

Common crane, *Grus grus*

Height : 1m15 - 1m30

Wingspan : 2m – 2m30

Weight : 4 kg -7kg

Life expectancy : 15 years – 17 years

European population : 400 000

Speed : 40 km/h to 80km/h



The cranes usually have two eggs in may. The pairs are faithful.

The incubation takes about 4 weeks.

The species requires inaccessible ground nesting-sites (swampy forest, marshland, reedy marshes).

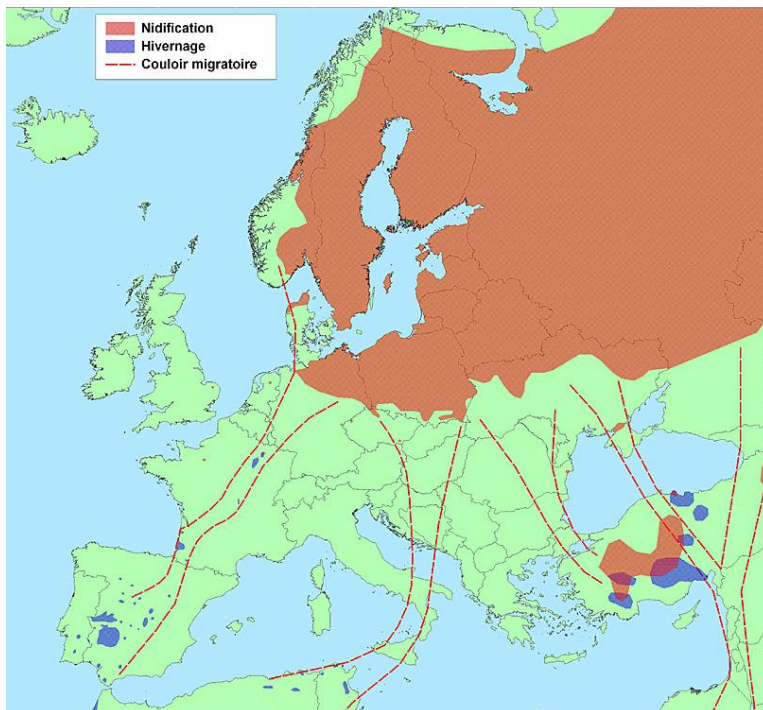
Youngs cranes can fly at 2 months (august).

They follow their parents until they migrate to south Europe in october or november. Before they migrates in autumn, about 30 000 cranes gather together on the island of Öland (Sweden) each year.

During the migration the cranes cover about 2500 km between north and south Europe.

They change their plumage each 3 or 4 years. So they can't fly during about 3 weeks in summer.

They stay in north europe during the summer (nest building-orange on the map) and go to south europe for the winter (wintering – blue on the map).



About 1000 cranes stay in Allier during winter (1627 in 2012).

They go back to north Europe on february. Just before breeding, in april, 12 000 cranes gather together on the lake Hornborgasjön.