

BIRD RINGING CAMP



POLAND – WILD BALTIC COAST



06 – 15 MAY 2024





Work with Pioneers on the sharp edge of Nature Conservation. Ring endangered birds in Polish wilderness.

Bird migrations are one of the most spectacular phenomena of Nature. Since beginnings, humans have been fascinated by the ability to fly, navigation skills and endurance of these wonderful Sky Wanderers.

Some of us went a step further, trying to understand mechanisms behind bird passages. In early 1960s, a small group of such dedicated enthusiasts set up mist nets on the Baltic shore for the first time. One of the oldest bird ringing schemes in the world has just begun.

Every year, in Spring and Autumn, Operation Baltic workers conduct scientific research on birds migrating through Polish coast. Birds are ringed and weighed. We also assess their health and orientation.

Million 200 thousand birds of 208 species have been ringed so far. Why such huge numbers? Because of the unique, transit location of Polish Baltic Coast. For birds, it is a meeting point of their migration routes.

The Operation Baltic cooperates with the Polish Academy of Sciences and top Polish universities. It is renowned for long-lasting tradition, making it one of the oldest bird ringing schemes worldwide. **Research has been going on for more than a half a century!**

The Operation Baltic and wildareas.net want you to become a vital part of the project. You have a unique opportunity to contribute to this world-class research and become our Volunteer.



What will I do?

You will handle the birds, taking them out from nets. Our main duty will be to regularly check mist nets located near the camp. We will bring caught birds in small bags to the camp where they will be ringed and assessed.

In the campsite we will **record all observations** made by the ringer in special notebooks. Sometimes we will perform orientation experiments. And we will release the birds back to the wild.

The work is done in pairs or small groups in shifts. **Nets are checked every hour** during the day and every two hours during the night. In severe weather conditions it's every half an hour – we don't want the animals to get wet or cold in the nets.

Everyone is obliged to keep the camp area tidy and clean. We **cook common meals** and do the washing up. We will also chop the wood for the bonfire and wood burner.



Where will I stay?

- **In a truly unique place.** The camp is located on a narrow sandspit peninsula in the heart of a well known landscape park.

There is a reserve with ancient, 200 year-old beech trees and pine forests. There is a lot of wild boars, so don't be surprised to see them

The area is known for wild beaches and sand dunes. There are lots of tourists in the season, but now you will enjoy deep silence and solitude

of vast, open spaces.

The Staff and Volunteers sleep in tents that are provided on the site. The camp life goes on in bigger, industrial-like tents, heated with a wood burner if necessary.

There is an access to the electricity and water – we have a generator and we shower in a neighbouring farm. We use a TOI-TOI toilet. The shower costs about 2 Pounds (10 PLN).



Free time!

With good organization of work **we can have plenty of free time.** The amount of free time varies and depends on decisions of the ringer. For example, if there are lots of birds in the nets, every pair of hands will be needed. But if there are only a few birds, the amount of free time increases. And then...

The idea is to try something new. Share our passions and learn from each other. Bring anything that crosses your mind – a game, an instrument that you play, a recipe for a delicious meal or other things that you find interesting. Tell us about your hobbies or your interesting job. Teach us unique skills that you have. **Share everything you want – it's up to you!**

In this beautiful place, you can:

- have a scenic walk on the beach
- look for ambers
- chat sitting by the fire
- play guitar
- get spectacular photos
- play games
- cook delicious dinner
- have a nap
- learn some Polish language!



- get suntan! Here the weather is much dryer and sunnier than in UK!

Important: if you wish to take a longer walk or some time-consuming photo exploration, do inform the Ringer!

To use our Time to the fullest...



We can organize several exploration activities, focusing only on creative and affordable ways to Discover the area. In the night we can hunt for Ambers with a UV torch if there is a stormy weather. And even polish found Amber pieces in a genuine amber processing workshop in Gdansk, as featured in Sir David Attenborough's series BBC Natural World. For more ideas, see the Exploration Topics Infosheet on our website www.wildareas.net/bird-ringing-camps

What's in it for me?



Boost your CV with our Certificate of Participation!

We offer HANDS-ON intensive exchange of specialist ornithological experience and knowledge and HANDS-ON field experience in wildlife monitoring abroad, especially important for Bird Ringers, Students, Wildlife Volunteers and Professionals. We will provide training in high-standard techniques of species ID, bird handling, age and sex determination, measurements and data registration.



Spend Time of Your Life in one of the wildest areas of Europe!

We offer deep contact with unspoiled Wildlife, 24 hours a day! You can watch stunning, tranquil Baltic sunrises and sunsets and reconnect with rhythms of Nature. You will have an opportunity to make lifelong friends with inspiring, like-minded people. You will experience invaluable and refreshing international, intercultural exchange. You will gain unforgettable memories.



***Experience life like in a documentary movie...
for real.***

How much will it cost?



You will spend £375 on everything necessary.

The price includes transfers from the Assembly Point to the site and back, all food expenses and a place in the tent. It also covers our high-quality field training with the Certificate of Participation.

The price of time off is 50 GBP, regardless of chosen activities. For a single payment you gain access to all of them. When applying, please specify if you are interested in it so that we can launch an online brainstorm and choose our favourite options.

Although our fee doesn't include plane tickets and insurance on the site, everything else is covered for you for the entire length of your stay with us.



