverage tend to forage up to 20 km inland on wadi and rocky area. In contrast, falcons nesting on islands further from the mainland and with high mangrove coverage tend to forage at sea and in the mangrove habitat. These findings are crucial to identify important habitats, threats faced inland such as poaching and to inform the implementation of nesting habitat enhancement/conservation actions.

**Licia Calabrese** is an ornithologist and conservation biologist with 15 years of experience working in temperate, tropical and arid ecosystems. Licia is specialized in baseline assessments and movement ecology of different species of seabirds and land birds with a focus on habitat enhancement and conservation of endangered populations, and has a PhD in movement ecology and conservation.

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WEDS, 2 APRIL, 1500 | ECR PRESENTER

### **Combining modelling and social science approaches to understand artisanal fisheries bycatch**

**Daniel Villar** (he/him)

[www.bou.org.uk](http://www.bou.org.uk)

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University of Oxford, UK

Co-authors: Paola Velasquez-Noriega, Universidad Mayor de San Andres; Edwin Gutierrez Tito, Reserva Nacional del Titicaca; Anahi Cosky Paca-Condori, Aves Bolivianas; Edmundo Moreno Terrazas, Universidad Nacional del Altiplano; Jorgelina Marino, University of Oxford; Andrew Gosler, University of Oxford

Artisanal fisheries account for 40% of the world's fisheries catch, yet its environmental impacts remain poorly understood, especially its impact on waterfowl. This is especially the case in developing countries. In this study, we sought to integrate Local Fisher's Knowledge with distribution modelling to estimate the annual bycatch of Titicaca Grebe (*Rollandia microptera*), an endangered endemic bird from Lake Titicaca whose main anthropogenic threat is bycatch. We conducted transect and point counts of fishing nets and conducted interviews with fishers across the Lake Titicaca region. We constructed a distribution model of fisheries, interviews with fishers asking about the frequency of grebe bycatch, and short-term monitoring at various sites while conducting transect points for dead grebes. We estimate 3270 km<sup>2</sup> of the surface area of Lake Titicaca is used for fishing, which amounts to 39.40% of the lake's surface area, but fisher's responses showed significant variance in bycatch estimates. We show that distribution modelling can be used to map fisheries bycatch in areas where monitoring is lacking, but caution about problems which can occur when relying on Local Fisher's Knowledge of bycatch.

**Daniel Villar** is a conservation biologist and DPhil candidate at the University of Oxford. Originally from Colombia, his research focuses on the conservation of grebes in Latin America, with a focus on the endangered endemic Titicaca Grebe.

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WEDS, 2 APRIL, 1515

## Using web-sourced images and Convolutional Neural Networks to study raptor diet

**Arjun Amar** (he/him)

Fitzpatrick Institute, University of Cape Town, South Africa

Traditional methods to study raptor diets, include analysis of prey remains, pellets, observations from hides or the use of nest cameras. However, these approaches tend to be limited to describing only the diet of adults, and only during the breeding period. To overcome these limitations, we have pioneered the use of web-sourced images to study raptor diet across several species, including Martial Eagles, Eurasian Sparrowhawks, Crested Caracaras and Red-tailed Hawks. This method has allowed us to examine diet differences by age, sex, and season. We have now expanded this approach to explore biogeographical dietary patterns at the continental scale, using Convolutional Neural Networks to better handle large numbers (100,000's) of photos and identify those which

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include prey items. The continual expansion of photographic databases means that this approach will become applicable to more and more species, helping to improve our understanding of species' dietary patterns.

**Arjun Amar** is an avian ecologist and conservation biologist based at the FitzPatrick Institute of African Ornithology, University of Cape Town, South Africa, where he is an Associate Professor. His research focuses on understanding how birds respond to environmental change of many different forms (land use change, urbanisation, and climate change), with a taxonomic focus on raptors.

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WEDS, 2 APRIL, 1615

### KEYNOTE

#### **Science to action through partnerships: applications of eBird data to inform avian conservation and management**

**Viviana Ruiz Gutierrez**

Cornell Lab of Ornithology, USA



Effective avian conservation and management requires reliable and applicable information on the status of bird populations. The overall status of a species is often assessed using changes in distribution or abundance across time, while more specific information needs for conservation decision-making largely focus around where, when and how many, including what factors are driving these patterns. To date, these information needs are best informed by large-scale avian monitoring programs, which are often volunteer-based, and either structured (e.g. Breeding Bird Survey of North America) or unstructured (e.g. eBird). However, there are also clear benefits of leveraging information of smaller-scale monitoring programs and efforts alongside large-scale data. In this talk, I will present examples of how we've worked closely with partners across the public and private sectors to use eBird data and data products, and additional data sources, to directly inform different aspects of the species conservation cycle.

**Viviana Ruiz-Gutierrez** earned her Bachelor's degree at the National University of Costa Rica in Tropical Biology, and her Doctorate in the Department of Ecology and Evolutionary Biology at Cornell University, with a strong focus on population biology and quantitative ecology. The focus of her research program is to work at the interface between science and application to deepen our understanding of the social and environmental factors that shape where and when species occur on a given landscape to improve decision-making and conservation. Her research group works on developing and applying novel quantitative modeling techniques to understand how human drivers of land-use change (e.g. agriculture) affect biodiversity using birds as indicators. Her team works collaboratively with practitioners, decision-makers, industry, and local communities to design

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research that supports the development and implementation of strategies that reconcile biodiversity conservation, sustainable development, and human well-being.

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WEDS, 2 APRIL, 1645 | ECR PRESENTER

### **Assessing threats and conservation action using Population Viability Analysis for the Critically Endangered Grenada Dove**

**Catherine Wise** (she/her)  
University of Chester, UK

The Critically Endangered Grenada Dove *Leptotila wellsi* is at risk from habitat loss, invasive species and disease along with the threat of further population reductions due to hurricane activity. This study used original data, published long-term population count data, and data from closely related species to conduct a population viability analysis (PVA) for the two extant populations of Grenada Dove to quantify extinction risk and compare the relative impacts of proposed management actions. Probability of extinction in the West (PE: 56.8%) of Grenada was substantially higher than the probability of extinction in the Southwest (PE: 7.6%). Extinction probability was increased under scenarios simulating tourist developments, increased disease transmission and unbalanced sex-ratios. Loss of forest habitat to commercial development is likely to have the biggest impact on extant Grenada Dove populations and of the potential management approaches, population supplementation is likely to be the most effective conservation strategy.

**Catherine Wise** focuses on the application of genetic techniques to the conservation of endangered animal populations with a particular interest in birds.

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WEDS, 2 APRIL, 1700 | ECR PRESENTER

### **Isolating drivers of distributional variation in British birds over 30 years of climate change**

**Beckie George** (she/her)  
University of East Anglia, UK

Co-authors: Rachel Warren (University of East Anglia), Jeff Price (University of East Anglia), Aldina Franco (University of East Anglia), James Pearce-Higgins (British Trust for Ornithology), Dario Massimino (British Trust for Ornithology)

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Previous studies have attributed short-term range expansions of some British bird species to lagged effects of climate change. However, the relative responses of different species to climate change in Britain are not well understood, nor is the role of other drivers, notably land use. This study examines the distributional shifts of British breeding bird species over the past 30 years using data from the Breeding Bird Survey (1994-2023). An annual time-series was constructed for each species to determine the magnitude and direction of the centroids of their distribution in Britain. The relationship between each species' time series, climate change, and land cover was explored, accounting for species traits. The results demonstrate that while British breeding birds have shifted their ranges in response to climate change, the direction and extent of these changes vary widely across species, suggesting a complex relationship between species traits, climate and land cover.

**Beckie George** is a PhD researcher focused on understanding how climate change and land use impact the distributions of British bird species. Her research aims to identify the drivers behind both historical and projected distribution changes to inform strategies that integrate climate resilience into biodiversity conservation and land use policy.

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WEDS, 2 APRIL, 1715 | ECR PRESENTER

### Using Bayesian mixed models to understand reproductive success in the extinct-in-the-wild sihek (Guam Kingfisher)

**Matthew Mitchell** (he/him)

University College London & Institute of Zoology, UK | [m-j-Mitchell.bsky.social](https://twitter.com/m-j-Mitchell)

Co-authors: Ryan Felice, UCL, John Ewen, IoZ, Amanda Trask, IoZ

One challenge when working with endangered species is small sample size, which can impede model convergence and reduce result reliability. The sihek (Guam Kingfisher, *Todiramphus cinnamominus*), is an extinct-in-the-wild bird with a population size of ~130 individuals and low population growth. Specific management strategies are required to ensure the species' survival, presenting the need for an in-depth understanding of factors that limit individuals' reproductive success. However, the sihek's small population size limits data availability, creating statistical challenges. Here, we use Bayesian generalised linear mixed models and leave-one-out cross-validation to interrogate the factors that influence egg viability and hatching success in the sihek. With a sample size of N=539 eggs and a model structure including up to 11 variables, we find strong support that parental age and parental inbreeding coefficients, but not pairwise kinship coefficients, negatively influence egg viability and hatching success rates, results that can inform future pairing decisions.

