

COMMON CRANE (*Grus grus*)

IDENTIFICATION

108-140 cm. **Adult** with slate grey plumage; throat, nape and sides of face black; white sides of head and neck; red crown; black primaries; long secondaries forming a bushy tail; long legs. **Juvenile** with brown plumage; chestnut head; shorter secondaries.

SIMILAR SPECIES

This species is unmistakable

AGEING

Since the species doesn't breed in Aragon, only 3 types of age can be recognized:

1st year autumn/2nd year spring with a patch of black tinged red skin on crown; rufous head and upper neck; with a pale patch behind the eye; ash grey body, usually with feathers on upperparts edged brown.

2nd year autumn/3rd year spring like **adult**, but crown not as bare; some retained old brown feathers on scapulars; wing coverts, tertials and underparts; usually with **juvenile** primaries and secondaries, which are narrower and pointed than in **adult**.

Adult with a patch of red skin on crown; head and neck dark grey or black with a broad white band on each side of head behind the eye; pale grey body without retained old brown feathers; primaries and secondaries more rounded and broad than in **juvenile**;

SEXING

Plumage of both sexes alike. Size and colour on base of bill can be useful in extreme birds: **male** with wing longer than 585 mm, base of bill bright red; **female** with wing shorter than 560 mm, base of bill duller red.

MOULT

Complete **postbreeding** moult but not all years since flight feathers are all changed every 2nd to perhaps even every 4th years. Partial **postjuvenile** moult involving only many body feathers; usually finished by October.

PHENOLOGY

I	II	III	IV	V	VI	VII	VIII	IX	X	XI	XII

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 Summer visitor
 Resident

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 Wintering
 On passage