



Birds and bats: Nature's pest controllers!

A guide to help you benefit from
their work in protecting crops

Olive groves and **vineyards** play a key role in **Europe's agricultural development**. However, certain animal species are being affected by the way these landscapes are managed for farming, especially **birds** and **bats**.

These incredible creatures have **unique traits** that make them highly effective as natural **pest control agents**. So, is there a way to harness this symbiotic relationship between the land and birds & bats to benefit biodiversity, rather than threaten it? Let's find out.

Did you know...?

Over 45 bat species and 900 bird species live in Europe...



...but farmland expansion to boost crop yields is driving their decline.

What makes bats and birds great at controlling pests?

Natural allies for farms and forests

Birds and bats are **insect-eaters**, and their hunger can actually help farmers. By **naturally feeding on pests** that damage crops, they provide important advantages:



Fewer **chemical pesticides** are needed.



This helps reduce **farming costs**.



It also **lowers health risks linked** to pesticide exposure.

Beyond pest control, they play a key role in **maintaining healthy ecosystems** through seed dispersal. By **transporting seeds** across different areas, they help with **forest regeneration**, promote **plant diversity**, and **support habitats** for other species.





What is the current situation?

A not very bright horizon for birds and bats

Farming is becoming more **industrial**, using machines, chemicals, and new technologies to grow more food. As the world's population grows, **food demand is expected to increase** by 35–56% between 2010 and 2050. But this way of farming often harms nature.

When fields all look the same, natural habitats disappear, and chemicals are used heavily, birds and bats start to vanish. By **changing how we farm**, we can protect these animals and **bring more life and diversity** back to our farmland.

Pest controllers in action!

A big appetite with real benefits for farmers

Farmland birds eat around **28 million tons of insects every year**, many of which are plant-eating bugs that damage crops.

Bats are even more intense: they eat more than **70% of their body weight** in insects every night, including **over 700 different pest species** that are known to harm crops.



The catch:

Building stronger **links between science and the farming community**. With better communication and practical outreach, we can support farmers in making choices that protect biodiversity and boost their crops, turning birds and bats into recognized **allies on the land!**

The next step:

Science shows that birds and bats can offer **real benefits to farming**, but many farmers aren't aware of it. There's a **communication gap** and researchers studying nature-friendly methods often **struggle to connect** with the people who can actually put them into practice.