**Matthew Mitchell** is a PhD student jointly at UCL and The Institute of Zoology, ZSL working on the conservation of extinct-in-the-wild birds. His research primarily focusses on the phenotypic



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consequences of population bottlenecks and long-term captive care with the aim of understanding how species can be supported in preparation for release.

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THURS, 3 APRIL, 0900

KEYNOTE

### **Advances in wild bird disease surveillance within the One Health paradigm**

**Becki Lawson**

Institute of Zoology, London, UK | [wildlife-health.bsky.social](https://twitter.com/wildlife-health.bsky.social)



One Health is defined as a ‘collaborative approach that aims to balance and optimize the health of people, animals, and ecosystems’. Disease in wild birds is increasingly recognised as important, not only to their welfare and conservation, but also to public and captive animal health. Emerging infectious diseases have caused large scale wild bird mortality and population declines, for example the recent highly pathogenic avian influenza panzootic, finch trichomonosis and Usutu virus infection. While connection with nature, often enriched through observation of wild birds, is known to benefit public well-being, some pathogens infecting wild birds have zoonotic potential. Human activity can influence the occurrence of disease in wild birds, for example through invasive species, agriculture, supplementary feeding and climate change. Wild bird disease surveillance therefore provides information for action to help safeguard the health of people, captive and wild animals alike. Approaches have advanced markedly in recent years, capitalising on opportunities afforded by novel digital and diagnostic methodologies. Multidisciplinary networks comprising governmental animal and public health agencies, working in partnership with conservation NGOs, and collaborating with relevant groups such as licensed bird ringers, wildlife rehabilitators, zoological collections, and members of the public, have been developed. Long-term national programmes that provide early warning networks to facilitate rapid detection of emerging threats, and research programmes which inform science-based mitigation guidance for disease prevention and control, are ongoing. This presentation will illustrate the above using international examples, with particular focus on the Garden Wildlife Health and Vector-Borne RADAR projects in the UK.

**Becki Lawson** is a wildlife veterinarian at the Zoological Society of London. Her research focuses on the effects of disease on free-ranging wildlife populations; the epidemiology of pathogen transmission between wildlife, domestic animals and humans; and the role that anthropogenic activity has on these processes. She currently leads the Garden Wildlife Health Project, a national disease surveillance scheme for garden birds, amphibians, hedgehogs and reptiles, in collaboration with the BTO, Froglife and the RSPB.



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THURS, 3 APRIL, 0930

## **Differences in the biovectoring role of three waterbird species in a coastal wetland**

**Julián Cano-Povedano**

Estación Biológica de Doñana – CSIC, Spain | [juliancap.bsky.social](https://bsky.app/profile/juliancap.bsky.social)

Co-authors: Victor Martín-Vélez, Instituto Ciencias del Mar; ICM-CSIC. Cosme López-Calderón, Biodiversidad y Cambio Global, Universidad de Extremadura. Belén Cañuelo-Jurado, Estación Biológica de Doñana; EBD-CSIC. Marta I. Sánchez, Estación Biológica de Doñana; EBD-CSIC. Francisco Hortas, Institute of Marine Research (INMAR), University of Cadiz and European University of the Seas (SEA-EU). Andrés Cózar, Institute of Marine Research (INMAR), University of Cadiz and European University of the Seas (SEA-EU). Andy J. Green, Estación Biológica de Doñana; EBD-CSIC

Plastic pollution is a major driver of global change, especially in wetlands. Although plastic enters waterbodies largely by water and wind, biovectors such as birds can also have a big impact. Many waterbirds forage in landfills then move to wetlands for roosting, transporting plastic in their pellets. We investigated the biovector role of storks, Lesser-black Backed and Yellow-legged Gulls in Cadiz Bay (SW Spain). We categorized and quantified plastic content of their pellets, and analysed movements by GPS. More plastic was transported per capita by storks (0.56g per pellet), but Yellow-legged Gulls had a higher proportion of plastic in their (smaller) pellets. The more common plastic were polyethylene and polystyrene, and silicone was only found in storks. Furthermore, storks were more faithful to landfills than gulls, and deposited plastic in different places. Preliminary results suggest these birds transport around 1000kg of plastic into the Cadiz Bay IBA each year.

**Julián Cano-Povedano** is a second-year PhD student in EBD-CSIC (Sevilla) studying the role of waterbirds in the biovectoring of plastics. Julián obtained a Masters in Biodiversity and Conservation Biology (Universidad Pablo de Olavide) and a Biology Bachelor in the University of Granada.

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THURS, 3 APRIL, 0945 | ECR PRESENTER

## **Evaluating whether modern environmental contaminants have the potential to cause eggshell thinning**

**Jacob Parkman** (he/him)

University of Sheffield, UK | [ecologist-jacob.bsky.social](https://bsky.app/profile/ecologist-jacob.bsky.social)

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Co-authors: Dr Nicola Hemmings, Dr Andy Sweetman, Dr Gloria Dos Santos Pereira, Dr Karl Evans

Avian population declines arising from eggshell thinning induced by chemical exposure is now typically regarded as an historical threat. Evidence has started to emerge, however, that a wide range of pollutants are abundant in the environment that could generate eggshell thinning. These include historical 'legacy' pollutants and more novel emergent pollutants. Using a systematic literature review approach we provide an assessment of the potential for six main chemical groups, those being DDT and its metabolites, PCBs, PBDEs, PFASs, NSAIDs and neonicotinoid pesticides, to induce eggshell thinning. Assessment of the quantity and quality of evidence highlight that whilst much additional research is needed a number of these pollutants, in addition to DDT, have potential to induce avian eggshell thinning – with potential demographic consequences.

**Jacob Parkman** is currently studying under Dr Karl Evans and Dr Nicola Hemmings at the University of Sheffield through the ECORISC CDT. Over the course of his project, he will be investigating the potential for a re-emergence of chemically induced eggshell thinning in British birds.

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THURS, 3 APRIL, 1000

### **Beyond a cradle-to-grave perspective of the lifespan: prenatality as an observable life-history stage in birds**

**Simon Evans** (he/him)

University of Exeter, UK

Co-authors: Zsófia Tóth, Lund University

Uncertainty has long surrounded the fertilisation status of unhatched bird eggs beyond intensively managed populations, and two recent studies of Parid populations hint that fertilisation failure may be exceptionally rare in non-endangered populations. With unhatched eggs faithfully indicating incidences of prenatal mortality, individual survival is observable from the day of conception onwards. If more broadly applicable, this egg-for-zygote substitution could be applied retrospectively to extant, long-term breeding records, offering a much more complete understanding of the dynamics regulating population size and persistence. In 2024, we collected all unhatched great tit eggs from >20 study populations across Europe to gain a detailed perspective of hatching and fertilisation failure rates across the species' range, and assess whether the extreme rarity of fertilisation failure is either (a) universal in this most popular of avian study species, or (b) whether it varies within or across study sites in relation to local- to continent-scale factors.

**Simon Evans** is broadly interested in behavioural and evolutionary ecology and much of his work focusses on quantitative genetics in wild populations. Presently, Simon is studying the evolutionary

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dynamics of clutch size using large-scale experimental manipulations (direct and indirect) in decades past. He is also keenly interested in the impact of the social environment, and in extending our cradle-to-grave perspective of the lifespan to include prenatality (two things that overlap considerably).

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THURS, 3 APRIL, 1015 | ECR PRESENTER

### **Impacts of river flow changes on the breeding ecology of the White-throated Dipper**

**Noelia Alvarez** (she/her)

Lancaster Environment Centre, Lancaster University, UK | [noealvarez88.bsky.social](https://bsky.app/profile/noealvarez88.bsky.social)

Co-authors: Stuart Sharp, Duncan Whyatt

Freshwater ecosystems are amongst the most diverse and vulnerable, with many species having experienced long-term declines. Pollution, habitat degradation and loss are some of the well-known pressures that freshwater species face. However, while climate change is potentially the greatest challenge, its impacts are yet to be fully understood. Periods of high rainfall and unpredictable extreme weather events are becoming more common, with important effects on river flow and wildlife. River specialists such as the White-throated Dipper, currently amber-listed and in decline, is one of the species vulnerable to these changes. As a bioindicator of river system health, dippers are an ideal model for investigating the effects of flow variation on riverine wildlife. Measuring river flow changes and invertebrate abundance during the breeding season, we aim to determine the effects of flow on parental care and offspring development, factors known to have important effects on offspring fitness.

