- 1 **Title:**
- 2 Cascading effects of moose (*Alces alces*) management on birds
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#### 1 Abstract

2 Large herbivores often have key functions in their ecosystems, and may change 3 ecosystem processes with cascading effects on other animals. The mechanisms often 4 involve relocations of resources of various kinds, including reduction in resource 5 availability following large herbivore foraging and increase in resources from animal 6 excreta. As large herbivore populations in Europe generally are intensely managed, 7 management activities may interact with the activities of the herbivores themselves in 8 the effect on other ecosystem components. We investigated the effects of moose (Alces 9 alces) winter browsing, together with the effect of net nutrient input via supplementary 10 winter feeding of moose on functional composition and species richness of birds in a 11 boreal forest. Supplementary feeding stations for moose had a net zero effect on bird 12 species richness and abundance, because negative effects of moose browsing were 13 balanced by positive effects of nutrient input. Sites with a similar browsing intensity as 14 at feeding stations but without nutrient input had lower abundance and species richness 15 than feeding stations. Functional groups of bird species showed differing responses: 16 Birds nesting at or below browsing height were negatively affected by moose browsing, 17 whereas species nesting above the browsing zone were positively affected by moose 18 browsing. Insect eating species responded negatively to moose browsing on birch but 19 positively to nutrient input at feeding stations, whereas seed eating species responded 20 positively to birch browsing and negatively to feeding stations. This study showed that 21 both high levels of cervid activity and human management interventions influenced the 22 bird community.

23

# 24 Keywords

25 Bird diversity; boreal forest; functional groups; herbivory; supplementary feeding;

# 1 Introduction

2

3 Large herbivores often have key functions in their ecosystems (Hobbs 1996). They have 4 the potential to directly and indirectly influence growth and structure of individual 5 plants and plant parts, population dynamics, composition and succession of plant and 6 animal communities, as well as fundamental ecosystem processes like nutrient cycling 7 (Danell et al. 2003; Hester et al. 2006; Hobbs 1996; Pastor et al. 2006; Persson et al. 8 2000; Skarpe and Hester 2008; Suominen et al. 2008). The high density of cervids in 9 Europe, North America and Japan during recent decades has raised concern about how 10 this may affect ecosystem components such as bird species diversity in temperate and 11 boreal forests (Allombert et al. 2005; Côte et al. 2004; Fuller 2001; McShea and 12 Rappole 2000; McShea et al. 1997; Miyashita et al. 2004). During recent decades, the 13 Fennoscandian moose (Alces alces) populations have increased to densities that have 14 probably not been experienced in post-glacial time (Cederlund and Bergström 1996). A 15 large herbivore such as the moose can modify the environment for other species by its 16 selective feeding, trampling, urination and defecation (Berger et al. 2001; Melis et al. 17 2007; Pastor et al. 1993; Persson et al. 2000; Suominen et al. 2008). Ecosystem effects 18 on other animals and long-term effects are poorly known (Suominen and Danell 2006), 19 and there is a need for research on cascading effects of high densities of cervids on 20 different animal taxa.

21

Supplementary feeding is a management tool used to increase winter survival of
cervids, reduce damage to forest plantations and minimise ungulate – vehicle collisions
(Gundersen *et al.* 2004; Luccarini *et al.* 2006; Putman and Staines 2004; Weisberg and
Bugmann 2003). Supplementary feeding of moose with silage during winter is common

in Norway, and leads to extremely high moose densities locally around feeding stations
(Gundersen *et al.* 2004). Supplementary feeding also constitutes a local net input of
nutrients directly from feed remains and indirectly via animal dung and urine. The high
moose density and nutrient input may be expected to have cascading effects on the
ecosystem locally around feeding stations.

6

7 High ungulate densities can affect diversity and abundance of birds by modifying 8 habitat structure and food resources (Fuller 2001; Suominen and Danell 2006). Moose 9 browsing in boreal forest may lead to a reduction of deciduous trees, which are 10 important for many bird species (Stokland 1997) and to a more open canopy (Persson et 11 al. 2000) which may increase predation risk (Martin and Joron 2003) and reduce 12 availability of nesting sites (Allombert et al. 2005; Berger et al. 2001; DeCalesta 1994; 13 McShea and Rappole 2000). Some studies of moderate browsing have shown positive 14 effects on invertebrates (Danell and Huss-Danell 1985), constituting an important food 15 resource for many bird species, but high browsing pressure over long time periods is 16 usually negative for invertebrate abundance (Stewart 2001; Suominen et al. 2008). Also 17 seed production, important for seed eating birds, may respond to browsing (Bergström 18 and Danell 1987). While moose browsing in boreal forest may reduce resource 19 availability (Pastor and Naiman 1992; Persson et al. 2007; Persson et al. 2005b), 20 supplementary feeding of moose brings resources into the system with potential positive 21 effects on productivity. Nutrient input may affect plant production, chemistry and the 22 way the trees respond to browsing by compensatory growth (Danell et al. 1997; Persson 23 et al. 2007), which in turn may have effects on invertebrate fauna or seed production 24 and hence food availability for birds. The forage provided for moose may also contain 25 seeds or insects that contribute directly to food availability for birds.

1	We investigated the effects of long-term supplementary winter feeding of moose on the
2	community of small to medium-sized birds in a boreal forest system in South-East
3	Norway. The distribution of moose around supplementary feeding stations in winter
4	makes it possible to study gradients in moose winter browsing and net input of
5	nutrients. Both herbivory and nutrient input can have positive, negative or unimodal
6	effect on species richness (Mackey and Currie 2001; Waide et al. 1999). Since moose
7	densities around feeding stations are very high (van Beest et al. 2010), and nutrient
8	availability in boreal forest is generally low (Bonan and Shugart 1989), we expect
9	negative effects of moose browsing and positive effects of nutrient input on bird species
10	richness. The aim of this study was to test if moose browsing generally has negative
11	effects on bird species richness and abundance, and if different functional groups of
12	birds may respond differently. However, at feeding stations we may have effects of both
13	moose browsing and input of nutrients. This leads to 3 possible scenarios:
14	
15	1) Feeding stations have a negative effect on bird species richness and abundance,
16	because negative effects of moose browsing are stronger than positive effects
17	of nutrient input.
18	2) Feeding stations have a net zero effect on bird species richness and abundance,
19	because negative effects of moose browsing are balanced by positive effects
20	of nutrient input.
21	3) Feeding stations have a positive effect on bird species richness and abundance,
22	because effects of nutrient input are stronger than browsing effects.
23	

