

29 April 2021

PRESS RELEASE

Get ready! May 1, 2021, marks the start of the second annual, one-month campaign of the Citizen Science and Arts Project DAWN CHORUS to collect birdsongs worldwide – now, with a new app!

With a new free app, DAWN CHORUS invites people around the world to record and share their local morning bird song and make an important contribution to biodiversity research. The integrated new media art feature even allows them to add an artistic dimension to their personal nature experience.

The Citizen Science and Arts Project DAWN CHORUS is calling on people around the globe to record and share the morning birdsong on their doorstep during May 2021. There was a resounding response to the first Dawn Chorus campaign initiated in May 2020 during the “pandemic silence” caused by reduced human noise during the initial lockdown. More than 4,000 uploads of bird song from 50 countries were uploaded to the project’s portal www.dawn-chorus.org, and more than 65,000 followers joined the project on social media which received international press coverage and was awarded as part of the “UN Decade of Biological Diversity.” The project was initiated by BIOTOPIA, the new museum for life sciences and environment in development in Munich, and Stiftung Kunst und Natur / Foundation Arts and Nature (formerly the Nantesbuch Foundation), with support from the Max Planck Society.

The Dawn Chorus as indicator of threatened biodiversity

Birdsong is a powerful and evocative indicator of ecosystem health. During the dawn chorus, many birds are highly vocally active. In an effort to make their voices heard, DAWN CHORUS 2020 took advantage of the unusual silence afforded by the first lockdown – the reduction of human-generated noise, such as airplane and road traffic – to motivate people around the world to listen to the birds in their immediate environment in the early morning hours, record the bird songs with their smartphones, and upload them to the DAWN CHORUS website. The collective data submitted by participants has since been included in a digital global sound map, where visitors can listen to and discover the myriad of bird songs from around the world. The songs have also become part of an invaluable collection of scientific data from which initial research questions have already been investigated in collaboration with the Max-Planck-Gesellschaft and other scientific institutions (<https://dawn-chorus.org/report2020-en/>). The collection has also been made available to the European Commission’s Global Coalition #UnitedforBiodiversity which is mobilizing international institutions to raise their voices on the global environmental crisis ahead of the UN Biodiversity Conference (COP15).

The goal, now, is to sustain and expand this initiative. Every year in May, when the birds herald the start of the breeding season with their mating songs, we hope to expand our public reach to citizen scientists with renewed calls for collecting bird song data that will help track developments in species diversity and habitats, as well as the effects of noise pollution through comparative analyses of annual data.

DAWN CHORUS 2021 hopes to inspire people to, once again, actively engage with nature and develop a personal awareness of the biodiversity in their immediate surroundings. It is well known, for example, that birds in the vicinity of airports start their morning song earlier. Are there also changes in the number and type of bird songs in the local city park, at bodies of water, or even on the village street? Which birds can be heard where? The aim of DAWN CHORUS 2021 is to increase the number of participants, generally, and encourage returning participants to make new recordings at the same location, on the same day and the same time as last year.

DAWN CHORUS 2021: New free app combines citizen science with innovative art

This year's funding from the German Federal Cultural Foundation enabled DAWN CHORUS 2021 to develop a new free app to complement and expand its web platform. The intuitive DAWN CHORUS app not only facilitates the recording and uploading process, but significantly improves the quality of uploads for scientific evaluation by standardizing data collection. In the future, the app will integrate the automatic recognition of bird calls using machine learning – a development that will involve experts from the field of artificial intelligence and machine learning.

A newly developed artistic feature adds another dimension to DAWN CHORUS 2021: *Sonic Feather*, created by multimedia artists Mika Johnson and Marcel Karnapke, allows participants to draw using their own recorded bird calls as if with “acoustic ink” to create unique, multi-layered media artworks that can then be shared on community networks. This interlinking of scientific curiosity and art intensifies and cements participants' dialogue with nature and their experience of the morning bird concert.

This year DAWN CHORUS is also excited to work with World Migratory Bird Day who have the theme “Sing, Fly, Soar like a Bird”.

As an interactive, community-based citizen science and art project, DAWN CHORUS 2021 opens the door to nature for everyday people around the world, piquing their curiosity and raising their awareness of its endangerment. It provides each and every participant the opportunity to make both a scientific and artistic contribution to biodiversity research.

“Dawn Chorus is a project that invites people to stop and listen, and connect with their local biodiversity through the medium of sound, while contributing to a global citizen science and art project. Birdsong is a vital indicator of the health of our ecosystems, and we want this project to be an alarm call to wake people up to the need to protect shrinking habitats for wildlife, and to make our cities and surrounding areas more hospitable to bird life. BIOTOPIA, Bavaria's new museum for environment and life sciences in development, is deeply committed to nurturing a deeper understanding of the ecosystems we depend on, and of inspiring people to action to protect our planet.”

Prof. Dr. Michael John Gorman, Founding Director, BIOTOPIA – Naturkundemuseum Bayern

The DAWN CHORUS app is now available at no charge for iOS and Android:

Google Play Store:

https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=com.natural_apptitude.dawnchorus

App Store:

<https://apps.apple.com/gb/app/dawn-chorus/id1557441003#?platform=iphone>

The *Sonic Feather* art feature will be available as an update from mid-May.

DAWN CHORUS

Hear the call!