**Noelia Álvarez** is a PhD student at Lancaster University who is investigating the effects of climate change on river flow and its consequences for the behaviour and breeding ecology of dippers. Additionally, she has worked as an ornithological consultant and is involved with ringing and monitoring of seabirds in Scotland.

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THURS, 3 APRIL, 1115

### KEYNOTE

#### **Using DNA metabarcoding to investigate links between diet and reproductive success in rural and urban Blue Tits**

**Andreanna Welch**

Durham University, UK



Urbanisation has dramatically transformed the world, altering habitat composition, the environment, and food availability for wildlife. Understanding the factors that influence species' success in these increasingly common settings is crucial for maintaining biodiversity in a rapidly urbanising world. During the winter urban birds often experience warmer temperatures and have access to supplemental food in cities, which may facilitate survival, however reproductive success is often lower. The Blue Tit (*Cyanistes caeruleus*) exemplifies this paradox. By employing cutting-edge DNA metabarcoding, we explored how urbanisation impacts the diet of Blue Tits during nestling development, as overwintering adults, and during energetically demanding chick rearing. We also conducted a brood manipulation experiment to assess the impact of increased brood sizes on chick diet and survival. We found that with increasing urbanisation clutch size decreases and chicks have both a lower occurrence and abundance of caterpillars in their diet, along with lower fledging success. In winter and spring, urban adult diets include more low-quality arthropods and anthropogenic food items like sunflower seeds, grains, and peanuts. Interestingly, there was no relationship between urbanisation and the occurrence of Lepidoptera, though urbanisation appears to affect the foraging strategies of males and females differently. In both urban and rural habitats experimentally increasing brood size led to increased nestling mortality and chicks were in poorer condition at fledging, suggesting that blue tit clutches may be optimized for their local environment. Overall, reduced clutch sizes and poor-quality diet for chicks are likely causes of the poor breeding success in urban blue tits.

**Andreanna Welch** is an Associate Professor in molecular ecology and evolutionary genomics at Durham University. She is broadly interested in how people and biodiversity can successfully coexist. Projects have included using ancient DNA to understand changes in population size and genetic diversity in the endangered Hawaiian Petrel (*Pterodroma sandwichensis*), and using DNA metabarcoding to examine diet competition in migratory and resident birds during the winter, and explore if birds consume crop pests on farms.

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### **Once a specialist always a specialist? Multiple techniques determine consistency of individual specialisation across traits**

**Danni Thompson** (she/her)

University of Aberdeen, UK | [twitter](https://bsky.app/profile/scottishseabird.bsky.social) scottishseabird.bsky.social

Co-authors: Beth Scott (University of Aberdeen), Ana Payo-Payo (Universidad Complutense), Alastair Baylis (South Atlantic Environmental Research Institute), Thomas Bodey (University of Aberdeen)

Individual variation is central to determining how adaptable populations are to environmental change. Thus, apparently generalist species are often comprised of specialist individuals, but this individual specialisation is typically examined across only single functional or behavioural traits. Simultaneous consideration of multiple traits can reveal more nuanced mechanisms of divergence among individuals. We combined biologging (GPS and TDR) data from breeding Falkland Island shags *Leucocarbo atriceps albiventer* with stable isotope and DNA metabarcoding data to identify the extent of specialisation across both foraging movements and diet from 104 individuals at seven colonies. Levels of individual specialisation varied across colonies and across multiple movement metrics and dietary niche widths, as did the extent of individual consistency across multiple traits. By combining multiple techniques to determine the consistency of individual specialisation across traits, we gain deeper insights into the extent of behavioural syndromes for specialisation within a generalist species.

**Danni Thompson** is an ecologist and early-career researcher with a particular interest in animal behaviour, species conservation and anthropogenic impacts on wildlife populations. She's currently at the University of Aberdeen undertaking her PhD investigating the drivers of individual foraging behaviour specialisation in Falkland Islands shags (*Leucocarbo atriceps albiventer*).

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THURS, 3 APRIL, 1200 | ECR PRESENTER

### **Morphological and molecular forensics of select Galliformes for species identification**

**Bhawani Sabat** (she/her)

Salim Ali Centre for Ornithology and Natural History, India | [twitter](https://bsky.app/profile/bhawanisabat.bsky.social) bhawanisabat.bsky.social

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Nadu, India 3. Harini M S - Salim Ali Centre for Ornithology and Natural History, South India Centre of Wildlife Institute of India, Post Anaikatty, 641108, Coimbatore, Tamil Nadu, India 4. Bavithra S - Salim Ali Centre for Ornithology and Natural History, South India Centre of Wildlife Institute of India, Post Anaikatty, 641108, Coimbatore, Tamil Nadu, India 5. Riddhika Kalle- Salim Ali Centre for Ornithology and Natural History, South India Centre of Wildlife Institute of India, Post Anaikatty, 641108, Coimbatore, Tamil Nadu, India 6. Ashutosh Singh- Salim Ali Centre for Ornithology and Natural History, South India Centre of Wildlife Institute of India, Post Anaikatty, 641108, Coimbatore, Tamil Nadu, India

The global demand for bushmeat and feathers of Galliformes has led to their increasing exploitation and crimes. Thus, this study established a forensic database of select Galliformes incorporating both feather characteristics, genetic data, and ethnozoological practices. For feather database, shed feathers were collected and examined using both Light Microscope and Field Emission Scanning Electron Microscope at various magnifications (40X to 9.70kX). Feather analysis revealed uniformly distributed nodes such as spined, ring-like, prongs, and distinct sub-pennaceous regions in plumulaceous barbs. However, pennaceous barbs revealed hooklets, ventral teeth, cilia and showed varying degree of pigmentation. FESEM micrographs showed pronged hamuli, cortex, medulla, and melanosomes respectively. For DNA database, three mitochondrial genes (Cyt b, 16s rRNA, and 12s rRNA) were processed for species identification. In conclusion, feather database is helpful for identifying Galliformes group but difficult for identifying individual species, hence, the DNA database is a reliable tool for species identification.

**Bhawani Sabat** was born into “Saura” tribal and grew up closely connected to nature which sparked an interest in wildlife. Later, she completed Bachelors and Masters degree in Zoology. Currently, she works as a Junior Research Fellow and is pursuing Ph.D. in Zoology from SACON, India. Her interests include wildlife forensics, conservation, and ethnozoology.

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THURS, 3 APRIL, 1215 | ECR PRESENTER

### **Track and trace: Using combined techniques to uncover movement and foraging strategies of Alpine Swift**

**Alex Brighten** (she/her)

University of Aberdeen, UK | [alexbrighten1.bsky.social](https://bsky.app/profile/alexbrighten1.bsky.social)

Co-authors: Thomas Bodey (University of Aberdeen), Pierre Bize (Swiss Ornithological Institute), Ana Payo-Payo (Universidad Complutense de Madrid)

Insectivorous birds rely on resource patches that fluctuate in time and space due to weather conditions and other environmental factors. The forecast increase in unpredictable weather and continuing insect declines resulting from ongoing anthropogenic change, mean it is crucial to

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understand aerial insectivore resource and habitat use given its central impact on productivity and survival. Biologging technology has dramatically enhanced our understanding of these species' movement strategies, including revealing significant levels of individual variation. However, we know little about how these individual-level differences drive variation in key demographic parameters. At fine and coarse scales respectively, we combine cutting-edge biologging (GPS, multi-sensor geolocators) and dietary analyses (DNA metabarcoding, stable isotopes) to investigate individual Alpine Swift *Tachymarptis melba* resource use. We link this to a rich life-history dataset to uncover demographic consequences of individual variation in foraging and movement strategies in the context of changing prey availability and an increasingly unpredictable climate.

**Alex Brighten** is a PhD student interested in movement ecology and the demographic consequences of individual variation and environmental change. Focusing on movement and foraging strategies of migratory birds, her PhD investigates the role of carry-over effects on survival and reproduction in the context of both changing prey availability and climate.

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THURS, 3 APRIL, 1230 | ECR PRESENTER

### **Can riparian habitats buffer populations of the Spotted Flycatcher, a declining, Afro-Palearctic migrant?**

**Catrin Eden** (she/her)

Lancaster University, UK | [cateden91.bsky.social](https://bsky.app/profile/cateden91.bsky.social)

Co-authors: Chris Hewson (British Trust for Ornithology), Richard Broughton (UK Centre for Ecology and Hydrology), Bart Donato (Natural England), Stuart Sharp (Lancaster University)

The importance of riparian habitats for supporting populations of terrestrial birds is often overlooked, yet research suggests that freshwater can provide supplemental, higher quality food for insectivorous species. We investigate the importance of aquatic subsidies using a rapidly declining, insectivorous Afro-Palearctic migrant; the Spotted Flycatcher (*Muscicapa striata*). We employ a combination of national survey data and local monitoring data to assess the utilisation of riparian habitats by this species. Specifically, using survey data we aim to understand whether the presence of rivers is a driver of changing Spotted Flycatcher occurrence, whilst analysis of faecal DNA and blood fatty acids will allow us to understand specific dietary drivers of variation in breeding success and nestling condition. We hope that this work will emphasise the importance of riparian habitats, not only for aquatic birds but also terrestrial insectivorous species.

