

SPI-Birds Network and Database

Terms of Use & Data Access Policy

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Produced by:

SPI-Birds team

Antica Culina, Stefan J.G. Vriend,
Liam D. Bailey & Marcel E. Visser

1 Introduction

This document is created as part of the **SPI-Birds Network and Database** (www.spibirds.org). SPI-Birds is an international network of researchers and others who collect data on populations of individually marked birds, with the aim to improve data accessibility and transparency and to facilitate data reuse and collaboration. This document is designed to guide the use of data hosted at SPI-Birds. We believe the sharing of data will foster collaborative scientific research and educational activities internationally. Each dataset hosted at SPI-Birds is accompanied by documentation (metadata), and for each dataset these metadata specify the terms and conditions of data use. SPI-Birds members endorse the principle that data hosted at SPI-Birds can be requested for academic, research, education, and other non-profit professional purposes. We encourage the use of our datasets but ask that users read and agree to our data use agreement below, and adhere to the principle of acknowledging the use of data and its attribution.

2 Definitions

Term	Definition
Data Custodian	Person or organisation that has the custody of a dataset hosted at SPI-Birds.
Data User	Person or persons who are interested in using data hosted at SPI-Birds.
License Type	One of three SPI-Birds data licenses, set by the Data Custodian , that prescribes the rights and conditions under which their data may be used.
Usage Terms	Specific terms set by the Data Custodian, often in correspondence with a Data User , that prescribe additional conditions under which their data may be used.

3 Data use agreement

Access to SPI-Birds datasets might be granted to the **Data User**, depending on the license of the dataset and the outcome of the correspondence between **Data User** and **Data Custodian** for closed datasets.

The general SPI-Birds terms of use apply to all users downloading data that are not their own. By accepting this document and accessing data from SPI-Birds, the user agrees to the following:

1. To follow the terms defined in the **License Type** and the study's **Usage Terms** for each study from which data are accessed.
2. To obtain permission from the **Data Custodian** for the proposed use prior to downloading data. For studies that are *Fully Open* or *By Attribution*, permission of the **Data Custodian** is not required for use. However, if data will be used for new applications or analyses, we strongly encourage users to make a reasonable attempt to contact the **Data**

Custodians about your intended use, and to offer co-authorship or other credit as appropriate for publications or products resulting from the use of these data.

3. To follow SPI-Birds citation guidelines ([Annex I](#)) for citing the use of data. Citation is required for data with the *By Attribution* license and if specified in the study's **Usage Terms**. For data licensed with *Fully Open* or if not specified by the study's **Usage Terms**, we encourage following these guidelines or providing citation and acknowledgement in other ways as is feasible.
4. Not to hold SPI-Birds or the **Data Custodian** liable for errors in the data. We do not guarantee the completeness or accuracy of these data.
5. To assess the fitness of these data for the intended use. Allowing the download of these data does not suggest that SPI-Birds or the **Data Custodian** approve of the proposed use or support the results of your analysis. If you find potential errors or incomplete information within a study, please contact the **Data Custodian** and/or spibirds@nioo.knaw.nl.

Further, the following guidelines apply:

1. The **Data User** understands that the majority of the datasets are being actively used by others (usually the **Data Custodians'** research group) for ongoing research and that communication and coordination is necessary to prevent duplicate publication. The **Data User** also realizes that the data may be misinterpreted if taken out of context. Data are mostly being collected by scientists in academic and other research organizations with the requirement to publish scientific papers. Thus, the Data User must contact the responsible person, usually the **Data Custodian**, for each dataset to check on other uses of the data, receive further information on data, and discuss collaboration and/or co-authorship. The contact person (usually the **Data Custodian**) is clearly stated for each dataset, in the datasets' metadata. Note that, in some cases, the **Data Custodian** opts not to be contacted prior to the data use. In this case, SPI-Birds will provide data upon an acceptable request (please see point 3).
2. Acknowledgement: the **Data User** agrees to acknowledge the use of data, resources, and expertise, in their publication, presentation or other dissemination media, and, where appropriate, agrees to engage the contributors of the data in other professional activities (e.g., co-authorship of papers). Use of the data in publications must always include the minimal terms of use, as stated in the metadata of each dataset, and might include other elements (specific terms), that are agreed upon with the **Data Custodian** (e.g., co-authorship). The minimal terms include the following (and are clearly stated for each dataset):
 - (a) acknowledge the **Data Custodian(s)** and the SPI-Birds Network and Database;
 - (b) acknowledge the stated funding sources (if any);
 - (c) cite publication(s) describing the population from which dataset was derived (if any);

