



## An Assessment of Bird Watching in Turkey as a Recreational Activity\*\*

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### Abstract

Due to the low damage of bird watching to nature, it is highly preferred as an alternative tourism activity, particularly in western societies. However, when Turkey is concerned specifically, we can claim that activities aimed at bird watching is not sufficient although the main migration flyways of birds pass through Turkey due to its geopolitical position and it has rich flora and fauna. In this study both qualitative and quantitative research methods are used with the aim of determining the current situation of bird watching in Turkey, which is rapidly developing in Western societies and specifying the profile of the participants in this context. In the first part of the study, secondary data related to bird watching in Turkey is gathered through document analysis method. In the second part, data were collected from 192 bird watchers via electronic questionnaire to obtain the demographic information and to determine the profiles of the people who participated in bird watching. As a result of the research, primarily we have tried to determine the revenues derived from bird watching worldwide, the number of the bird species breeding in our country and significant bird watching areas in Turkey by examining the reports prepared by non- governmental organizations dealing with bird watching both in Turkey and in the world. Afterwards, we have tried to identify the demographic information and profiles of bird watchers by cooperating with various non- governmental organizations. As a result of the statistical analysis, it was observed that the majority of the participants consisted of the male, juvenile people with high educational and income level. When the expenditures of the participants were analyzed, although people with high income level constituted the majority of the participants, the number of those who spent below the average were high. On the other hand, the bird watchers mostly participate in the bird watching activity once a month, they prefer the city they live in or the surrounding cities for this activity and they do not require any accommodation. Based on the findings, various suggestions were made to the tourism sector, practitioners and future studies in the last part of the study.

### Article Type

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