**Catrin Eden's** PhD research at Lancaster University is seeking to understand the decline of Spotted Flycatchers, a rapidly declining Afro-Palearctic migrant. Catrin came to her PhD with a strong interest in applied conservation, and hopes that her research will inform future conservation actions for this species.





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THURS, 3 APRIL, 1415 | ECR PRESENTER

**Microclimate refugia use and behavioural responses to extreme temperatures by Eurasian Kestrels (*Falco tinnunculus*)**

**Karolina Zalewska** (she/they)

University of East Anglia, UK | [kazalews.bsky.social](https://bsky.app/profile/kazalews.bsky.social)

As global temperatures continue to increase and extreme weather events become more frequent, it is of key importance to understand how individuals may respond and whether they can adapt to these challenging, rapidly changing conditions. Individuals may adopt a variety of behavioural strategies to avoid or mitigate the negative effects of exposure to extended periods of high temperatures or climate extremes. This study focuses on the use and availability of microclimate refugia at the warm edge of Eurasian Kestrels' distribution in Europe. We use GPS tracking data to quantify the extent of use and availability of microclimate refugia in areas used by tracked individuals under different temperature conditions and during the warmest periods of the year. Our results enable us to identify habitat features that may be important for individuals to survive extreme temperature events, and therefore, may be crucial for species conservation in the face of climate change.

**Karolina Zalewska** is a PhD student at the University of East Anglia, Norwich. Her project focuses on individual- and population-level responses to climatic variability and extremes as well as the importance of microclimate refugia in population survival. She is interested in individual-habitat associations and factors affecting population demography and dispersal.

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THURS, 3 APRIL, 1430 | ECR PRESENTER

**The influence of abundance on within-patch breeding season habitat characteristics for Chiffchaff**

**Rachel Jade Kuzmich** (she/her)

Queen's University, Canada | [thatracheljade.bsky.social](https://bsky.app/profile/thatracheljade.bsky.social)

Co-authors: Ross A Hill (Bournemouth University), Shelley A Hinsley (UK Centre for Ecology and Hydrology), Paul E Bellamy (The Royal Society for the Protection of Birds), Ailidh E Barnes (British Trust for Ornithology), Markus Melin (Natural Resources Institute Finland), Paul M Treitz (Queen's University)

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Bird species abundance at broader spatial scales may influence breeding season habitat at smaller spatial scales. For instance, Chiffchaff (*Phylloscopus collybita*) occurrence in smaller woods was shown to reduce when regional abundance reduced (Hinsley et al. 1996). Nonetheless, in the past 27 years, Chiffchaff abundance has increased (Heywood et al., 2024), and individuals may use habitat that appeared unsuitable at lower abundances. Our goal is to model Chiffchaff habitat at two study sites in Cambridgeshire, UK, using light detection and ranging (lidar) data acquired in 2000, 2005, 2012 and 2015. Lidar data capture three-dimensional woody vegetation structural characteristics (Lefsky et al., 2002) and have been used to model bird habitat (Bakx et al., 2019). We will assess differences in local habitat use due to broad scale abundance changes and thereby address robustness in habitat models.

**Rachel Jade Kuzmich** is a PhD candidate at Queen's University (Canada) using remote sensing and bird survey time series data to improve our understanding of habitat in successional contexts.

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THURS, 3 APRIL, 1445 | ECR PRESENTER

### **Does forest cover influence the movements and behaviour of GPS tagged Golden Eagles *Aquila chrysaetos*?**

**Charlotte Jennifer Chandler**

University of Chester, UK

Co-authors: Dr Matt Geary - University of Chester. Dr Charlotte Hosie - University of Chester. Dr Philip Whitfield - Natural Research Ltd. Dr Alan Fielding - Natural Research Ltd

The uplands of Scotland are an open landscape of grassland, heather moor and blanket bog, under increased pressure from economically driven land use change. Currently the Scottish Government are prioritising afforestation, with plans to increase forest cover by 3.5% in the next 8 years, to help achieve the net-zero target. Significant habitat changes like this can impact open habitat specialists, such as the Golden Eagle. Currently the specific impacts and behavioural responses of Golden Eagles to forest cover within their home ranges is unknown. This study will use mixed effects models to understand the resource selection of golden eagles and analyse their behavioural responses to forest cover from GPS tag location data. The results of this study will enable us to recommend how to reduce the impacts of further afforestation on Golden Eagles, such as advising the most suitable areas for planting to occur.

**Charlotte Jennifer Chandler** is a PhD student at the University of Chester researching the potential impacts of afforestation on Golden Eagles in Scotland. Charlotte's previous research includes 3D home range analysis of Western Ringtail Possums in Australia. Charlotte has previously worked in Ecological Consultancy and enjoys wildlife photography.



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THURS, 3 APRIL, 1500

KEYNOTE

**Cognition and culture in our urban birds**

**Lucy Aplin**

University of Zurich, Switzerland & Australian National University



When innovations arise in human societies, they can spread rapidly through social networks to form new cultural traits—a vital component of our success. A long history of research has now established that other animals can also exhibit social learning and culture. But can cultural traits in animals also emerge and change in response to social and environmental drivers? And can socio-cognitive responses be an important determinant of behavioural flexibility in other species? In this keynote, I summarize how my research addresses these questions, focusing on my recent research project CULTURES-ADAPT that focuses on wild, urban living Sulphur-crested Cockatoos. Here we use various approaches including wild experiments, large-scale citizen science, and innovative tracking technologies to explore how this large, big-brained and long-lived parrot has successfully adapted to the recent and rapid process of urbanisation in Australia. Altogether, this work highlights how the experience of others can have profound implications for how animals learn about and exploit their local environments, and how social and cognitive processes can interact to determine behavioural responses to human induced rapid environmental change.

**Lucy Aplin** studied for her PhD jointly at the Australian National University and the University of Oxford. She then held a Junior Research Fellowship at St John’s College, Oxford, before moving to the Max Planck Institute of Animal Behavior in Germany to take up a Group Leader Fellowship. She currently holds joint faculty positions as an Associate Professor at the Australian National University and as a SERI Professorial Fellow at the University of Zurich, and currently leads the ERC-awarded, SERI-funded project CULTURES-ADAPT.



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POSTER

**Foraging distribution and movements of the White-cheeked and Lesser Crested Tern in the Red Sea**

**Licia Calabrese**

Red Sea Global - Red Sea Zone

We investigate the foraging distribution of the White-cheeked (*Sterna repressa*) and Lesser Crested (*Thalasseus bengalensis*) Tern breeding in the Al Wajh bank IBA (Saudi Arabia) by deploying GPS tags on breeding adults nesting on the same island. To our knowledge, these are the first data on foraging movements for the two species. The White-cheeked Tern appeared to forage closer to the colony compared to the Lesser Crested Tern. The latter was foraging up to 90 Km from the colony. Shallow and coastal waters were preferred to deep waters and other islands of the lagoon were utilized as overnight stopover to reach further foraging grounds. Understanding the foraging ecology and distribution of these species is fundamental to inform spatial planning and implementation of future marine protected areas in the region.

**Licia Calabrese** is an ornithologist and conservation biologist with 15 years of experience working in temperate, tropical and arid ecosystems. Licia is specialized in baseline assessments and movement ecology of different species of seabirds and land birds with a focus on habitat enhancement and conservation of endangered populations, and has a PhD in movement ecology and conservation.

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POSTER | ECR PRESENTER

**Skyglow facilitates prey detection in a crepuscular insectivore: distant light sources create bright skies**

**Jitse Creemers** (he/him)

Université Catholique de Louvain & University of Antwerp, Belgium

Co-authors: Marcel Eens, Michiel Lathouwers, Ruben Evens

Light profoundly shapes ecosystems, influencing the behaviour and niche specialisation of many species. This is especially true for visual predators, particularly crepuscular and nocturnal animals, whose foraging depends on adequate illumination. Despite this, research on how animals perceive light sources and position themselves relative to these sources is scarce. Using a modified dead-reckoning protocol based on GPS, accelerometer, and magnetic compass data, we investigated the body orientation of foraging European Nightjars (*Caprimulgus europaeus*, hereafter nightjar) to

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determine their line of sight relative to bright sections of the nocturnal sky, created by natural or artificial light.

