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Weekend EuroBirdwatch 06 a success across Europe

Monday October 9, 2006: Europe's largest birdwatching event, the Eurobirdwatch, has once again been a huge success across the continent, attracting more than 43.408 people in 34 countries and spotting more than 2.204.949 birds.

More than 3 million birds were spotted in the 2005 event, and this year's EuroBirdwatch statistics have shown again that birds have a broad appeal and are an easily accessible part of Europe's nature.

The figures from the EuroBirdwatch speak for themselves:

- The country with the largest number of separate events was Poland, which held 182 events across the two days weekend.
- The country with the highest number of recorded participants is Spain, with 25.000 people
- The country with the largest number of birds spotted was Lithuania, with a tally of 813.945 birds.
- The country with the most diverse birdlist is Romania, with 200 different species observed.

"It's always so exciting to get the results back at the end of the weekend, and see just how many people got involved, and how many birds were seen. The numbers of people and events get bigger every year, and more people mean more birds are spotted. Whether it's in the cities or parks or backyards, or really out in the wilderness, it's great to know that so many people have shared in the natural experience." said Adrian Long, BirdLife International's Communications Director.

"There is always a bit of rivalry between countries for who can see the most birds, and who can put on the biggest EuroBirdwatch event. But the bottom line is people everywhere are getting involved, and through that are learning about not just birds, but their environment, and the need to protect Europe's natural heritage. Important Bird Areas (IBA's) are a focus of the weekend, and it's through these areas, and other protected sites, that we will continue to conserve unique flora and fauna – including birds." said Adrian Long.

Part of the World Bird Festival organised by BirdLife International and it's partners globally, the EuroBirdwatch was held this past October weekend with the aim of encouraging people of all ages to go birdwatching in their countries, and join in the activities and events organised by local BirdLife partner organisations.

This year, the EuroBirdwatch Launch was supported by the Toyota Fund for Europe. Toyota Motor Europe and BirdLife International established a partnership that not only involves the support of the EuroBirdwatch Launch but also practical cooperation between local Toyota affiliates and local IBAs.

For further information on EuroBirdwatch, please go to:

<http://www.birdlife.org/action/awareness/eurobirdwatch/index.html>

<http://www.lipu.it/news/no.asp?471>

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