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The Atlantic

German system of visual observations of bird migration.

(Lecture held by ORR Dr. Bild, GAF)

The bird observation in Germany is based on a visual and a radar system. I shall give you only a short report about the visual system for which were published new regulations in October 1969. (Besondere Anweisung für den Geophysikalischen Beratungsdienst der Bundeswehr).

The following persons, institutions and institutes are working within this system:

- 1. Met people on military airfields
- 2. ATC people on military airfields
- 3. ATC people on civil airports
- 4. Ornithological institutes
- 5. Honorary people in Germany

The observers either are field ornithologists or got special books and lessons informations and regulations for bird observation, bird recognition and references to distinguish a real bird migration from other types of bird movement during the year. Criteria for a real bird migration are: (you find it in encl. 3 of the "Anweisung")

- 1. Quantity of observed birds
- 2. Number of observed birds
- 3. Type of appearance
- 4. Flight height
- 5. Flight direction
- 6. Weather situation (for orientation the observers got a special list parameters which seem to be important/not important for migration you will find it in encl. 4 of the a.m. "Anweisung").

The observer has to distinguish between various types of bird movements in Germany:

- 1. Main migration in spring and fall
- 2. Early spring migration induced by weather
- 3. Inter-migration in early summer after breeding period
- 4. Moulting migration of waterfowl in summer
- 5. Winter migration induced by weather
- 6. Retreat migration in spring induced by cold air spells
- 7. Generally weather conditioned migration independent on seasons
- 8. Invasions during all seasons
- 9. Looping migration

The observer has to inform GeophysWahn immediately about observations according the well-known regulation a, b, c, d, e, by the Met or ATO network. But weather information or other ATO informations are more important than his informations.

In order to give an idea about the number of single informations and observations within 1989 following indications:

500 bird observations by visual observers

136 bird observations by radar observers

From 26.3. - 21.9.1990 we got nearly 300 radar observations at polaroid-photos

Because of the high number of observations it seems to be impossible to give these informations directly to the airfields. They are collected in GEO Wahn, evaluated and filtered within a short time and given out as birdman in case it seems to be necessary. The birdman mostly is based on a lot of single informations; but to have a personnel problem, therefore it is not possible to work always in a 24 hours turn.