From **May 1 to May 31, 2021**, DAWN CHORUS is calling on citizen scientists to get active once again:

Get up very early and record the bird concert between dusk and dawn with your phone using the DAWN CHORUS app. Create your own media artwork with the recordings. Upload the recordings to the global sound map and share your experience with people around the world at <https://dawn-chorus.org/en/>. Through your participation, you are making an important contribution to a growing collection of scientific data on biodiversity research and thus to species conservation. Be a part of a global artistic project.

You can hear the voices of the DAWN CHORUS at **#dawnchorus2021** and **#stopandlisten**

Facebook [@DawnChorusStopAndListen](https://www.facebook.com/DawnChorusStopAndListen)

Instagram www.instagram.com/dawnchorus_stopandlisten
[@dawnchorus_stopandlisten](https://www.instagram.com/dawnchorus_stopandlisten)

or by visiting <https://dawn-chorus.org/en/>.

PRESS MATERIAL is available for download at:

<https://dawn-chorus.org/press/>

“Dawn Chorus – the App” is developed as part of the “dive in. Programme for Digital Interactions” of the Kulturstiftung des Bundes (German Federal Cultural Foundation) with funding by the Federal Government Commissioner for Culture and the Media (BMK) in the NEUSTART KULTUR programme.

DAWN CHORUS is a collaborative project of BIOTOPIA – Naturkundemuseum Bayern and Stiftung Kunst und Natur / Foundation Arts and Nature, as well as Förderkreis BIOTOPIA – Naturkundemuseum Bayern e.V.

DAWN CHORUS – PROJECT PARTNERS:

Bayerisches Staatsministerium für Wissenschaft und Kunst (Bavarian State Ministry for Science and Art)

Bayerisches Staatsministerium für Umwelt und Verbraucherschutz (Bavarian State Ministry of the Environment and Consumer Protection)

Bayerische Akademie für Naturschutz und Landschaftspflege (Bavarian Academy for Nature Conservation and Landscape Management)

Bayern 2 (Bavarian Broadcast 2)

BirdLife International

BUND Naturschutz in Bayern e.V. (Bavarian Society for the Protection of Birds e.V.)

Landesbund für Vogelschutz in Bayern e.V. (Nature and Biodiversity Conservation Union of Germany e.V.)

Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität München, Lehrstuhl für Didaktik der Biologie (LMU Munich, Institute for Biology Education)

Max-Planck-Gesellschaft (Max-Planck-Society)

Max-Planck-Institut für Ornithologie (Max-Planck-Institute for Ornithology)

Museum for the United Nations – UN Live

Staatliche Naturwissenschaftliche Sammlungen Bayerns

UN-Dekade Biologische Vielfalt (UN Decade on Biodiversity)

Universität Salzburg, Didaktik der Biologie (University of Salzburg, Institute for Biology Education)

VBio

World Migratory Bird Day

WWF

Advisors:

Dr. Bernie Krause, Bioacoustician

Prof. Dr. Manfred Gahr, Director, Max-Planck-Institute for Ornithology, Seewiesen, Germany

Prof. Kathrin Böhning-Gaese, Senckenberg Gesellschaft (Senckenberg Natural Science Society)

Dr. Robert Lachlan, Royal Holloway University of London

Prof. Michael Scherer-Lorenzen, Albert-Ludwigs-Universität Freiburg (University of Freiburg)

DAWN CHORUS – FOUNDING MEMBERS:

BIOTOPIA – Naturkundemuseum Bayern is currently in planning as a new museum of environmental and biological sciences in Munich-Nymphenburg/Germany. It reinvents the concept of the natural history museum for the “age of biology” and is, thus, to expand and eventually replace the existing Museum Mensch und Natur. As an interface between science, art and society, BIOTOPIA will feature interactive exhibitions, events, festivals, digital education programs and Bavaria-wide mobile programs, as well as serve as a new discussion and education platform on life sciences and sustainability issues. BIOTOPIA is an international lighthouse project of the Free State of Bavaria with private support from the Friends of BIOTOPIA – Naturkundemuseum Bayern, chaired by Dr. Auguste Prinzessin von Bayern.

Learn more at: <https://www.biotopia.net/en>

Stiftung Kunst und Natur / Foundation Arts and Nature (formerly the Nantesbuch Foundation) offers facilities and interdisciplinary programs for the sensory engagement with art and culture, as well as nature and the landscape. It aims to inspire and motivate people to action.

Founded in 2012 by entrepreneur Susanne Klatten, the foundation operates at two locations: In Nantesbuch, in the Bavarian foothills of the Alps, it is developing a large nature site with comprehensive measures in renaturation, landscape preservation, forest conversion, and extensive agriculture and forestry, and hosts a diverse cultural and educational program on art and nature. In Bad Homburg, Hesse, the Museum Sinclair-Haus offers an exhibition venue for contemporary international art. Learn more at: www.kunst-und-natur.de

MEDIA CONTACT:

Project DAWN CHORUS

Ulrike Haardt

CONTENT | PR | SOCIAL MEDIA

mail@ulrikehaardt.de

Cell +49 (0)163-478 3522

Stiftung Kunst und Natur – Foundation Arts and Nature

Anke Michaelis

Head of Strategic Communications, Press Spokesperson

am@kunst-und-natur.de

Tel +49 (0)8046-23192 208

Cell +49 (0)175-400 8221

www.kunst-und-natur.de

BIOTOPIA – Naturkundemuseum Bayern

Dr. Ulrike Rehwagen

Head of Communication and Marketing

rehwagen@biotopia.net

Tel +49 (0)89 178 61 421

Cell +49 (0)174-164 8558

<https://www.biotopia.net/en>