We found that nightjars are more likely to align themselves with brighter sections of the sky, although not necessarily with the brightest patch. On full moon nights, they positioned the moon within their line of sight when it was low on the horizon, but this likelihood decreased as the moon rose higher. During other moon phases, the likelihood of having the moon within line of sight increased linearly with moon altitude. During moonless parts of the night, nightjars appeared to use skyglow as a background for prey detection, but only when it was sufficiently bright. When both moonlight and skyglow were present, nightjars showed a preference for moonlight.

This study shows that European Nightjars use illuminated sections of the sky, including skyglow, as bright backgrounds to detect flying prey. This suggests that, in the absence of the moon, nightjars can actively take advantage of this form of light pollution while foraging. However, the success of their hunting under skyglow-induced lighting remains unclear. We hypothesise that the effectiveness of these backgrounds depends on their brightness and colour composition. Further research is needed to better understand the complex dynamics of contrast detection under varying lighting conditions.

**Jitse Creemers** is a PhD student at Université Catholique de Louvain under Prof. Ruben Evens and University of Antwerp under Prof. Marcel Eens. The Noxalis-group at UCLouvain explores the ecological impacts of skyglow, aiming to raise awareness of this overlooked sensory pollutant.

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POSTER

### **Applications of iButton “Thermochron” Miniature Temperature Loggers in Ornithological Research**

**Mark Eddowes** (he/him)

Independent researcher | [🐦 markeddowes.bsky.social](https://bsky.app/profile/markeddowes.bsky.social)

iButton “thermochrons” are robust, self-contained devices, about the size of a small coin, that measure temperature at programmable intervals. They are deployed in the field and later retrieved for downloading local temperature data. Primary ornithological research applications to date include monitoring of nest survival, based on thermal time profiles, and following local site temperatures in support of phenological plasticity studies. They have been applied to a wider range of ecological studies, for example fixed to turtle shells to monitor temperature dependent ectotherm behaviour, and potentially have wider applications. Practical aspects of thermochron deployment and optimization of performance, for example through calibration, will be described, together with associated research findings. Smart phone driven endoscopes for natural nest hole inspection, wider remote camera monitoring and GPS are additional recent technological developments, now

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becoming standard practice, that facilitate field studies. Researchers should be constantly looking for others that may improve data gathering.

**Mark Eddowes** is formally trained in physical sciences and maintains his childhood interest in ornithology in a voluntary capacity, with county ornithological societies, the BTO and the BOU. His primary research interest is the linked themes of long-distance passerine migrant arrival phenology, breeding phenology and range shift in a changing climate.

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POSTER | ECR PRESENTER

### **Understanding anthropogenic effects on Osprey *Pandion haliaetus* using video surveillance and GPS-tracking in the Eastern Baltic Sea region**

**James Firkins** (he/him)

Nature Research Centre (GTC), Lithuania

Co-authors: Gintarė Grašytė, State Service for Protected Areas under the Ministry of Environment, Lithuania; Mindaugas Dagys, Nature Research Centre (GTC), Lithuania; Justas Dainys, Nature Research Centre (GTC), Lithuania; Urtė Strylaitė, Vilnius university, Lithuania; Rimgaudas Treinys, Nature Research Centre (GTC), Lithuania

Raptor mortality is often influenced by human-induced factors, with electrocution being a significant cause of death for raptors worldwide. Our research indicates that Ospreys (*Pandion haliaetus*) face a significant electrocution risk, disproportionately affecting adults over juveniles. We hypothesised that this increased risk may be linked to the species' foraging behaviour and the spatial distribution, and extent, of feeding habitats.

This study aims to: a) identify key feeding water bodies and assess tolerance to human proximity when foraging, and b) determine adult Ospreys' roosting sites, including possible use of electrical structures in breeding areas.

To achieve this, we analysed nest video surveillance during breeding season to quantify prey delivery patterns and determine the origin of prey (wild fish vs. artificially bred). Using GPS-tracking data from six adult Ospreys, we are analysing feeding habitats, their spatial distribution, and roosting locations and their types (natural vs. electricity infrastructure), in a GIS environment.

We predict that adult Ospreys are particularly vulnerable to electrocution due to their extensive travel distances (often up to 25 km) and possible frequent use of electrical structures in open

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landscapes. These may serve as resting sites or vantage points for sit-and-wait hunting near water bodies in human proximity.

**James Firkins** began his PhD studies in 2023 with the Nature Research Centre (GTC) in Vilnius, Lithuania. His research examines dispersal, survival and habitat use and their changes during maturation in Accipitriformes in the eastern Baltic region. Given the sensitivity of raptors to environmental change, I am particularly interested in how ecological research can aid conservation.

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POSTER | ECR PRESENTER

### **Using bio-logging to study fine-scale foraging behaviour of European Shags during the non-breeding season in Shetland**

**Tom Gale** (he/him)

UK Centre for Ecology and Hydrology & Bangor University, UK | [ukcehseabirds.bsky.social](https://twitter.com/ukcehseabirds)

Understanding fine-scale foraging behaviour of seabirds throughout the annual cycle is important when considering the potential impacts of marine industries on seabird populations. However, due to logistical constraints in capturing seabirds outside of the breeding period, for many species there is a lack of detailed information on foraging behaviour during the non-breeding season. This contributes to uncertainty around the impacts of new developments on seabirds and may limit the effectiveness of environmental impact assessments. We used a recently trialled method to capture 20 European Shags *Gulosus aristotellis* at daytime roost locations in Shetland during the non breeding season and fitted birds with GPS-TDR loggers to gather data on fine-scale foraging movements and diving behaviour. A proportion of these individuals were tracked within Bluemull Sound, Unst, a tidal channel containing an active tidal stream energy development, providing a rare opportunity to study foraging behaviour of birds within the vicinity of an existing array installation. Preliminary results show that birds' foraging locations were generally found close inshore around coastal features, although there was considerable variation in the distances travelled between individuals during the tracking period. Further analysis will determine the relative influences of seabed habitat, hydrodynamic conditions and prey distributions on Shag foraging habitat selection. For birds that foraged within the tidal channel, results may improve understanding of the potential for interactions between the species and tidal stream energy installations.

**Tom Gale** is a PhD student at the UK Centre for Ecology & Hydrology in Edinburgh, co-supervised at Bangor University. Tom's research investigates the drivers and demographic consequences of seabird foraging behaviour, with a specific focus on European Shag populations in the Isle of May and Shetland.

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POSTER | ECR PRESENTER

### **Identifying predators of Northern Lapwing chicks using DNA metabarcoding of predated remains**

**Leah Gray** (she/her)

University of Aberdeen, UK | [leahgray.bsky.social](https://bsky.app/profile/leahgray.bsky.social)

Co-authors: Thomas Bodey

Gaining insights into predation rates is a common but highly challenging aim of radio-tracking. Previous radio-tagging or observational studies have been severely limited in their ability to accurately assign predators due to challenges in either observing fleeting predation events, or determining cause of death even if carcasses are retrieved. This study uses DNA metabarcoding to identify the principal predators of radio-tagged Northern Lapwing chicks (*Vanellus vanellus*) on mainland Orkney using swab samples of predated remains (n = 21 predated chicks). Given the increasing importance of the Orkney archipelago and other offshore islands for UK breeding waders, identifying which species are predated chicks is imperative to designing targeted conservation initiatives for these key populations. There are very limited examples of studies using DNA to identify avian predation (which typically leaves fewer traces of DNA), however, it is anticipated that successfully demonstrating this approach could ensure its much wider application and utility.

**Leah Gray** is a PhD student at the University of Aberdeen researching the impacts of agricultural wetland management and predation pressure on the breeding success of wading birds on Orkney.

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BLUESKY-ONLY

### **Man made reservoirs act as regugia for local avian biodiversity, in Tigray, Northern Ethiopia**

**Tsegazebe Hadush Haileselasie**

Mekelle University, Ethiopia

Published accounts of the conservation of biodiversity indicate that understanding patterns of species distribution and richness is crucial. However, what drives patterns of species composition in a landscape remains debatable. I examined the relationship between limnological characteristics of reservoirs, morpho-edaphic variables, biological variables, and patterns of bird species richness and distribution. Six limnological, three morpho-edaphic variables, and biological variables were recorded for 35 reservoirs and analyzed by multivariate statistical techniques. To investigate the most



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important explanatory factors influencing avian species richness and their distribution, redundancy analysis (RDA) was used. A total of 85 bird species from 54 genera, with a mean species richness  $14.23 \pm 6.72$  (mean  $\pm$  standard deviation) per reservoir, were recorded. The RDA analysis identified two significant RDA axes, and 34.4% of the variation in species richness is explained by environmental variation ( $R^2_{adj} = 0.34375$ ;  $P < 0.001$ ). Bird species richness was positively correlated with the surface area of reservoirs. I showed here that reservoir size and environmental heterogeneity were the important features that affect bird species richness, thus providing an important insight into the ecological relationship between waterbird species richness and the limnological characteristics of reservoirs. The strong positive correlation between species richness and both size and environmental variables underscores the importance of these reservoir features in the management of wildlife conservation. Large, environmentally heterogeneous reservoirs can support more species than small, environmentally homogeneous reservoirs because large, environmentally heterogeneous limnetic ecosystems can provide different resources for nesting, foraging, and roosting habitats for a diversified bird species. The result here also plays a role towards strengthening our knowledge of aquatic bird ecology and the natural history of African-Eurasian Migratory waterbirds.