## 1 Materials and methods

2

#### 3 Study system

4 This study was carried out in Stor-Elvdal municipality, Hedmark County in southeast 5 Norway (~61°N, 11°E). The study area is situated between 291 and 684 m.a.s.l. in the 6 middle and northern boreal vegetation zone (Moen et al. 1999). The area is dominated 7 by a main river valley running northwest - southeast, interspersed by side valleys and 8 mountainous areas. The forest in this area consists of pure or mixed stands of Scots 9 pine (*Pinus sylvestris*), Norway spruce (*Picea abies*), downy birch (*Betula pubescens*) 10 and silver birch (Betula pendula) interspersed with species such as grey alder (Alnus 11 incana), rowan (Sorbus aucuparia), aspen (Populus tremula) and willows (Salix spp.). 12 Most of the forest is managed for commercial production of timber or pulp. The field 13 layer vegetation is often dominated by dwarf shrubs such as cowberry (Vaccinium vitis-14 *idaea*) and bilberry (*V. myrtillus*). Data from weather stations in the valley bottom from 15 the last 30-year period show a mean summer temperature of 10.6 °C (May-September) and mean winter temperature of -5.8 °C (October – April). During the same period, the 16 17 mean annual precipitation was 628 mm and the mean snow depth 39 cm (eKlima 2008). 18 The bird community in the area is typical for a Scandinavian boreal forest, dominated 19 by migratory species such as the chaffinch (Fringilla coelebs) and willow warbler 20 (Phylloscopus trochilus) in summertime, and more resident species such as Eurasian 21 siskin (Carduelis spinus) and tit species (Parus spp.) in the winter, with occasional 22 peaks in drifting species such as crossbills (*Loxia* spp.).

23

The moose population in the area is mainly migratory, spending the summer at higher altitudes and migrating down to the valley bottom where the snow depth is lower in

1 winter. The landowners have carried out organised supplementary winter feeding of 2 moose with grass silage since 1990 (Gundersen et al. 2004), to reduce traffic accidents 3 and damage to young pine stands. On average around 600 ( $\pm$  140 SE) tonnes of silage is 4 provided each year in Stor-Elydal municipality, increasing over the last 10 years (Stor-5 Elvdal landowner association, unpubl. data). In the winter 2006-2007, before this study 6 was carried out, approximately 778 tonnes silage were deposited at feeding stations in 7 the municipality. This equals an average of 63-78 kg nitrogen per feeding station. The 8 effects of the nutrient input can be observed locally around feeding stations, by an 9 increase in herbaceous vegetation growth and flowering and in presence of nitrogen-10 demanding species in the field-layer vegetation (Torgersen 2008). The feeding stations 11 are mainly placed along forest roads in the side-valleys. The overall moose density in the municipality is about  $\sim 1,1$  moose per km<sup>2</sup> (Gundersen *et al.* 2004), but in winter the 12 effective moose density is many times higher in the valley bottom. In 2007 when this 13 14 study was carried out, moose density at 1 km distance from feeding stations was  $3.6 \pm 1$ moose pr  $\text{km}^2$  (estimated from pellet counts (this study, see methods) assuming 14 15 16 pellet groups per moose per day in winter (Persson et al. 2000) and a winter period of 17 180 days). At a local scale of 25-50 meters radius around feeding stations, pellet group density corresponded to a moose density of  $130 \pm 20$  moose /km<sup>2</sup>, however, this reflects 18 19 intensive use of feeding stations by moose, rather than population density in the area.

20

# 21 Field procedures

We performed replicated point counts of birds at 11 supplementary feeding stations for moose and 11 control sites. Point counts are appropriate for comparisons of relative densities between habitats (Bibby *et al.* 2000) and feeding stations represent points of high moose density and input of nutrients in the landscape. The feeding stations used in this study had been in use for more than 10 years, thus reflecting long-term effects on

the ecosystem. The control sites were selected in similar vegetation types as the feeding stations, with similar elevation (290-680 m.a.s.l.) (Table 1) and distance to forest roads, and all controls had a minimum distance of 1 km from any feeding station. All sites had a nest box for small birds that was used in a parallel study on reproduction, which might lead to a somewhat higher occurrence of hole-nesting species in this survey than is otherwise common for this type of forest. However this was similar for feeding stations and controls.

8

9 The study was carried out between early May and mid-June 2007. Each site was visited 10 5 times during the study period, approximately once a week. All sites were visited on 11 the same day between 04:30 and 08:30 a.m. Days with wind or heavy rain were 12 avoided. The 3-4 observers and the time of day were rotated systematically among sites 13 and sampling days to avoid bias due to observer or time of day. All observers had 14 previous experience with observing birds, and were trained on bird species common for 15 this region. During observation, all vocalisations of territorial males were counted for 16 10 minutes, as an indicator of the relative abundance of breeding territories. The song of 17 bird species that carried further than 1 km would be recorded at both feeding stations 18 and controls, but this would not affect the analysis. As the effects of feeding stations are 19 quite local in scale (Gundersen et al. 2004), we expected effects on species with small 20 home ranges, and this study was designed to detect local-scale differences in relative 21 density.

22

For all sites that were used in bird counts we recorded habitat variables in May-June as follows: Moose pellet groups were counted in 5 circular plots of 50 m<sup>2</sup>, one plot at the observation point and four plots 25 m from the observation point in each of the directions north, south, west and east. Only pellet groups from last winter were counted.

1	The age of the pellet group was determined on basis of pellet colours/moisture and
2	cover of leaf litter (Neff 1968). Moose browsing pressure was estimated as % browsed
3	shoots of shoots available at browsing height $(0.5 - 3 \text{ m})$ in the same plots. We
4	estimated browsing pressure on trees of birch, pine and spruce separately, and other
5	species (rowan, aspen, willow, alder) were grouped together because of their low
6	densities. In addition, we surveyed vegetation variables in July, in a circular plot of 10
7	m radius around the observation point, to give a rough estimate of the vegetation type,
8	similar to the relevé method (Almendinger and DNR 2007). These variables were: %
9	vertical canopy cover of trees with total height below and above 3 m for birch, pine,
10	spruce and other species (grouped) and % ground cover of the categories herbs, lichens
11	and dwarf shrubs. The sites were categorised by forest vegetation type (Moen et al.
12	1999): 1 = lichen forest, 2 = cowberry-bilberry forest, 3 = heather bog-bilberry pine, 4 =
13	bilberry forest and $5 =$ small-fern forest. The age of the forest was categorised according
14	to Norwegian forestry cutting classes: $1 = \text{clearcut}, 2 = \text{trees up to 8 m height}, 3 = \text{trees}$
15	higher than 8 m, but not mature, $4 =$ forest mature for cutting, $5 =$ old growth forest.
16	
17	Statistical analyses
18	
19	Comparison of habitat at controls sites and feeding stations
20	To ensure that control and feeding station sites were similar in vegetation type, and
21	different in moose activity, we compared browsing, pellet group density and habitat
22	variables between all feeding stations and controls with an ANOVA (or Kruskal-Wallis
23	for non-normally distributed variables) using SAS software (SAS-Inst. 2003). Feeding
24	stations and control sites had similar vegetation types, elevation and canopy cover of

