



# Ottenby

Bird Observatory

SWEDEN | ÖLAND

Come work  
with us

Ottenby Bird Observatory is a part of



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56°11'51"N, 16°23'58"E



## Ottenby Bird Observatory — Sweden

Ottenby Bird Observatory is situated in SE Sweden, at the southern point of the Baltic island of Öland. The bird observatory was founded in 1946 and is run by BirdLife Sweden.

Working here is great fun and a lifetime experience, and the following pages are meant to give you a short presentation of what we do, when and how we do it and what we need your help for!

### Ottenby Bird Observatory in short

- Bird ringing ✓
- Research projects ✓
- Monitoring programs ✓
- Public activities ✓

- Field season: March 15 to December 15
- Staff: 1 employed warden and 5-15 volunteers
- Housing: On site, in an old cozy villa
- Allowance: Salary or scholarship

# The birds

Southern Öland, and especially the Ottenby area, provides top class bird watching during spring, summer and autumn. Peak periods are mid-April to late May, mid-July to mid-August (shorebirds) and mid-September to late October. C. 120 species breed in the area, e.g. Red-breasted Flycatcher, Collared Flycatcher, Scarlet Rosefinch, Red-backed Shrike, Barred Warbler, Icterine Warbler, Golden Oriole, Avocet, Thrush Nightingale, Corncrake, White-tailed Eagle and Greenish Warbler.

Seabird migration is terrific with millions of birds of a wide array of species passing each season and, furthermore, southern Öland is well known for numerous and regular records of Siberian vagrants (as well as masses of bird watchers). In total, close to 400 species of birds have been recorded in the Ottenby area.



## The ringing program

About 25.000 birds of 140 species are ringed each year. This primarily includes passerines and shorebirds, but also ducks, owls and some raptors. Much of the ringing is conducted within our standardized program during March 15 to June 15 (spring), July 10 to August 31 (shorebirds) and July 25 to November 15 (autumn).

The work starts just before sunrise and ends at 11 am. Typical daily totals are between 30–100 birds, but may reach >1000 during intense days. Birds are trapped primarily with mist nets, two Heligoland traps and with the "Ottenby shorebird-traps". All birds are processed indoors in our ringing lab.

# The research

Extensive research has been conducted for many decades now, and the scientific areas primarily include research on bird migration, the importance of birds as reservoirs or vectors for zoonotic diseases, monitoring of population trends and trends in phenology. In addition, extensive contract research is carried out for external institutions, authorities and private researchers. 5–15 peer reviewed scientific papers are published annually. Assisting such projects is interesting and fun, and also gives valuable contacts with professional researchers.

# The duck trap

The bird observatory is a cooperative partner of a long-term avian influenza monitoring program. Ducks are trapped from August to mid-December and samples are being taken for analysis at the Linnaeus University in Kalmar. The number of ducks vary from very few early in the season to sometimes more than 100 per day during peak migration in late autumn.

# The monitoring programs

Breeding bird monitoring programs are conducted annually, both on our vast shore meadows and in the beautiful deciduous forest called Ottenby lund, just nearby. We also run a long-term stop-over count of arctic shorebirds and a program where we follow the introduction of Green Toads here on the point.





## Public activities

The southern point and the lighthouse Långe Jan are popular tourist attractions — each year c. 250.000 people visit the area. The bird observatory gives guided tours to about 3.000 persons every year, where we show them who we are and how and why we trap and ring birds. This is actually one of our major income sources. Furthermore, we also have a museum, a restaurant and a nature bookstore on the site.

## Staying here

The island of Öland is a quiet, rural and very friendly part of Scandinavia, and Ottenby is a truly beautiful piece of nature, famous in Sweden for its rich biodiversity, the lighthouse and the bird observatory. Your only neighbours will be the other volunteers, the birds and the seals...

As a volunteer you will receive a free bed in the "White house", the old villa that used to host the lighthouse keeper and his family. Food is bought and prepared together with the rest of the staff. The bird observatory building is just a minute's walk away, and the bird trapping is conducted in the surrounding garden and along the nearby shoreline. Internet (incl. wifi) and telephones are free to use.

The staff size is around 5–15 persons, depending on season, and in total c. 30 volunteers work here every year. Some stay for just a week or two, but quite a few end up spending whole seasons (or several years) here.

**Are you also interested in coming here?  
Have a look at the next page...**



## What do you want to do?

### Bird ringer

As a bird ringer you are primarily working with trapping and ringing of birds. Other tasks may include data entry, guided tours or other practical things of various nature. Scholarship: Accommodation and 200 SEK (c. 20€)/day. Available between: March 15 to November 15 (or perhaps into December). Your CV should include recommendations from previous ringing duties.

### Ringers assistant

As an assistant you are primarily working with trapping and extraction of birds from nets and traps. Other tasks may include data entry, guided tours or other practical things of various nature. Scholarship: Accommodation and 180 SEK (c. 18€)/day. Available between: March 15 to November 15 (or perhaps into December).

### Duck trapper

As a duck trapper you are primarily working with trapping, ringing, sample-taking and data entry of ducks. Other tasks may include guided tours or other practical things of various nature. Monthly salary: 10.000 SEK (c. 1000€) minus tax. Available between: August 1 to December 15. Your CV should include recommendations from previous ringing duties.

### Monitoring staff

The monitoring staff is primarily responsible for performing the various parts of our monitoring programs in Ottenby lund and on the meadows. Other tasks may include guided tours or other practical things of various nature. Monthly salary: 10.000 SEK (c. 1000€) minus tax. Available between: April 20 to June 20. Knowledge of bird songs is required.





## Apply

Please visit [www.ottenby.se/en/work-with-us/](http://www.ottenby.se/en/work-with-us/). There you will find some more information as well as a form for you to fill. Applications should have arrived by December 31 (for the spring), March 31 (for the summer) or May 31 (for the autumn).

If all paid posts are taken, you may still be welcome to join us, but due to limited resources we may not be able to offer you any allowance.

If you have any questions what so ever, feel free to contact us on [info@ottenby.se](mailto:info@ottenby.se).

**WELCOME TO OTTENBY!**

## Getting here

- International flight to Kastrup airport, Copenhagen (Denmark).
- Train to Kalmar (direct) leaves several times each day from the Kastrup airport train station.
- From Kalmar train station, take bus 112 or 105 as far south as possible (which may be the villages Mörbylånga, Grönhögen or Ottenby depending on departure time) were we pick you up with car.

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