

BIRD OBSERVATION BY THE  
SKYGUARD SEARCH- AND TRACKING RADAR

Video tape of the  
German Federal Armed Forces

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SUMMARY

The SKYGUARD search- and tracking X-Band radar of the manufacturer Contraves is normally used by the German Air Force for the surveillance of low flying aircraft. In fall 1989 the system was tested for its suitability for recording the flight paths of birds in an area north of Munich. Gulls, lapwings, ducks, and crows could be tracked upto a distance of 8 km depending on the altitude of the flock and the absence of obstacles. The longest track lasted more than 8 minutes and run over more than 9 km. The altitudes of the birds varied between 30 m and 600 m, but mostly between 100 m and 300 m. During daylight the bird species could be identified by a TV-camera with a focal length of 1000 to 4200 mm.