**Tsegazeabe Hadush Haileselasie** is an aquatic ecologist by training but very much interested in biodiversity and the conservation of aquatic organisms, mainly fish and birds. Tsegazeabe is question centred and for this reason has worked on different model organisms from *Daphnia* to fish and birds, asking different ecoevolutionary questions related to how biodiversity is generated and maintained in the face of unprecedented climate change on our planet.

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POSTER | ECR PRESENTER

### **Exploring Grey Heron (*Ardea cinerea*) DNA transportation through lake sediment in a spatiotemporal analysis using ddPCR**

**Sophie Harris** (she/her)

Newcastle University, UK | [sophiesww.bsky.social](https://www.bsky.social/sophiesww)

Sedimentary DNA is rapidly becoming a novel technique for unlocking ecological archives in lakes. While much research has focused on plant, mammal and fish DNA in sediment cores, there has been little research into how DNA from birds is deposited and distributed throughout a lake system. This study uses an island heronry in a lake in Gloucestershire to map the spatiotemporal distribution of heron DNA. This will identify whether heron DNA can be detected in the surface sediment, how seasonality effects the quantity detected, and how the distance for the DNA input, in the case the nests, impacts detection.

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**Sophie Harris** is a third year PhD student at Newcastle University, working in partnership with the Wildfowl Wetland Trust. Her thesis explores how biodiversity has changed in British ponds over the past 200 years using a combination of geochemical and molecular techniques to reconstruct past environments.

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POSTER | ECR PRESENTER

### **Dynamics of Flocking in Birds: Significant Changes in a Key Flight Parameter**

**Robin S Mehlhausen-Franks** (he/him)

Royal Holloway University of London, UK | [✉ rsmehlhausenfranks.bsky.social](https://bsky.app/profile/rsmehlhausenfranks.bsky.social)

Co-authors: Dr Steve Portugal (Royal Holloway University of London/University of Oxford)

Movement in groups is among the most widespread of animal behaviours, and key to the success of many species. Flocking birds enjoy a variety of benefits to the group and to the individual, including improved predator defence and navigational efficiency. A popular model for studying flocking behaviours are homing pigeons (*Columba livia*). Counter to the increased flight efficiency of v-shaped flocks, globular flocking such as that of homing pigeons incurs an increased energetic cost to individuals within the group. An effective measure of flight's energetic cost is flap frequency, and combining this with other variables provides insight into the behaviour of individuals during flight. This study utilised GPS and accelerometer loggers to track the homing flights of pigeon flocks, and analysed how flap frequency was affected by relevant parameters. Significant changes incurred by these factors indicate that they have a substantive effect on the energetics of flight in bird flocks.

**Robin S Mehlhausen-Franks**, originally from the Welsh countryside, is a PhD student nearing the end of his third year at the Royal Holloway University of London, supervised by Dr Steven Portugal. His research interests are in animal behaviour and conservation, particularly the study of social and movement behaviours in bird species.

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POSTER | ECR PRESENTER

### **Migration phenology of the Egyptian Vulture on the Central Asian Flyway**

**Cat Taras** (she/her)

Central Asian Vultures Project | [✉ vulturecat.bsky.social](https://bsky.app/profile/vulturecat.bsky.social)

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Co-authors: Vladimir Dobrev (Bulgarian Society for the Protection of Birds/ BirdLife Bulgaria), Igor Karyakin (Russian Raptor Research and Conservation Network), Robert J. Burnside (Prince Mohamed bin Salman Royal Reserve), Genriyetta Pulikova (Biodiversity Research and Conservation Centre, Kazakhstan), Anna Ten (Institute of Zoology, Uzbekistan), Elvira Nikolenko (Russian Raptor Research and Conservation Network), Valentin Soldatov (Institute of Zoology, Uzbekistan) & Alyona Kapyonkina (Biodiversity Research and Conservation Centre, Kazakhstan)

The migration patterns and phenology of the Egyptian Vulture (*Neophron percnopterus*) are well-studied across Europe and the Middle East, however almost no studies have been done across the species range in Central Asia. 10 juveniles and 5 immature and sub-adult birds were tagged with GPS/GSM transmitters in Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan in 2021 and 2022 to study their migration and identify their wintering grounds for the first time. 14 birds were tracked over 23 migration trips 2021-2023. All birds (n=14) except for one followed the Central Asian Flyway and wintered in India and Pakistan while one bird spent two consecutive winters in Yemen. The mean migration distance was 2663 km, and lasted for an average of 11 days. The migratory speed was higher during the spring than in autumn (294 km/day vs 278 km/day). Additional Egyptian vultures tagged in 2023 and 2024 will add to the data.

The Central Asian Vultures Project is a collaboration between team members of varying backgrounds across the world. **Cat Taras** joined the 2024 fieldwork and tagging workshop in Uzbekistan in 2024, and is a member of the IUCN SSC Vulture Specialist Group.

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BLUESKY-ONLY

### Implications of natal philopatry for Great Black-backed Gull reproductive success

**Dylan Titmuss** (they/them)

Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution & Gulls of Appledore Research Group, USA |

 [dylantitmuss.bsky.social](https://twitter.com/dylantitmuss.bsky.social)

Co-authors: Mary Elizabeth Everett & Sarah J. Courchesne, Gulls of Appledore Research Group

Within the last four decades, the global population of Great Black-backed Gulls (*Larus marinus*) has declined by more than 45%, and the North American population by almost 70%. However, our potential to isolate specific causes of this decline is challenged by a considerable lack of existing data on Great Black-backed Gulls' population dynamics and demography. As such, this project examines the relationship between the natal philopatry exhibited in a focal Great Black-backed Gull colony and the reproductive success of individuals across the colony. In 2022–2024, data from the Great Black-backed Gull colony breeding on Appledore Island in the northwest Atlantic revealed a 70% rate of

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natal philopatry among the colony's banded individuals. Additionally, preliminary data from 2024 suggests a negative correlation between natal dispersal distance (an inverse metric for philopatry) and fledging success, thereby elevating our understanding of the demographic drivers of productivity in this globally declining seabird species.

**Dylan Titmuss** is a research assistant at the Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution (MA, USA) studying the potential use of chemical data to predict baleen whale distributions. Through the Gulls of Appledore Research Group, Dylan also conducts work that ultimately aims to understand where Great Black-backed Gulls are and aren't, and why.

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### DELEGATES

|                          |   |   |
|--------------------------|---|---|
| José Alves               | University of East Anglia, UK   |   |
| Arjun Amar               | Fitzpatrick Institute, University of Cape Town, South Africa  | <a href="#">arjundevamar.bsky.social</a>    |
| Lucy Aplin               | University of Zurich, Switzerland & Australian National University  | <a href="#">lucymaplin.bsky.social</a>      |
| Graham Appleton          | BOU Honorary Treasurer  | <a href="#">wadertales.bsky.social</a>      |
| Adham Ashton-Butt        | British Trust for Ornithology, UK<br>BOU Awards Nominations Committee member                              | <a href="#">adhamab.bsky.social</a>         |
| Orestis Aslanidis        | University of Reading, UK   |   |
| Ailidh Barnes            | British Trust for Ornithology, UK<br>BOU2025 Scientific Programme Committee                               |   |
| Sam Barrett              | University of Salford, UK   |   |
| Ondřej Belfín            | University of Groningen, Netherlands<br>BOU Conference Support Officer<br>BOU Engagement Committee member |   |
| Ruth Bell                |   |   |
| Sophie Bennett           | British Trust for Ornithology, UK   | <a href="#">bennett-sophie.bsky.social</a>  |
| Allert Bijleveld         | NIOZ Royal Netherlands Institute for Sea Research, Netherlands  | <a href="#">allertbijleveld.bsky.social</a> |
| Alex Brighten            | University of Aberdeen, UK  | <a href="#">alexbrighten1.bsky.social</a>   |
| Alan Brodin              | PathTrack   |   |
| Stuart Brooker           | Essex Wildlife Trust  |   |
| Claire Buchan            | University of East Anglia, UK<br>BOU2025 Scientific Programme Committee                                   | <a href="#">buchanding.bsky.social</a>      |
| Graeme Buchanan          | RSPB Centre for Conservation Science, UK<br>BOU President   |   |
| Malcolm Burgess          | RSPB Centre for Conservation Science, UK  | <a href="#">piedflynet.bsky.social</a>      |
| Nigel Butcher            | RSPB Centre for Conservation Science, UK  |   |
| Licia Calabrese          | The Red Sea Project   |   |
| Julián Cano-Povedano     | Estación Biológica de Doñana – CSIC, Spain  | <a href="#">juliancap.bsky.social</a>       |
| Charlotte Chandler       | University of Chester, UK   |   |
| Jitse Creemers           | Université Catholique de Louvain & University of Antwerp, Belgium   |   |
| Delip Das                | University of Groningen, Netherlands & Jagannath University, Bangladesh                                   |   |
| Sarah Deans              | Lotek   |   |
| Laura Dobson             | Titley Scientific   |   |
| Noelia Dominguez Alvarez | Lancaster Environment Centre, Lancaster University, UK  | <a href="#">noealvarez88.bsky.social</a>    |
| Andrew Doyle             | University of Durham, UK  |   |
| Louis Driver             |   |   |
| Gregory Eckhardt         | University of Birmingham, UK  |   |
| Mark Eddowes             | Independent researcher  | <a href="#">markeddowes.bsky.social</a>     |