25 tree species, indicating that control sites were appropriate (Table 1). Birch browsing

26 (%), spruce browsing (%), pellet groups density and % herb cover were significantly

higher at feeding stations compared to controls, and % cover of dwarf shrubs was
significantly lower, indicating a higher level of moose activity at feeding stations
compared to controls (Table 1). However, variation in birch browsing pressure was high
within control sites (Table 1). Pine browsing was 90 - 100% both at feeding stations and
controls, but sample size of plots containing pine was too small for a reliable test
between feeding stations and controls.

7

#### 8 Analysis of species richness and abundance

9 We tested for differences in bird species richness and abundance between feeding 10 stations and controls with ANOVA using the average of all 5 replicates per station. 11 Hypothesis testing of control versus feeding stations showed no significant differences 12 in bird species richness or abundance. We therefore further used model selection to 13 investigate which habitat- and methodological variables were important in explaining 14 bird species richness and abundance, using the selection criteria AICc (corrected Akaike 15 Information Criterion) (Burnham and Anderson 2002) and among models with  $\Delta AICc <$ 16 2 we selected the most parsimonious model (the model with the fewest model terms) 17 (Quinn and Keough 2002). The minimum adequate model was then used to evaluate the 18 effect of feeding stations on species richness and abundance.

19

We investigated the effects of observer, date and time of day and habitat variables on species richness and abundance in a mixed model with repeated design (station/date) with poisson distributed errors using the GLIMMIX macro in SAS software (SAS-Inst. 2003). We chose several candidate models by selecting the most relevant habitat variables (see below) and analysing several combinations of these (Table 2). The explanatory variables analysed were date, time, observer, feeding treatment (control, feeding station), % birch browsing, cutting class, and vegetation variables (see below).

1 We investigated the relationship between explanatory variables with simple correlations 2 to avoid including highly correlated variables (Graham 2003). As spruce browsing and 3 moose pellet density were strongly correlated with feeding treatment, they were not 4 included in the model. Pine browsing was not included in the model because of low 5 occurrence of pine within browsing height and low variation in browsing pressure. 6 Therefore birch browsing was the variable that represented the gradient in moose 7 browsing intensity best. For the categorical variables with many levels, such as date, 8 observer and cutting class, we first did pair-wise comparisons using Scheffé corrections 9 within the full model, to see which levels were significantly different from others, and 10 then grouped the levels that were not significantly different, to reduce the number of 11 parameters.

12

13 To include all the vegetation variables measured, but avoid intercorrelation, we did a 14 principal component analysis (PCA) of all vegetation variables (tree cover, field 15 layer/ground cover and vegetation type), and included the sample scores of PCA axis 1 16 and 2 in the model. Axis 1 was positively correlated with herbs and vegetation type 5 17 (small-fern forest) and negatively correlated with dwarf shrubs, representing the 18 gradient between richer vegetation types with herbs/grasses and poorer vegetation types 19 with cowberry/bilberry woodland. Axis 2 was positively correlated with cover of spruce 20 > 3 m high and negatively correlated with lichen cover, representing the gradient from 21 spruce to lichen/pine forest.

22

For the variables such as observer, date and time of day, we first investigated if they had any effect in a linear model of species richness/abundance including all the variables. Species richness varied among observation days ( $F_{4,79} = 3.27$ , p = 0.016), but with no consistent trend in time. Species richness also varied among observers ( $F_{4.62} = 6.95$ , p=

1 0.0001) and time of day ( $F_{1,79} = 7.84$ , p = 0.0064). However, because observers and 2 time of the day were systematically rotated among sites and days of observation, this 3 did not lead to any visible bias in the results. These variables were included in further 4 modelling, to account for the effect of observer, date and time. Total abundance of 5 territorial males showed the same variation with time, date and observer as species 6 richness did.

7

#### 8 Analysis of functional groups and individual species

9 All bird species were grouped into functional groups (Appendix 1) according to 10 migratory strategy (migratory/resident/drifting), main feeding ecology in the 11 observation period (insects/seeds/buds, woodpeckers forming a separate group) and 12 nesting height (below, at and above 0.5-3 m browsing height for moose) (Cramp 1977), 13 to see if functional groups differed in response to feeding treatment and habitat 14 variables. Investigation of abundance of groups according to diet/migration and their 15 relation to habitat variables was analysed by ordinations in the statistical software 16 package Canoco (ter Braak and Smilauer 2006). Linear response models were used, as 17 the gradient determined by the first axis of a detrended correspondence analysis (DCA) 18 was below 4 standard deviations (Hill and Gauch 1980). For each site we used the mean 19 number of singing males of each group across the 5 sampling days to relate species 20 abundance to environmental variables. We carried out a principal component analysis 21 (PCA) and a redundancy analysis (RDA) to investigate functional group composition 22 and relation to environmental variables. The significance of environmental variables in 23 explaining abundance of functional groups was tested with Monte Carlo permutation 24 tests in a RDA in Canoco. Ordinations are not as sensitive to intercorrelated variables as 25 a normal regression analyses, so we included most of the environmental variables

measured, but removed the environmental variables that were highly correlated with
 other variables in the analysis.

3

4 The environmental variables that contributed to explaining the variation of functional 5 group abundance in ordinations were further explored for each functional group in a 6 mixed model with poisson distributed errors using the GLIMMIX macro in SAS (Littell 7 2006). Instead of using a repeated design, we used the mean abundance over 5 sampling 8 events, and added the number of the observation site as a random intercept. The 9 abundance of nesting height groups was analysed only with linear models in SAS, as 10 there were only 3 groups. 11 12 We analysed the individual bird species response to habitat variables with the same 13 linear methods in Canoco as for functional group abundance. In ordinations we 14 excluded species that were observed only once (Appendix 1), so that rare species should 15 not dominate in the ordination.

