

UEA-BTO Audio Checker

Practical tips before you begin

For the clearest listening, try to work in a quiet room and use headphones if possible. Some clips are naturally faint, and the focal bird call may be difficult to hear alongside other sounds or background calls. This is normal, simply choose the best answer based on what you can hear.

You can replay each clip as many times as you need. When making your decision, focus mainly on the area between the two dashed lines at 1–4 seconds.

1. Getting started

Expand the Verify section and click Start. A random audio clip will load along with its spectrogram (Figure 1).

2. Understanding the spectrogram

The spectrogram is a visual representation of the recording, showing how sound changes over time and across different frequencies.

The two dashed vertical lines mark the 1–4 second focal area, where the bird vocalisation of interest is expected to occur. Focus primarily on this area when making your decision. Sounds outside the focal area may provide useful context, but your answer should be based mainly on what you hear between the dashed lines.

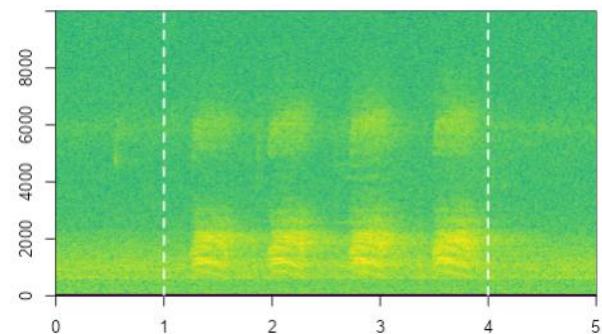


Figure 1: Example spectrogram.

3. Listening to the clip

Use the audio player below the spectrogram to listen to the recording. You can replay the clip as many times as needed. Some recordings will be clear, while others may contain faint calls, background birds or other noise. The spectrogram may help guide you, especially if you are familiar with using spectrograms to identify bird songs.

4. Question 1: Can you hear a bird species?

Choose **Yes** if you can hear a bird vocalisation in the focal area. Choose **No** if you cannot hear one.

If you select **Yes**, a search box will appear where you can enter the species you heard by typing the English name (e.g., Blue Tit). You can select more than one species if necessary.

If you cannot confidently decide whether a bird is present or the identify of the species you are hearing, select **Unknown** where appropriate.

If you change your mind, use the **X** to remove an individual species or clear your selection.

5. Question 2: Can you hear any other noises?

This question asks whether you can hear sounds other than bird vocalisations within the focal area. Choose **Yes** if other noticeable sounds are present and **No** if they are not.

If you select **Yes**, choose one or more relevant categories:

- Human voice (e.g., laughter, speech, shouting)
- Vehicle (e.g., horns, traffic, tractors)
- Animal other (e.g., any other sound from other species including cats, dogs, and livestock)
- Weather (e.g., wind, rain etc)
- Microphone noise (e.g., hiss, static, hum)
- Unknown sound (cannot identify the sound present)

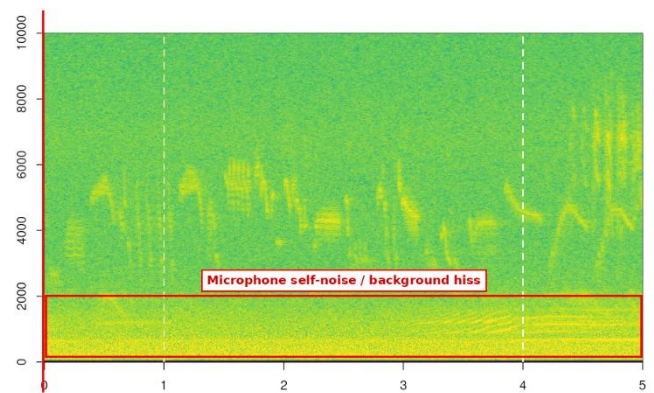


Figure 2: Microphone self-noise (red box): a constant low hiss across the whole clip, made by the recorder rather than a bird. If you can hear it in the focal area, select Microphone noise in Question 2.

6. Submitting your answer

Once you are happy with your selections, click **Submit**.

Your answers will be saved, and a new audio clip will load automatically. If you realise that you made a mistake after submitting, click **Undo last submission** to return to the previous clip and change your answer.

If you can, please aim to validate at least 20 clips per session. This usually takes around 10 minutes, and your contribution makes a real difference to the project.

7. Why your contribution matters

Each validated clip helps us understand how accurately automated bird sound identification tools perform across different seasons, times of day and environments. Your careful listening provides the human validation needed to assess these tools and improve how they are used in ecological monitoring and research.

Thank you for taking the time to contribute to the UEA-BTO Audio Checker project.