



Common Cranes!

This Itinerary is made for driving your car while searching for the best places to see Common Cranes in winter. Best time of the year: between mid-November till the end of February. Total length: approximately 220 kms. Common Cranes like to forage on ploughed fields as there are rice fields and corn. The route brings you as quick as possible to the best places for watching cranes and other waterfowl.

From the entrance of Finca Las Abubillas you turn right to the village. Drive through the village till the T-junction. Turn left. After a hundred metres turn right to the A5. You drive along the 'boulevard' of Jaraicejo. Coming to the A5, turn right in the direction of Trujillo. Follow the highway till exit number 253, which is marked as Trujillo/Guadalupe. At the end of the exit turn left to Guadalupe. You continue this road (Ex.208) until the end of the village of Zorita. Driving through Zorita you turn right at the end of the village in the direction of Madrigalejo, roadnumber Ex.355.

At some point further on you will see a quite big lake at your left-hand. This is Sierra Brava. There goes a road right towards Campo Lugar, but don't take this one, unless you want to seek for Great and Little Bustards which can be found in the steppes along this road.

Where there is a sign "Presa de Sierra Brava" at your left-hand, you might enter this road to look for waterfowl in the lake. Ignore the signs that won't let you enter this road.

Continue the road to Madrigalejo. After some kilometres you pass a channel for irrigation. Take the second road at your right hand after this channel, which is marked Fernando V. This is a very quiet land road that leads you through rice fields where you can find lots of Common Cranes. But all kind of other species can be seen here, such as Red Kite, Buzzard, Marsh Harrier, maybe Merlin. Also lots of smaller birds can be found: Bluethroat, Kingfisher, Cetti's Warbler and the quite exotic Red Avadavat and Common Waxbills. Also birds as Lapwing, Greenshank and Common Snipe can be seen in ditches and fields. Look especially for Godwits in February as they feed on rice on their way back to the Netherlands. Once you are finished here, turn back to the road to Madrigalejo. Turn right.

Follow the road that leads you along the village of Madrigalejo as long as you come again in open countryside. After a few kilometres there is a sign to Vegas Altas, a small village. Turn left here. Once you are at the village, take the tarmac road on your right hand that goes into the fields. This is one of the best places to see huge numbers of Cranes in wintertime as other species like Cattle Egrets, Harriers and even the Black shouldered Kite. Take your time here and enjoy the richness of birds that can be found here. When you are finished, turn back to Vegas Altas and return to the Ex.355. Turn left here and follow the road till you reach the N.430. Turn left here. After a while turn left again to Obando (Ex.116) Follow this road. You will see dehesa as well as open country side. Pass the bridge of Rio Cubilar. A little further you can turn right to Moheda Alta, which is a protected area of beautiful dehesa. There is a bird center here, special to Common Cranes. You can enter the Moheda Alta dehesa by car or by foot. At the end, a 1500 metres further you will find a large screen overlooking rice fields in which normally lots of Cranes and Geese find food. Maybe you are lucky and big groups of Cranes fly over.

Turn back to the Ex.116. Turn right. A few kilometres ahead there is another possibility to enter the rice fields at your right hand. Do so and look for Cranes and other birds. You can also look on the other side of the Ex.116, which is indeed good for Black shouldered Kite.

Once you are finished, keep going on the Ex.116 in the direction of Guadalupe. Further there is a roundabout on which you can go to Logrosan. Take this road that brings you to Logrosan. Once you are there follow the signs to Trujillo, which is a 40 minutes' drive. Just before Trujillo turn right on the A5 in the direction of Madrid and take Exit number 232 Jaraicejo Est. From there you can easily find your way back to the Finca!

Finca Las Abubillas - www.extremadura-spain.co.uk – tel. 0034-608.31.12.86