# 1 **Results**

2

# 3 Effects of moose browsing and feeding stations on total species richness and

# 4 **abundance**

5 We recorded a total of 32 species of male territorial birds (Appendix 1). Bird species 6 richness and abundance showed no difference when comparing feeding stations and controls alone using ANOVA (richness: F  $_{1.20} = 0.15$  p = 0.70, abundance : F  $_{1.20} = 0.16$ 7 8 p = 0.69 Figure 1a). However, the large variation in browsing pressure on controls made 9 it possible to analyse the effects of browsing and of feeding stations separately (Figure 1 10 b). The minimum adequate model for species richness included the variables birch 11 browsing, feeding station/control, observer (grouped) and vegetation-PCA axis 2 (Table 12 2). Species richness decreased with increasing birch browsing, but species richness was 13 higher at feeding stations than at controls with equally high browsing pressure (Table 3 14 and Figure 1b). At the control sites, species richness decreased from 7.4 ( $\pm$  1.1 SE) to 15 4.8 ( $\pm 1.0$  SE) species per site (- 35 %) when birch browsing increased from 10 % to 95 16 % (Figure 1b), whilst species richness at feeding stations was  $0.81(\pm 1.0 \text{ SE})$  species per 17 site higher (+ 17%) than at controls. Species richness was positively correlated with 18 vegetation-PCA axis 2, representing a positive correlation with spruce forest or a 19 negative correlation with lichen/pine forest. The variables that best described the 20 abundance of territorial males included feeding station/control, birch browsing, observer 21 and date (grouped) (Table 3). Abundance of territorial males showed the same pattern as 22 species richness (Figure 1 c). Abundance decreased from 9.3 ( $\pm$  1.1 SE) birds per site at 23 10 % browsing pressure to 6.5 ( $\pm$  1.1 SE) at 95 % browsing pressure at controls (-30%), 24 but was 0.84 ( $\pm$  1.1 SE) birds per site higher (+ 13%) at feeding stations compared to 25 controls.

2

3	An RDA of the abundance in different functional groups selected the following
4	variables by Monte Carlo tests (including 999 permutations): birch browsing ( $F = 2.22$ ,
5	p = 0.092), % cover of pine less than 3m high (F = 2.26, p = 0.092), feeding station (F =
6	2.35, p = 0.058) and cutting class 2 (F = 2.13, p = 0.088), together explaining 37 % of
7	the variation in bird species composition. From interpretation of the PCA diagram
8	(Figure 2a) we could identify two main modes of reaction to birch browsing: seed-eaters
9	were positively correlated with birch browsing, whilst the insect-eaters were negatively
10	correlated with birch browsing, and mixed seed-insect eaters were in an intermediate
11	position (Figure 2a). There was no clear pattern between groups with different
12	migration strategy (Figure 2a). All functional groups seemed to be negatively correlated
13	with cover of small pine, and strict insect eating groups were most abundant in cutting
14	class 2 (Figure 2a). The same patterns can be observed in the ordination of individual
15	species (Figure 2b).

Response of functional groups to birch browsing and feeding stations

16

17 As functional groups with a similar diet (seeds/insects) responded in similar ways to 18 birch browsing in the ordination diagram, we grouped the bird species into larger 19 groups of seed- or insect-eaters, but excluded mixed seed-insect feeders because of their 20 intermediate position, and woodpeckers because of their different ecology. Then we 21 tested for an interaction between diet (seed/insect), feeding station and birch browsing. 22 There was a significant interaction between diet and the effects of both feeding station  $(F_{1,19} = 8.31, p = 0.0095)$  and birch browsing  $(F_{1,19} = 15.36, p = 0.0009)$  on abundance. 23 Insect eaters decreased in abundance with increasing birch browsing, but had a higher 24 25 abundance at feeding stations compared to controls, whilst seed eaters increased with

increasing birch browsing and had a lower abundance at feeding stations compared to
 controls (Figure 3a).

3

Abundance of birds in the different nesting categories responded differently to birch browsing, but not to feeding treatment ( $F_{1,60} = 1.68$ , p = 0.120). The interaction between nesting group and birch browsing was significant ( $F_{3,59} = 5.03$ , p = 0.0036). Abundance of birds nesting below browsing height and at browsing height decreased with increasing birch browsing, whilst abundance of birds nesting above browsing height increased with increasing birch browsing (Figure 3b).

#### 11 Responses of individual bird species to feeding stations and birch browsing

12 Few species showed differences in abundance between feeding stations and controls, 13 except the pied flycatcher (Ficedula hypoleuca), which had a higher abundance at 14 feeding stations than at control sites (Appendix 1, Figure 2b). To control that the 15 positive effects at feeding stations were not just due to this species, we ran the analysis 16 of feeding groups and species richness again excluding the flycatcher, and the 17 interaction between feeding stations and abundance of insect/seed eaters was still significant ( $F_{1,119} = 6.59$ , p = 0.019), and so was the positive effect of feeding stations 18 19 on species richness ( $F_{1.18} = 4.08$ , p = 0.058), although slightly weaker. In an RDA of 20 abundance of all bird species, selection with Monte Carlo permutation showed that only 21 the variables birch browsing (F = 2.47, p = 0.024) and cutting class 2 (F = 2.04, p =22 0.036) contributed significantly in explaining the variation in species abundance. Birch 23 browsing explained most of the variation in species abundance (11%), while feeding 24 station/control explained 4 % of the variation (F = 1.31, p = 0.23) once birch browsing 25 and cutting class 2 were added to the model. Parus major and Phylloscopus trochilus 26 were common far from feeding stations, most frequent in cutting class 2, and seemed to

- be negatively correlated with birch browsing (Figure 2b). The seed-eater *Carduelis spinus* was also most abundant far from feeding stations (Figure 2b). Insect-eaters
   tended to be negatively correlated to birch browsing, except *Ficedula hypoleuca* and
   *Regulus regulus* which may be positively correlated with birch browsing (Figure 2b).

# 1 Discussion

2 Feeding stations had a net zero effect on bird species richness and abundance in 3 accordance with scenario 2, as negative effects of moose browsing on birch were 4 balanced by positive effects of feeding stations (Figure 1abc). The positive effect of 5 feeding stations was most likely caused by positive effects of input of nutrients to the 6 ecosystem. Different functional groups of birds showed opposite responses to browsing 7 and nutrient input; Insect eating species responded negatively to birch browsing but 8 positively to nutrient input at feeding stations, whereas seed eating species responded 9 positively to birch browsing and negatively to feeding stations. Birds nesting at or 10 below browsing height were negatively affected by moose browsing, whereas species 11 nesting above the browsing zone were positively affected by moose browsing.

