

Birdstrike risk forecast for the mid of February till the mid of March 2020

The first short and middle distance migrants arrive in bigger numbers and migration will increase significantly till the mid of March. Along with this the birdstrike risk at German airports raises as well. The abundances of Nordic geese and swans in the wet lowlands in North and East-Germany stay on a constant level whilst grey geese and cranes are reported in increased numbers. Though there are often smaller and average flocks of migrating cranes on their way in north-eastern direction. If the temperatures stay rather mild, no massive moving in of Nordic geese have to be expected during the following months, but on the other side the conditions benefit the early return of Middle-European species. For example this can be seen on an explicit increase of reported white storks which already arrived at their nesting grounds in many places and start with their breeding behaviour.

Also the numbers of starlings and lapwings (see below) are clearly increased last week and also till the end of the month bigger flocks on their migration have to be expected. While starlings are spread all over Germany, lapwings are mostly reported at the coasts and the bigger lowlands in the North. Currently a massive invasion of skylarks (see below) takes place so that at airports, which represent an optimal breeding area, bigger abundances have to be expected. They are going to start with their courting behaviour soon what can lead to an increased number of birdstrikes. Likewise, crows start with their breeding behaviour this month. Crows, gulls and raptors can pose a risk for the air traffic on the manoeuvring areas and during commuting flights in the surroundings. Local movements of the avifauna mostly take place under 600 ft but migration activities currently also take place in bigger heights till 30.000 ft (geese and cranes), though it is limited for many species to a maximum of 6.000 ft. However migrating bird flocks occur during the day as well as during the night but they often focus on the hours around dawn and dusk.

For your flight preparation please also use the birdtam chat provided under the following link <https://www.notams.faa.gov/common/birdtam.html>



Starling (*Sturnus vulgaris*), above left;
Lapwing (*Vanellus vanellus*), above right;
Skylark (*Alauda arvensis*), below