- (d) cite the SPI-Birds paper;
 - (e) cite the dataset. Citation guidelines are provided in the [Annex I](#).
3. Acceptable use: use of the dataset will be restricted to academic, research, educational, government, recreational, or other non-profit professional purposes. Any other uses can be discussed with the **Data Custodian**. We therefore require a brief description of the purpose of the data request, even for datasets that do not require the agreement on the specific terms of use/explicit approval of the **Data Custodian**.
 4. The **Data User** agrees to notify the SPI-Birds and the **Data Custodian** when any derivative work or publication based on, or derived from, the dataset is distributed. The **Data User** is requested and encouraged to send a pdf of any publications resulting from use of the data to the responsible person for the SPI-Birds Program Coordinator (a.culina@nioo.knaw.nl). We would like to include such manuscripts in our SPI-Birds publications list.
 5. The **Data User** agrees not to redistribute original data and documentation without permission from the **Data Custodian**.
 6. We also advise (but do not require) that data requests are sent prior to grant applications based on data hosted at SPI-Birds. This is to i) avoid failure of funded projects in case dataset use is not granted; ii) establish whether another similar project has been submitted/planned to be submitted. Further, whenever possible, we encourage that projects that are planned based on several of the SPI-Birds datasets also include some budget for the SPI-Birds Network and Database costs, which can be discussed with the SPI-Birds Program Coordinator. Some examples include workshops, conference participation, work on data pipelines, and work on database updates.

4 Disclaimer

By using these data, the **Data User** agrees to follow the guidelines of this agreement. While substantial efforts are made to ensure the accuracy of data and documentation, complete accuracy of datasets cannot be guaranteed. SPI-Birds shall not be liable for damages resulting from any use or misinterpretation of datasets. The **Data User** may be held responsible for any misuse that is caused or encouraged by the **Data User's** failure to abide by the terms of this agreement. **Data Users** should be aware that we periodically update datasets.

Thank you for your cooperation.

Annex I

The following guidelines and examples are provided for **Data Users**, **Data Custodians** and publishers to ensure appropriate citation of data hosted at SPI-Birds. Because **Data Custodians** retain custody of their data at SPI-Birds, references to “SPI-Birds data” or “data accessed through SPI-Birds” are insufficient. Proper citation or other attribution will depend on the **Data Custodian’s** terms of use and applicable data licenses (as stated in the metadata of each dataset).

1. *Cite related papers*

The **Data Custodian** might want you to cite related papers or research projects. Refer to the **License Terms** and citations in the metadata.

2. *Cite datasets hosted at SPI-Birds*

To refer to the dataset hosted at SPI-Birds, it is best to include both the population full name (as provided in the metadata) and the “SPI-Birds ID” listed in the metadata and in the SPI-Birds standard protocol, data version, along with the date accessed. For example:

“The data used in this study were accessed from SPI-Birds Network and Database (study name “Harjavalta”, study ID HAR_Harjavalta_Finland), [version number] on [date].”

3. *Data availability statements*

The following example statement is modelled after those recommended by Springer-Nature and a research data policy framework drafted by the Research Data Alliance (Hrynaszkiewicz et al. 2019):

“The datasets generated during and/or analyzed during the current study are available at SPI-Birds Network and Database [study name], [study ID:xx], [version: xx], [Data Custodian], [Year].”

4. *Cite large numbers of datasets/publications*

In collaborations involving many studies in SPI-Birds, such as meta-analyses or comparative analyses, the content format or journal might limit the number of references and make it impossible to cite all participating studies and existing papers as described above. Examples of ways to include a longer list of citations or alternative acknowledgements:

- (a) Some journals allow a separate reference list for the methods that might allow a full listing of citations for participating studies.
- (b) Web-based tools or products should include a page of acknowledgements or source information that lists citations as suggested above, or otherwise references participating studies and **Data Custodians**.
- (c) Including a full list in the supplemental materials of a paper should be used only as a last resort. References listed here are typically not recognized by search engines and other automated methods of recognizing data citation and re-use.

We welcome discussion with publishers and others about how to better support attribution for these types of projects. Please contact a.culina@nioo.knaw.nl.

5. *Cite SPI-Birds*

To refer to SPI-Birds Network and Database itself, and not specific data within it, please use this citation:

Culina et al. 2021. Journal of Animal Ecology. DOI: [10.1111/1365-2656.13388](https://doi.org/10.1111/1365-2656.13388).