

157 Common Crane

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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

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.

STATUS IN ARAGON

On passage and winter visitor, with presence mainly in Gallocanta and some places of the Ebro Basin.

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**;