

## AUTUMN MIGRATION OF THE THRUSH NIGHTINGALE (*Luscinia luscinia*) IN NORTHERN HUNGARY

**Dávid Kováts**

### ABSTRACT

Kováts D. 2012. *Autumn migration of the Thrush Nightingale (Luscinia luscinia) in northern Hungary*. Ring 34: 23-36.

The autumn migration of the Thrush Nightingale was studied in Szalonna in northern Hungary in 1989-2010. Birds were mist-netted, ringed, aged, measured, weighed and fat scored. In total, 193 Thrush Nightingales were ringed during 22 years. Relations between arrival time and biometrical measurements were determined. Within the study period (6 August – 26 September) the migration curve was bimodal showing maximum on 22 August and 27 August. Immature birds arrived significantly earlier with lower body mass and shorter wing length and had more pointed wings in the first half of their passage. The distribution of fat score classes did not differ significantly between the early and late periods of the most intensive migration, although the mean of the deposited fat was the lowest during the peak of migration. Fat reserve distribution was bimodal in autumn suggesting that Thrush Nightingales probably start their journey from different breeding ranges (populations) or follow still undiscovered migration strategies of sex/age groups. The low proportion of recaptures proved that the area was not used as a stopover site or premigratory fattening area. Within 22 years of study, the median date of autumn migration of Thrush Nightingales shifted 7.9 days earlier, probably due to current climate change.

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D. Kováts, University of Debrecen, Department of Evolutionary Zoology and Human Biology, 4032 Debrecen, Egyetem tér 1., Hungary, E-mail: david.kovats@gmail.com

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