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|                         |   |  |
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|                         | BOU Council member  |  |
| Catrin Eden             | Lancaster University, UK  | <a href="#">cateden91.bsky.social</a>          |
| Simon Evans             | University of Exeter, UK  | <a href="#">sevans.bsky.social</a>             |
| James Firkins           | Nature Research Centre (GTC), Lithuania   |  |
| Aldina Franco           | University of East Anglia, UK   | <a href="#">aldinafranco.bsky.social</a>       |
| Victoria Franks         | University of Salford, UK   | <a href="#">vixfranks.bsky.social</a>          |
| Robert Furness          | University of Glasgow & MacArthur Green Ecological Consultancy, UK                                      |  |
| Laura Gage              | NHBS  |  |
| Tom Gale                | UK Centre for Ecology & Hydrology & Bangor University, UK   | <a href="#">ukcehseabirds.bsky.social</a>      |
| Matthew Geary           | University of Chester, UK   |  |
| Beckie George           | University of East Anglia, UK   |  |
| Jennifer Gill           | University of East Anglia, UK<br>IBIS Editor-in-Chief   | <a href="#">jengill.bsky.social</a>            |
| Simon Gillings          | British Trust for Ornithology, UK   | <a href="#">simongillings.bsky.social</a>      |
| William Gough           |   |  |
| Leah Gray               | Aberdeen University, UK   | <a href="#">leahgray.bsky.social</a>           |
| Sophie Harris           | Newcastle University, UK  | <a href="#">sophiesww.bsky.social</a>          |
| Emma Hill               | Durham University, UK   |  |
| Danielle Hinchcliffe    | Liverpool John Moores University, UK<br>BOU Engagement Committee member                                 | <a href="#">dannihinchy.bsky.social</a>        |
| Charlotte Hosie         | University of Chester, UK   |  |
| Christine Howard        | Durham University, UK<br>Chair, BOU2025 Scientific Programme Committee<br>BOU Meetings Committee member |  |
| Paul Howden-Leach       | Wildlife Acoustics  |  |
| Rosemarie Kentie        | University of Amsterdam, Netherlands<br>Chair, IBIS Management Committee                                | <a href="#">rooskentie.bsky.social</a>         |
| Maire Kirkland          | British Trust for Ornithology, UK   |  |
| Nishant Kumar           | University of Oxford, UK & Wildlife Institute of India  | <a href="#">nishantkumar.bsky.social</a>       |
| Rachel Kuzmich          | Queen's University, Canada  | <a href="#">thatracheljade.bsky.social</a>     |
| Becki Lawson            | Institute of Zoology, London, UK  | <a href="#">wildlife-health.bsky.social</a>    |
| Amy Leedale             | University of Salford, UK   | <a href="#">amyleedale.bsky.social</a>         |
| Oliver Leedham          | UK Centre for Ecology & Hydrology<br>BOU2025 Scientific Programme Committee                             |  |
| Yang Liu                | Sun Yat-sen University, China   |  |
| Petra Manche            |   |  |
| Ruari Marshall-Hawkes   | Sidney Sussex College, Cambridge University, UK   |  |
| Jim Martin              | Bloomsbury Publishing   | <a href="#">jimspim.bsky.social</a>            |
| Robin Mehlhausen-Franks | Royal Holloway University of London, UK   | <a href="#">rsmehlhausenfranks.bsky.social</a> |
| Oliver Metcalf          | Lancaster University, UK  | <a href="#">ollie333.bsky.social</a>           |

#BOU2024

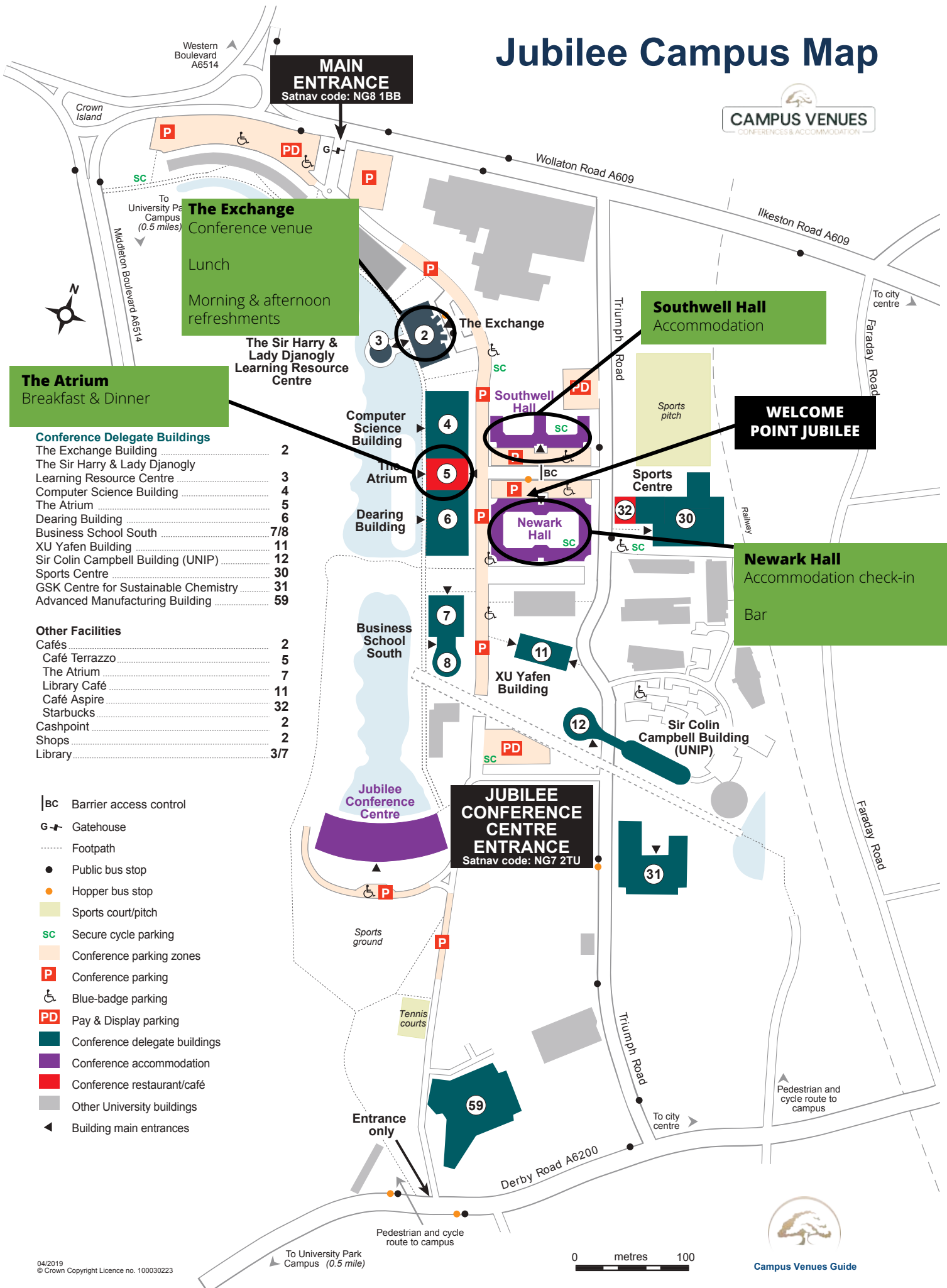
## Urban birds

9 – 11 April 2024 | University of Nottingham, UK & X (Twitter)