12

13 Negative effects of heavy browsing or grazing by ungulates on abundance and species 14 richness of birds have been documented in earlier studies (Fuller 2001; Suominen and 15 Danell 2006), but these effects have mostly been linked to changes in vegetation 16 structure (Allombert et al. 2005; Berger et al. 2001; DeCalesta 1994; McShea and 17 Rappole 2000) whilst our results indicate that reduced food resources for insectivorous 18 birds may also be an important mechanism. Although heavy or long-term browsing 19 pressure seems to have negative effects on bird diversity, low or short-term grazing 20 pressure can in some ecosystems have a positive effect on bird diversity (Loe et al. 21 2007). The positive effect of nutrient input at supplementary feeding stations on bird 22 species richness is unique to this study. Folkard and Smith (1995) showed that 23 fertilisation in boreal forest can have positive effects on bird abundance, probably due to 24 increased plant growth increasing arthropod availability.

1 We found that bird species nesting at and below browsing height were negatively 2 affected by birch browsing. Earlier studies have also identified nesting height as an 3 important factor explaining bird responses to browsing (Allombert et al. 2005; Berger et 4 al. 2001; Casey and Hein 1983; DeCalesta 1994; McShea and Rappole 2000). For birds 5 nesting at and below browsing height, browsing and trampling may lead to loss of 6 nesting sites. Moose browsing changes tree structure and opens up the canopy 7 (Mathisen et al. 2010; Persson et al. 2007; Persson et al. 2005a) and may increase nest 8 predation from avian predators (Martin and Joron 2003). However, the abundance of 9 birds nesting above browsing height was positively correlated with birch browsing. 10

11 The dominance of insect eating birds in the summer bird community in the area most 12 likely explains why the overall abundance and species richness of birds showed the 13 same response as the insect eaters. The negative correlation between abundance of 14 insectivorous birds and birch browsing suggests that moose browsing has a negative 15 effect on the food resources or foraging sites for insectivorous birds, and that they 16 choose their breeding habitat to avoid heavily browsed areas. Since many of the 17 insectivores nest at or under browsing height, we cannot separate the effect of birch 18 browsing on habitat structure from that on food availability. However, feeding stations 19 had a higher abundance of insectivorous birds than control areas with equally high 20 browsing pressure. The effect of feeding stations was not significant for nesting groups, 21 suggesting an effect of feeding stations on food availability. The explanation may be 22 that nutrient input through dung, urine and residual silage directly and/or indirectly 23 increased the availability of arthropod prey.

24

Previous studies have shown diverse effects of cervid browsing on abundance and
diversity of different arthropod groups (Danell and Huss-Danell 1985; Riipi *et al.* 2005;

1 Stewart 2001; Suominen 1999; Suominen et al. 2008), but heavy browsing is reported 2 to mainly have negative effects (Miyashita et al. 2004; Shimazaki and Miyashita 2002; 3 Stewart 2001; Suominen 1999; Suominen et al. 2008), especially on herbivorous insects 4 (Suominen and Danell 2006). Moose browsing may reduce arthropod availability 5 through reduced birch leaf biomass (Pedersen et al. 2007; Persson et al. 2007), changed 6 chemical content (Danell and Huss-Danell 1985) or changed tree species composition 7 (Pastor and Naiman 1992). Few studies have investigated the link between browsing, 8 invertebrates and insectivorous birds, but Bailey and Whitham (2003) have 9 experimentally shown that elk (Cervus canadensis) browsing on aspen can reduce 10 abundance of galling sawflies, arthropod availability and foraging activity of 11 insectivorous birds. Pedersen et al. (2007) have also suggested a link between moose 12 browsing, invertebrate availability and breeding success in great tits (Parus major) in 13 the same study area.

14

15 At feeding stations the input of nutrients from animal excreta and silage residues may 16 favour some arthropod groups directly or via changes in plant biomass and chemistry 17 (Stewart 2001). The mechanism may be increased arthropod availability with the 18 increase in herbs and grasses at enriched feeding stations (Strengbom and Nordin 2008; 19 Torgersen 2008). Changed nutrient availability and responses in the vegetation may 20 lead to increase in body-size or abundance of some arthropod groups (Strengbom et al. 21 2005; Throop and Lerdau 2004). Another possibility is increase in dung-related 22 arthropods (Rice 2010), or arthropods in silage remains. In a parallel study (Mathisen et 23 al. unpublished) it was observed that great tits brought back larger caterpillars to the 24 nest boxes at feeding stations than at sites with high browsing pressure and low nutrient 25 input.

26

1 Granivorous bird abundance was positively correlated to birch browsing, but was lower 2 at feeding stations than at controls of similar browsing pressure. This implies that 3 negative effects of high levels of moose browsing were stronger than any positive 4 effects of nutrient input at feeding stations for granivorous birds according to scenario 5 1, although there was no net effect of feeding treatment. The granivores were dominated 6 by Eurasian siskins (*Carduelis spinus*) and crossbills (*Loxia* spp.), but also wood 7 pigeons (Columba palumbus) and bullfinches (Pyrrhula pyrrhula) belong to this group. 8 Birch seeds is an important food for siskins, and Bergström and Danell (1987) have 9 shown that birch when subject to browsing produces fewer but heavier seeds, which 10 might explain the positive correlation between granivorous bird abundance and birch 11 browsing. Siskins, crossbills and wood pigeons nest above browsing height, and were 12 probably less affected by effects of moose browsing on nesting sites, which means that 13 the positive correlation between browsing and bird abundance can also be explained by 14 nesting group. However, since the effect of feeding stations was not significant for 15 nesting groups, this suggests that the mechanism behind reduced abundance at feeding 16 stations is related to food availability.

17

18 The pied flycatcher (*Ficedula hypoleuca*) was the only bird species that had a higher 19 abundance at feeding stations than at controls. The flycatcher prefers open areas and 20 catches insects by air sallying (Sanz 1998; Waldbauer 1998), and may profit from more 21 open vegetation caused by moose browsing, or an increase in arthropod prey abundance 22 caused by the increase in dung, urine, residual silage and herbs at feeding stations. It has 23 been suggested that deer browsing may be positive for this species in British woods 24 (Fuller 2001). A parallel study of reproduction in flycatchers in the same area over 25 several years also shows a preference for nest-boxes at feeding stations, a higher 26 number of fledgings produced at feeding stations and a higher feeding frequency in bird

boxes at feeding stations compared to controls (K. M. Mathisen, unpublished). The
goldcrest (*Regulus regulus*) was the other common species that did not show the same
response to birch browsing as the rest of the insect-eating group. However this species
commonly nests high above browsing height (Cramp 1977), and might therefore be less
affected by moose browsing.