***Contribute to world-class bird conservation research
of critical importance:
become a part of something bigger.***

Your questions answered

Do I have to know a lot about birds to participate?

You don't have to be a bird expert! Ornithological knowledge can be gained on the site. There are persons who help in the research not mainly for birds – they want to reconnect with nature or be a part of friendly community, Apart from ornithologists, our Volunteers are astronomers, businessmen, farmers, teachers, journalists and people from all walks of life.



Is mist netting safe for birds? Yes, this is a safe method of capturing birds. The nets are made of fine threads and the animals are removed from the nets regularly and often, so they are not at risks of a predator attack or exposed to harsh weather conditions.



What to bring?

All-weather clothing. The temperatures can be very high in May, June, July, August and September, but there can also be some chills typical for early Spring or upcoming Autumn. You should definitely have a polar fleece and wind-proof jacket (winds are strong in the shore area) as well as comfortable hiking boots. In early Spring and late Autumn – hat, scarf and gloves. You should have warm socks and spare set of clothes in case you get wet. Sleeping bag is a must. You can take your own waterproofs and wellies, but they are available on site. Another important stuff is a head-torch or a small torch. We don't have any binoculars, except a scope, so Birdwatchers are required to have own equipment. It will be useful to take an insect repellent. We don't have midges, but there are mosquitoes and ticks. You can also take a hand sanitizer, although there is water and soap on the site. Don't forget the electricity plugin adapter. Another useful item is a belt for trousers so that you can attach wader straps.



What is provided on the site?

Full board and lodging. The Baltic action provides tents with very thick foam mattresses and blankets. The food is also covered, but you should inform us if you have any allergies or intolerances. Pots, plates, mugs and cutlery are provided. We also have waterproofs and wellies as well as waders.



Can I bring my own tent? Yes. Persons needing more privacy can bring their own tent.

I am a ringer. Will I be able to ring birds on the camp?

Unfortunately no. Polish law doesn't allow foreign license holders to ring birds in Poland without a suitable preparation.



Health & Safety tips

Bring a proof of your insurance with you, European Health Insurance Card is the best option.

Report any allergies or diseases to us before you arrive. Take all necessary medicaments that you use. First aid kit is on site, but it contains only basic supplies.

Beware of ticks. In Poland they transmit borreliosis and Tick Borne Encephalitis. There's a vaccination against TBE and it is recommended that you vaccinate yourself. If you notice a tick on your skin, you should remove it as soon as possible. Shower everyday is a good idea – ticks will be removed by the running water. It's difficult to spot them regarding their size – below is an image of a tick on a grass stem.

Sosnowsky's hogweed (*Heracleum sosnowskyi*) is a poisonous plant that you might encounter in Poland. Don't touch it – it causes severe burns. It is a tall, impressive umbellifer, reaching up to 4 meters of height.

Don't forget to wash hands before eating – you will handle animals living in the wild.

Birds of prey, herons and owls can be dangerous. Unexperienced Participants have to leave them to more experienced team members or ringers. (Passerines generally aren't dangerous. They peck and scratch but won't do you any harm.)



Camp factfile

Contact Person in UK:	Joanna Chmielewska info@wildareas.net , www.wildareas.net +48 697 148 121 1 Old Union Street Dumfries DG1 2BQ United Kingdom
Camp location:	Bukowo near Koszalin, Western-Pomeranian Voivodeship, POLAND
Available dates:	06-15.05.2024
Camp language:	English, Polish
Meeting point and time	KFC at Gdansk Glowny Station, Gdansk City Center
Polish contact details:	Uniwersytet Gdanski, Akcja Bałtycka ul. Wita Stwosza 59 80-308 Gdansk, POLAND www.akbalt.ug.edu.pl



Our location in Poland



Some of Species

ringed during Operation Baltic.

Many from RSPB Birds of Concern

Red and Amber list

Retraps from Russia, Scandinavia, UK, Latvia, Estonia, Spain, Italy, Germany ...

Eurasian woodcock
European turtle dove
Ringed plover
Cuckoo
Bullfinch
Merlin
Golden oriole
Red-backed shrike
Willow tit
Marsh tit
Eurasian skylark
Wood warbler
Grasshopper warbler
Savi's warbler
Pygmy owl
Marsh warbler
Starling
Ring ouzel
Fieldfare

Redwing
Corncrake
Mistle thrush
Spotted flycatcher
Nightingale
Pied flycatcher
Black redstart
Whinchat
House sparrow
Tree sparrow
Yellow wagtail
Grey wagtail
Tree pipit
Hawfinch
Linnet
Twite
Lesser redpoll
Yellowhammer
Corn bunting

Bittern
Honey buzzard
Hen harrier
Marsh harrier
Montagu's harrier
Spotted crane
Sandpipers
Red crossbill
Snipe
Willow warbler
Treetreepers
Common redstart
Dunnock
Goldcrest
Lesser spotted woodpecker
Nightjar
Reed bunting
Song thrush
Bullfinch

These are selected species. Some of them are fairly common but for obvious reasons we cannot guarantee that you will see them all. The most abundant are tits, robins, song thrushes, bullfinches.





THERE IS NO WIFI IN THE

FOREST BUT YOU WILL

FIND A BETTER

CONNECTION



www.wildareas.net