|                        |   |   |
|------------------------|---|---|
| Matthew Mitchell       | University College London & Institute of Zoology, UK  | <a href="#">m-j-Mitchell.bsky.social</a>    |
| Catriona Morrison      | University of Iceland<br>Chair, BOU Meetings Committee  | <a href="#">catmorrison.bsky.social</a>     |
| Jacob Parkman          | University of Sheffield, UK   | <a href="#">ecologist-jacob.bsky.social</a> |
| Rachel Reid            |   |   |
| Roos Reinartz          | Sovon Dutch Centre for Field Ornithology  |   |
| Alice Risely           | University of Salford, UK<br>BOU Meetings Committee member  | <a href="#">alice-risely.bsky.social</a>    |
| Katy Roper             | Bloomsbury Publishing   |   |
| Viviana Ruiz Gutierrez | Cornell Lab of Ornithology, USA   |   |
| Charlie Russell        | University of East Anglia, UK<br>BOU Blog Editor<br>BOU Engagement Committee member                                       | <a href="#">crussell.bsky.social</a>        |
| Bhawani Sabat          | Salim Ali Centre for Ornithology and Natural History, India   | <a href="#">bhawanisabat.bsky.social</a>    |
| Judy Shamoun-Baranes   | University of Amsterdam, the Netherlands  |   |
| Elwyn Sharps           | Natural Resources Wales<br>BOU Engagement Committee member  | <a href="#">elwynsharps.bsky.social</a>     |
| Jessica Shaw           | Nature Scotland   |   |
| Ana Smith              | University of Birmingham, UK  |   |
| Marius Somveille       | University of East Anglia, UK<br>BOU2025 Scientific Programme Committee   |   |
| Tohar Tal              | University of Amsterdam, the Netherlands & University of Aveiro, Portugal   | <a href="#">tohar-tal.bsky.social</a>       |
| Catherine Taras        | Central Asian Vultures Project  | <a href="#">vulturecat.bsky.social</a>      |
| Danni Thompson         | University of Aberdeen, UK  | <a href="#">scottishseabird.bsky.social</a> |
| Benjamin Van Doren     | University of Illinois, USA   | <a href="#">bvdbirds.bsky.social</a>        |
| Juliet Vickery         | British Trust for Ornithology, UK   |   |
| Daniel Villar          | University of Oxford, UK  | <a href="#">daniel-a-villar.bsky.social</a> |
| Leila Walker           | British Ornithologists' Union   |   |
| Andreanna Welch        | Durham University, UK   |   |
| Matthew White          | ADAS  |   |
| Helen Whitehead        | University of Salford, UK   | <a href="#">helenwhitehead1.bsky.social</a> |
| Catherine Wise         | University of Chester, UK   |   |
| Karolina Zalewska      | University of East Anglia, UK<br>BOU Engagement Committee member  | <a href="#">kazalews.bsky.social</a>        |
| Natalia Zielonka       | University of East Anglia & University of Kent, UK<br>BOU Social Media Support Officer<br>BOU Engagement Committee member | <a href="#">natbzielonka.bsky.social</a>    |

# Jubilee Campus Map



**MAIN ENTRANCE**  
Satnav code: NG8 1BB

**The Exchange**  
Conference venue  
Lunch  
Morning & afternoon refreshments

**Southwell Hall**  
Accommodation

**WELCOME POINT JUBILEE**

**Newark Hall**  
Accommodation check-in  
Bar

**JUBILEE CONFERENCE CENTRE ENTRANCE**  
Satnav code: NG7 2TU

**The Atrium**  
Breakfast & Dinner

**Conference Delegate Buildings**

|  |     |
|--|-----|
| The Exchange Building                                  | 2   |
| The Sir Harry & Lady Djanogly Learning Resource Centre | 3   |
| Computer Science Building                              | 4   |
| The Atrium   | 5   |
| Dearing Building                                       | 6   |
| Business School South                                  | 7/8 |
| XU Yafen Building                                      | 11  |
| Sir Colin Campbell Building (UNIP)                     | 12  |
| Sports Centre  | 30  |
| GSK Centre for Sustainable Chemistry                   | 31  |
| Advanced Manufacturing Building                        | 59  |

**Other Facilities**

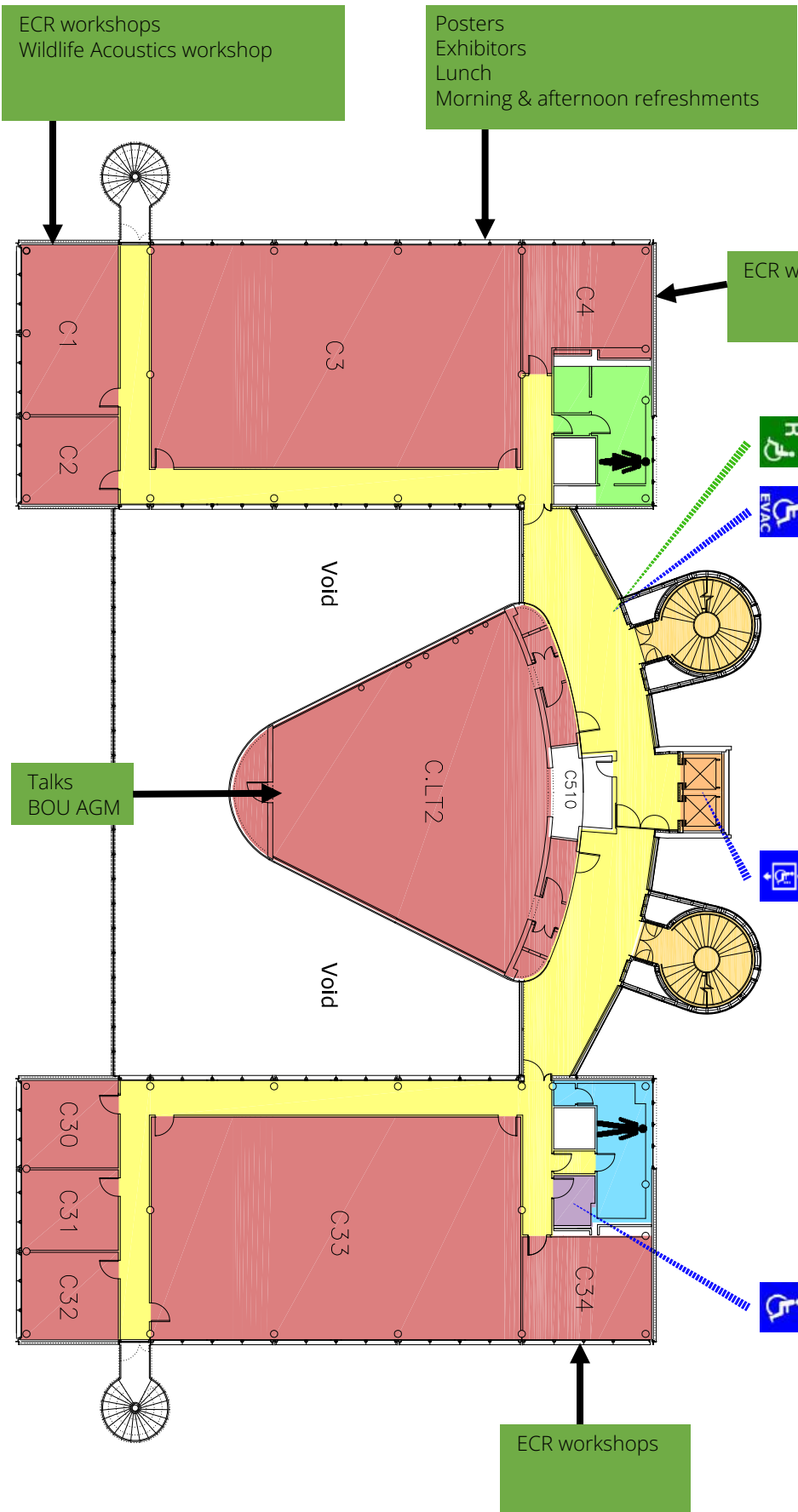
|               |     |
|---------------|-----|
| Cafés         | 2   |
| Café Terrazzo | 5   |
| The Atrium    | 7   |
| Library Café  | 11  |
| Café Aspire   | 32  |
| Starbucks     | 2   |
| Cashpoint     | 2   |
| Shops         | 2   |
| Library       | 3/7 |

- |BC Barrier access control
- G Gatehouse
- ..... Footpath
- Public bus stop
- Hopper bus stop
- Sports court/pitch
- SC Secure cycle parking
- P Conference parking zones
- P Conference parking
- ♿ Blue-badge parking
- PD Pay & Display parking
- Conference delegate buildings
- Conference accommodation
- Conference restaurant/café
- Other University buildings
- ◀ Building main entrances





# The Exchange - C Floor Plan



Key

- Designated Badge-Holder Parking
- Access Ramp
- Automatic Doors
- Accessible Lift
- Entrance
- Accessible Entrance
- Evacuation Chair
- Emergency Refuge
- Toilet (Female / Male)
- Accessible Toilet
- Reception
- Refractory/Cafe
- Central Timetabled Room
- Lift
- Fire Assembly Point