6

Supplementary feeding stations may be positive for bird diversity because of positive 7 8 local fertilization effects and increasing variation in moose density on a landscape scale. 9 However supplementary feeding may sustain high moose population densities leading 10 to negative effects of high browsing pressure. Effects of browsers on the ecosystem are 11 complex and dynamic, and the mechanisms are still poorly understood, and should be 12 further investigated using well designed experiments. Today many bird populations are 13 sustained within forests managed for timber production, and high moose densities and 14 intensive browsing pressure should be a concern for bird diversity conservation within 15 wildlife management and forestry practices. Birds can serve as indicator species of 16 ecosystem function, and when bird diversity changes this is a sign that the ecosystem is 17 changing. Such high moose browsing pressure as in this study is only common locally 18 where moose concentrate on winter feeding grounds. However densities of moose have been extraordinary high during the last decades in Fennoscandia, as well as densities of 19 20 other browsers in Europe and North-America, and changes in the ecosystems caused by 21 these browsers have been documented. As dynamics are changing in boreal forest 22 systems, with global warming, changes in forestry practices and the re-establishment of 23 large predators, it is especially important to understand how large ungulate activities can 24 have cascading effects on other animals and ecosystem processes.

25

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#### 1 Figure legends

2

3 Figure 1 Effects of moose browsing and supplementary feeding stations on bird species 4 richness and abundance a) Comparison of bird species richness and abundance between 5 feeding treatments (FS = feeding station, C = control 1 km from feeding station). b) 6 Bird species richness per site in relation to birch browsing (% of twigs browsed) and 7 feeding treatment. Observations for all 5 sampling events are shown, although some 8 data points are overlapping, especially for FS. The predicted model line shown is 9 standardized for effects of observer and vegetation type. c) Bird abundance per site in 10 relation to birch browsing (% of twigs browsed) and feeding treatment. Observations for 11 all 5 sampling events are shown, although some data points are overlapping, especially 12 for FS. 13

14 Figure 2 PCA of a) functional groups and b) individual species. The most significant 15 environmental variables from the RDA were added according to best fit. Categorical 16 variables are shown as triangles, continuous as thick arrows, and bird species as thin 17 arrows. CC2 = cutting class 2. Birchbr = birch browsing (% shoots browsed). FS = 18 Feeding station. Small pine = % cover of pine below 3 m. a) The variables shown in the 19 figure explained 37% of the variation in abundance of functional groups. b) Only the 20 species with more than 20 observations are shown to ease interpretation of the figure. 21 Feeding station was also added to figure b even though it was not significant, to see how 22 different species relate to feeding station. The variables shown in figure b explained 23 24% of the variation in species abundance. For full name of bird species see Appendix 1 24

Figure 3 Responses of functional groups to birch browsing and feeding stations. a)
Interaction between abundance of feeding groups of birds (seed-eater or insect-eater)

and the response to % birch browsing and feeding stations. FS = feeding station for
moose. C = control 1 km from feeding station. b) Abundance of nesting groups of birds
(feeding stations and controls pooled); below, at and above browsing height (0.5-3m)
for moose, at different degrees of birch browsing. For both a) and b) the mean numbers
of territorial males observed per site over 5 observation days are shown as points, the
regression model as a line.

- '
- 8

#### 1 Tables

- 2 Table 1 Comparison of habitat between feeding stations for moose and controls (1 km from feeding
- 3 station): Mean and standard errors and test statistics for all habitat variables and moose activity variables.
- 4 P-values less than 0,05 are highlighted. \* Pine browsing had very low sample size, and the variation at
- 5 controls = 0, so the statistical significance probably does not reflect a biological significance, as pine was
- 6 heavily browsed at all feeding stations and controls. Significant results are shown in bold.

Variable	Feeding station	Control	F/ X <sup>2</sup>	р
Moose variables				
Pellet group density pr m <sup>2</sup>	$2.39 \pm 0.71$	$0.06 \pm 0.01$	$F_{1,20} = 25.01$	0.0001
Birch browsing (%)	$95.08 \pm 2.48$	$65.34 \pm 8.79$	$X^{2}_{1,20} = 8.91$	0.0028
Pine browsing (%) *	$90.01 \pm 4.24$	$100 \pm 0$	$X_{1,11}^2 = 5.12$	0.024
Spruce browsing (%)	65.17 ± 13.05	$4.6 \pm 2.14$	$X^{2}_{1,20} = 11.93$	0.0006
Habitat variables				
% Canopy cover above 3 m height				
Spruce	$12.64\pm7.03$	$12.91 \pm 2.63$	$F_{1,20} = 2.21$	0.15
Birch	$11.45 \pm 3.84$	$12.18 \pm 3.41$	$F_{1,20} = 0.05$	0.82
Rowan/ aspen/ willow/ alder	$7.73 \pm 7.23$	$2.09 \pm 1.48$	$X_{1,20}^2 = 0.16$	0.68
Pine	$7.18 \pm 2.82$	8.27 ± 3.21	$X^2_{1,20} = 0.06$	0.81
% Canopy cover below 3 m height				
Birch	8.18 ± 1.51	9.91 ± 3.51	$F_{1,20} = 0.21$	0.65
Spruce	4.91 ± 1.28	$4.36 \pm 1.18$	$F_{1,20} = 0.04$	0.84
Rowan/ aspen/ willow/ alder	$4.73 \pm 1.62$	3.91 ± 1.36	$F_{1,20} = 0.01$	0.91
Pine	$0.41 \pm 0.15$	$1.27 \pm 0.5$	$X^{2}_{1.20} = 3.33$	0.068

% Canopy cover of field- / ground layer vegetation

Dwarf shrubs	$24.27\pm 6.39$	$59.55 \pm 7.88$	$X^{2}_{1,20} = 7.64$	0.0057
Herbs	$40.91 \pm 10.18$	$14.82\pm7.92$	$X^{2}_{1,20} = 4.93$	0.027

Lichens	$14.73 \pm 4.54$	$16.82\pm4.04$	$F_{1,20} = 0.66$	0.43
Forest type				
Cutting class	$2.64\pm0.2$	$3 \pm 0.23$	$X^{2}_{1,20} = 1.50$	0.47
Vegetation type	$3 \pm 0.43$	$2.64\pm0.34$	$X^{2}_{1,20} = 1.40$	0.50
Elevation	$423\pm26.9$	$431\pm36.9$	$F_{1,20} = 0.03$	0.86

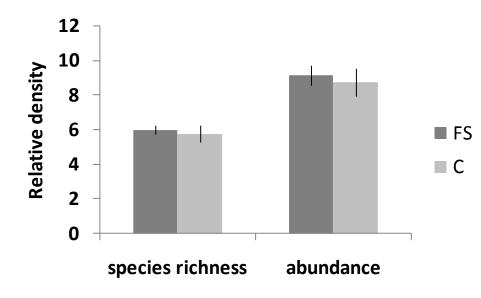
- 1 Table 2 Results from selection of variables in SAS in a mixed model with poisson distributed errors for
- 2 species richness of singing males at feeding stations (FS) for moose and controls (C). Birchbr = birch
- 3 browsing. Dategr1 = 5 dates grouped in 2 groups, obsgr2 = 5 observers grouped in 3 groups. Vegpca 1
- 4 and 2 are axis 1 and 2 from a PCA of vegetation parameters. CC = forest cutting class. Time = time of
- 5 day. The minimum adequate model is shown in bold.

