



BIOTOPIA
LAB

Joint press release

Call to Action for Biodiversity: Record Birdsong for the "Dawn Chorus" Project

**Main collection period from May 1st – AI-supported
automatic bird song recognition integrated for the first
time**

Munich/Hilpoltstein, April 25, 2024 – On May 1st, the main collection period of the Citizen Science project "Dawn Chorus" kicks off once again. Together, the Naturkundemuseum Bayern/BIOTOPIA Lab and the Bavarian Association for the Protection of Bird and Nature (LBV) invite people worldwide to take a moment to experience, record, and share the early morning bird Dawn Chorus at their doorstep. For the first time, participants can now also use AI-supported automatic bird song recognition in the Dawn Chorus app. This is intended to make it easier for the participants to identify bird sounds and thus learn more about the species occurring in their environment. The recordings collected in the project form a valuable, growing database for biodiversity research. At the same time, Dawn Chorus offers various opportunities for creativity, thus representing a unique symbiosis of art and science.

The Dawn Chorus is a fascinating natural phenomenon that peaks in Europe in May. "About an hour before dawn, birds everywhere start chirping, whistling, and trilling. The song of the awakening bird world is now most intense until about an hour after sunrise. This makes the Dawn Chorus particularly interesting for science: Changes in biodiversity – such as those caused by climate change or habitat alterations – can be observed here. As part of the Citizen Science project, everyone can contribute to research," **explains Dr. Norbert Schäffer, Chairperson of LBV (Bavarian Association for the Protection of Birds and Nature)**. With the free Dawn Chorus app, it is possible to make and upload scientifically standardized recordings without prior bird knowledge.

This year, for the first time, there is the possibility to use integrated bird song recognition in the app. This is intended to help participants identify which species are heard in their recordings. Additionally, the scientific analysis of the data is expected to become easier in the future. "Automatic bird song recognition can help people in the future not only to

listen but also to educate themselves and learn more about the birds, their habitat, and their songs. Being able to recognize more and more species by their songs exercises a great fascination and thus opens up a new dimension of the Dawn Chorus project," explains **Dr. Auguste von Bayern, Chairperson of the Naturkundemuseum Bayern/BIOTOPIA Lab, researcher at the Max Planck Institute for Biological Intelligence, and co-initiator of Dawn Chorus.**

The algorithm of the well-known bird song app "BirdNET," developed by a research team led by Dr. Stefan Kahl of TU Chemnitz and the renowned Cornell Ornithology Lab, serves as the basis for Dawn Chorus' automatic bird song recognition. The vast diversity of the morning concert is still a challenge for automatic bird song recognition and needs further development. To reliably identify all voices in the future, the help of participants is required: volunteer bird song experts help to continuously improve artificial intelligence.

City vs. Countryside Challenge on May 19th

The main scientific collection period also takes place this year from May 1st to 31st. The project team calls for the popular "City versus Country Challenge" on May 19th. The goal is to collect as many recordings as possible on this day, regardless of whether they come from urban or rural areas. More information on participation and other actions related to Dawn Chorus can be found at www.dawn-chorus.org. Recordings of bird songs are also welcome outside the main collection period.

About the project

As the sun slowly rises, the "dawn chorus" begins. Many birds begin to sing. The citizen science and art project Dawn Chorus invites people all over the world to experience this morning concert and record it with their smartphones - to make nature heard. The scientific goal is to use sound recordings with the help of citizen scientists to document bird diversity over a period of years. The data from this acoustic biomonitoring helps to reveal changes in species diversity. The project was initiated by Naturkundemuseum Bayern/BIOTOPIA Lab and the Stiftung Kunst und Natur during the silence of the first Corona Lockdown in spring 2020. Since 2022, LBV has been a project partner of Dawn Chorus. The project lead position, still closely connected with the Naturkundemuseum Bayern/BIOTOPIA Lab and the Max Planck Institute for Biological Intelligence, is now located at LMU Munich.

You can tune in to the bird songs of Dawn Chorus with the hashtags **#dawnchorus2024** and **#stopandlisten**

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Free images for this press release can be found at <https://dawn-chorus.org/press/>. Please note the instructions for use.