

# British hunters kill 22M birds each year

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Researchers say more than 22 million birds are shot legally in Britain every year -- part of a European total of more than 100 million.

The birds killed by European hunters annually include as many as 30 million songbirds, a German anti-hunting organization -- the Committee against Bird Crime -- claims, The Independent reported Tuesday.

The study is called Europe's the first audit of all official bird-hunting "bags."

Britain is listed second in Europe in the number of birds killed annually, behind France, where 25 million are shot, The Independent said. Italy is third, with 17 million.

"If you put all the birds shot in a year next to each other, they would cover a distance of 41,000 kilometers (25,500 miles) corresponding to a total weight of 66,000 tons," said Heinz Schwarze, the organization's president.

But some of the figures have been challenged, The Independent said. For example, the organization claims 738,000 jays are killed in Britain each year, but the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds said the total number of jays living in Britain is less than half that figure.

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