

NAKUWA is funded by Interreg Germany-Denmark with funds from the European Regional Development Fund

Code of Conduct for Birdwatching in the Wadden Sea National Park

Developed through the German-Danish Interreg 5A project NAKUWA - Sustainable Nature and Cultural Tourism in the Wadden Sea World Heritage Site, www.nakuwa.net, last updated: January 2019

Our policy and principles

The welfare of all birds and the protection of their habitats have priority.

How to behave in nature

- In general, our behaviour out in nature, regardless if protected or not (e.g. as a nature reserve or national park), is in a considerate and responsible manner.
- We avoid any disturbance of birds and other living creatures as well as any damage to their natural habitats and will use sufficient distance when observing them.
- We will stay on paths and tracks and will not scare the birds.
- We will move slowly, are patient and will aim to avoid any loud noises.
- We will respect nesting, moulting, sleeping, feeding and places of courtship and will not disturb them.
- In addition to the protection of breeding birds, we note that especially migratory birds need enough time and distance to rest and feed as they are often exhausted and hungry.
- We know and acknowledge stressful behaviour, signs of restlessness, as well as warning calls from the birds and will withdraw when we notice these.
- We use the existing observation facilities, because at these locations the birds are most likely less susceptible to disturbances and are easy to observe
- We respect all guidelines of nature conservation (in particular of the Federal Nature Conservation Act, National Nature Conservation Act, National Park Act, Nature Conservation Regulations), such as the non-entry regulations in protected areas.
- We use acoustic aids to attract birds not at all or only sparingly. No use in the breeding season!
- We avoid using flash and lighting when taking photos and filming. We refrain from taking pictures if any negative effects are to be expected. Photo hides such as camouflage tents are only available in consultation with the respective authority. It is generally forbidden to use drones in the National Park and in other protected areas.
- We report our observations to www.ornitho.de, so that they are available for nature conservation and scientific evaluations. But we handle our observations responsibly and consider whether make information publicly available. Sensitive observations will be entered using the protected site of www.ornitho.de.

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Behaviour towards people

- We always behave in a friendly and respectful manner towards fellow bird observers, local residents, landowners and conservation workers.
- We will not trespass, respect private property and land ownership, stay on paths, roads, etc. and will not block any roads. We will park only on designated, suitable areas.

Behaviour in groups

- Bird watching in a group requires special attention from all participants to avoid any disruption.
- All participants know and accept this Code of Conduct.
- Group leaders act as role models.
- The group stays together as single/multiple person(s) going ahead could interfere with observation opportunities for the remainder of the group.
- All group members respect the interests, rights and expertise of the other participants. Everyone shares their knowledge.
- Behaviour that does not conform to this code of conduct is addressed in a polite manner.
- Areas not suitable for groups will not be visited.
- Group sizes must correspond to the conditions of the protected area.
- The well-being of nature and participants will be put before any commercial interests.