Model	Variables	Parameters/	-2 log	Δ
		Num df	likelihood	AIC <sub>C</sub>
1	FS_C dategr1 time obsgr2 birchbr vegpca2	10	31.4	0
2	FS_C dategr1 obsgr2 birchbr vegpca2	9	33.9	0.1
3	FS_C obsgr2 birchbr vegpca2	7	37.3	0.8
4	FS_C dategr1 time obsgr2 birchbr cc vegpca2	13	27.9	2.1
5	FS_C obsgr2 birchbr	6	41.9	3.1
6	FS_C dategr1 time obsgr2 birchbr cc vegpca1 vegpca2	14	26.9	3.7
7	FS_C date time obs birchbr vegpca2	15	24.9	6.4
8	FS_C date time obs birchbr cc vegpca2	18	21.1	9
9	FS_C date time obs birchbr cc vegpca1 vegpca2	19	19.8	10.6
10	FS_C birchbr cc vegpca1 vegpca2	8	58.7	24.5
11	FS_C birchbr cc	6	66	27.2

**Table 3** Solution for fixed effects with poisson distributed errors for the model with the lowest AICc for species richness (model 3 Table 2) and abundance of territorial male birds at feeding stations for moose and controls (1 km from feeding station). For categorical variables, one of the categories is given 0 as the reference level. The observers are grouped according to differences in detection of birds, in 3 groups for species richness, for abundance 2 groups. Date (abundance) is grouped into two groups, as significantly more birds were observed the 7. May. Important results are shown in bold.

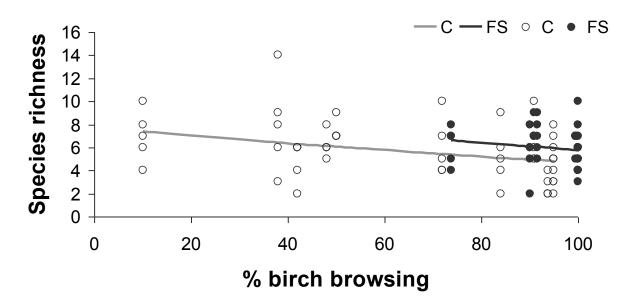
Effect	Levels	Estimate	Standard Error	Den DF	t Value	Pr >  t			
Species richness									
Intercept		2.45	0.14	18	17.40	<.0001			
FS_C	Control	-0.21	0.069	18	-3.03	0.007			
FS_C	Feeding station	0	-	-	-	-			
Observer gr2	BBKMRO	-0.19	0.060	36	-3.09	0.004			
Observer gr2	CS	-0.53	0.098	36	-5.43	<.0001			
Observer gr2	LH	0	-	-	-	-			
Birch browsing		-0.0050	0.0013	18	-3.77	0.0014			
Vegetation pca axis 2		0.063	0.028	18	2.22	0.039			
Abundance									
Intercept		2.50	0.15	19	16.19	<.0001			
FS_C	Control	-0.15	0.075	19	-2.01	0.058			
FS_C	Feeding station	0	-	-	-	-			
Observer gr1	BBLH	0.57	0.059	21	9.58	<.0001			
Observer gr1	CSKMRO	0	-	-	-	-			
Date gr1	16.may-6.jun	-0.29	0.067	21	-4.31	0.0003			
Date gr1	7.may	0	-	-	-	-			
Birch browsing		-0.0034	0.0014	19	-2.39	0.027			





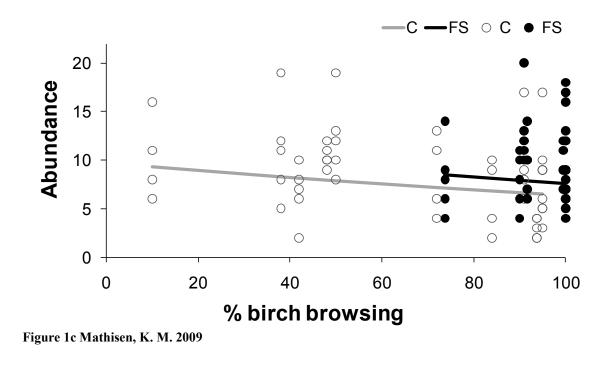




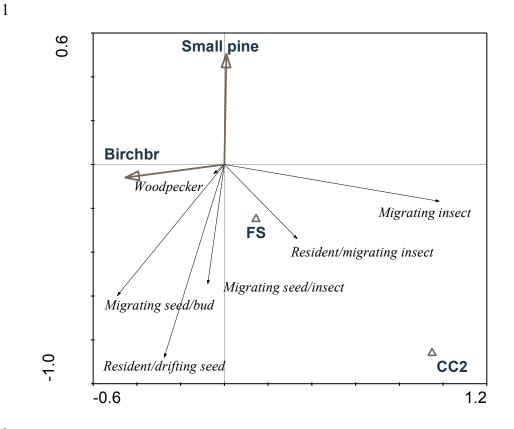




5 Figure 1b Mathisen, K. M. 2009

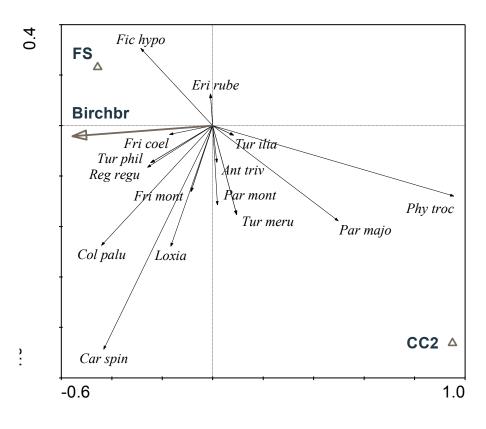












5 Figure 2b Mathisen, K. M. 2009

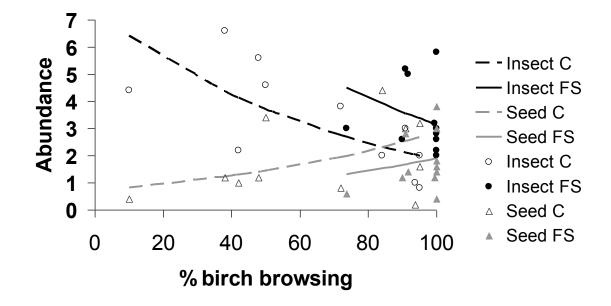
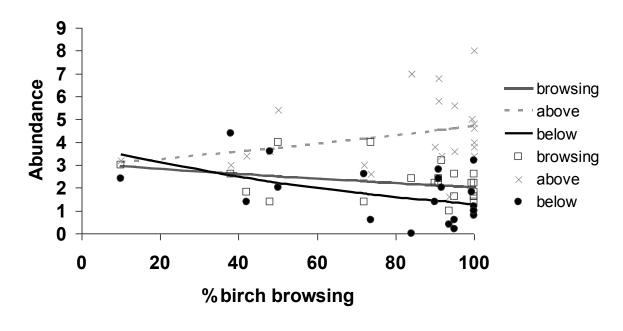




Figure 3a Mathisen, K. M. 2009



4 Figure 3b Mathisen, K. M. 2009

Appendix 1 : Bird species observations and functional group classification.

Total number of observations of bird species observed over 5 observation days in point counts of singing males at 11 feeding stations (FS) for moose and 11 controls (C) 1 km from feeding station in Stor-Elvdal municipality, Hedmark County, Norway. Species are grouped into functional groups after migration strategy and diet in the nesting period. Species are defined as nesting under, at or over browsing (br) height (0.5-3 m) for moose.

Migratory strategy	Diet Insects	Nest height under br	English name Willow warbler	Latin name Phylloscopus trochilus	Mean FS ± SE	Mean C ± SE	Total obs
Migrating					$0.89 \hspace{0.2cm} \pm \hspace{0.2cm} 0.36$	$1.27 \hspace{0.1in} \pm \hspace{0.1in} 0.36$	
Migrating	Insects	under br	Tree pipit	Anthus trivialis	$0.58 \hspace{0.1in} \pm \hspace{0.1in} 0.11$	$0.36  \pm  0.11$	52
Migrating	Insects	at br	Pied flycatcher	Ficedula hypoleuca	$0.45  \pm  0.07$	$0.13  \pm  0.07$	32
Migrating	Insects	at br	Dunnock	Prunella modularis	$0.09  \pm  0.06$	$0.13  \pm  0.06$	12
Migrating	Insects	other	Cuckoo	Cuculus canorus	$0.09 \hspace{0.1in} \pm \hspace{0.1in} 0.05$	$0.07  \pm  0.05$	9
Migrating	Insects	under br	Chiffchaff	Phylloscopus collybita	$0.02  \pm  0.06$	$0.09  \pm  0.06$	6
Migrating	Insects	other	Wren	Troglodytes troglodytes	$0.07  \pm  0.02$	$0.04  \pm  0.02$	6
Migrating	Insects	at br	Garden warbler	Sylvia borin	$0.02  \pm  0.04$	$0.09  \pm  0.04$	6
Migrating	Insects	at br	Lesser whitethroat	Sylvia curruca	$0.07  \pm  0.02$	$0.02  \pm  0.02$	5
Migrating	Insects	at br	Blackcap	Sylvia atricapilla	$0.02  \pm  0.04$	$0.04  \pm  0.04$	3
Migrating	Insects	under br	Whinchat	Saxicola rubetra	$0.02  \pm  0.00$	$0.00  \pm  0.00$	1
Migrating	Insects	at br	Common redstart	Phoenicurus phoenicurus	$0.02 \hspace{0.1in} \pm \hspace{0.1in} 0.00$	$0.00 \hspace{0.1in} \pm \hspace{0.1in} 0.00$	1
Migrating	Seeds & buds	over br	Common wood pigeon	Columba palumbus	$0.24 \hspace{0.1in} \pm \hspace{0.1in} 0.09$	$0.29 \hspace{0.2cm} \pm \hspace{0.2cm} 0.09$	29

Migrating	Seeds & insects	over br	Chaffinch	Fringilla coelebs	2.09	±	0.09	1.76	±	0.09	212
Migrating	Seeds & insects	at br	Robin	Erithacus rubecula	0.47	±	0.10	0.56	±	0.10	57
Migrating	Seeds & insects	at br	Song thrush	Turdus philomelos	0.56	±	0.12	0.47	±	0.12	57
Migrating	Seeds & insects	over br	Brambling	Fringilla montifringilla	0.36	±	0.08	0.25	±	0.08	34
Migrating	Seeds & insects	at br	Redwing	Turdus iliacus	0.22	±	0.08	0.24	±	0.08	25
Migrating	Seeds & insects	at br	Blackbird	Turdus merula	0.16	±	0.05	0.22	±	0.05	21
Migrating	Seeds & insects	over br	Mistle thrush	Turdus viscivorus	0.02	±	0.00	0.00	±	0.00	1
Resident	Woodpecker	over br	Great spotted woodpecker	Dendrocopos major	0.04	±	0.04	0.05	±	0.04	5
Resident	Woodpecker	over br	Black woodpecker	Dryocopus martius	0.05	±	0.02	0.04	±	0.02	5
Resident/ drifting	Seeds	over br	Eurasian siskin	Carduelis spinus	1.29	±	0.29	1.33	±	0.29	144
Resident/ drifting	Seeds	over br	Crossbill	Loxia spp.	0.20	±	0.12	0.18	±	0.12	21
Resident/ drifting	Seeds	at br	Common bullfinch	Pyrrhula pyrrhula	0.02	±	0.04	0.05	±	0.04	4
Resident/ migrating	Insects	other	Great tit	Parus major	0.47	±	0.14	0.47	±	0.14	52
Resident/ migrating	Insects	over br	Goldcrest	Regulus regulus	0.27	±	0.08	0.20	±	0.08	26
Resident/ migrating	Insects	at br	Willow tit	Parus montanus	0.15	±	0.10	0.24	±	0.10	21
Resident/ migrating	Insects	other	Coal tit	Parus ater	0.09	±	0.02	0.04	±	0.02	7
Resident/ migrating	Insects	under br	Yellowhammer	Emberiza citrinella	0.02	±	0.05	0.09	±	0.05	6
Resident/ migrating	Insects	at br	Crested tit	Parus cristatus	0.04	±	0.00	0.00	±	0.00	2
Resident/ migrating	Insects	other	Blue tit	Parus caeruleus	0.02	±	0.00	0.00	±	0.00	1