



Montado of holm oak

> Place of Interest

THE CRANES AND THE MONTADO

The common crane (*Grus grus*) is a wading bird that reaches 1 m in length and 2.20 m in wingspan. It nests in northern Europe and moves south in flocks during the winter to settle in large groups along lakes and open fields. The border area of Ouguela represents one of the most important wintering grounds of this bird in Portugal. Here, where the landscape is flat and open, with *montados* of intermediate density and natural pastures, hundreds of common cranes (adult and immature) find the ideal place to rest and look for food (especially acorns) and thus pass a mild and safe winter

PR2
CMR

WALKING PATH OF THE CRANES



> Highlights

NATURE: the main habitat is the *montado* of holm-oak, with natural pastures of extensive use. Seasonal water courses maintain groups of tamujo (*Flueggea tinctoria*), a bush exclusive to Mediterranean watercourses of the SW Iberian Peninsula. Birds of prey: short-toed eagle (*Circaetus gallicus*), the Montagu's harrier (*Circus pygargus*), the black kite (*Milvus migrans*). In the spring: the bee-eater (*Merops apiaster*) and the stone-curlew (*Burhinus oediconemus*). In the winter: cranes (*Grus grus*).

HANDICRAFT: wrought iron; paper flowers; objects in card (plough, sickle, dishes); hand-painted clay ware.

GASTRONOMY: chickpea with meat; olive (Protected Designation of Origin). Sweets (*sericaia* with plums, *tosquiados*, crumpled cakes, nougat and tortillas with almond, chickpea and chila).

> Recommended season

This walking path can be done throughout the year. Nevertheless, users must be aware of high temperatures during summer time and the muddy ground or even flooded during winter or during periods of longer rainfall.

> Trail signage

® FCMP

right way



wrong way



turn left



turn right



> Walking code

Follow sign-posted trails only. / Respect private property. / Avoid making unnecessary noise. / Do not disturb the animals. / Do not collect or damage plants or rocks. / Do not litter and leave no trace of your visit. / Do not light fire and do not throw cigarettes on the ground. / Be kind to local people. / Beware of cattle. Although gentle, they do not like strangers approaching their young. / Leave the gates as you found them. If they are closed, be sure they remain well shut.

> Useful contacts

Town Hall of Campo Maior: +351 268 680 300

Municipal Tourist Office: +351 268 689 367

SOS Emergency: 112

SOS Forest: 117

Medical Center: +351 268 699 700

Anti-Poisoning Information: +351 217 950 143

GNR (Republican National Guard): +351 268 680 390

Fire Department: +351 268 686 227

Village Hall of São João Baptista: +351 268 688 860

Promotor:



Walking path registered and approved by:



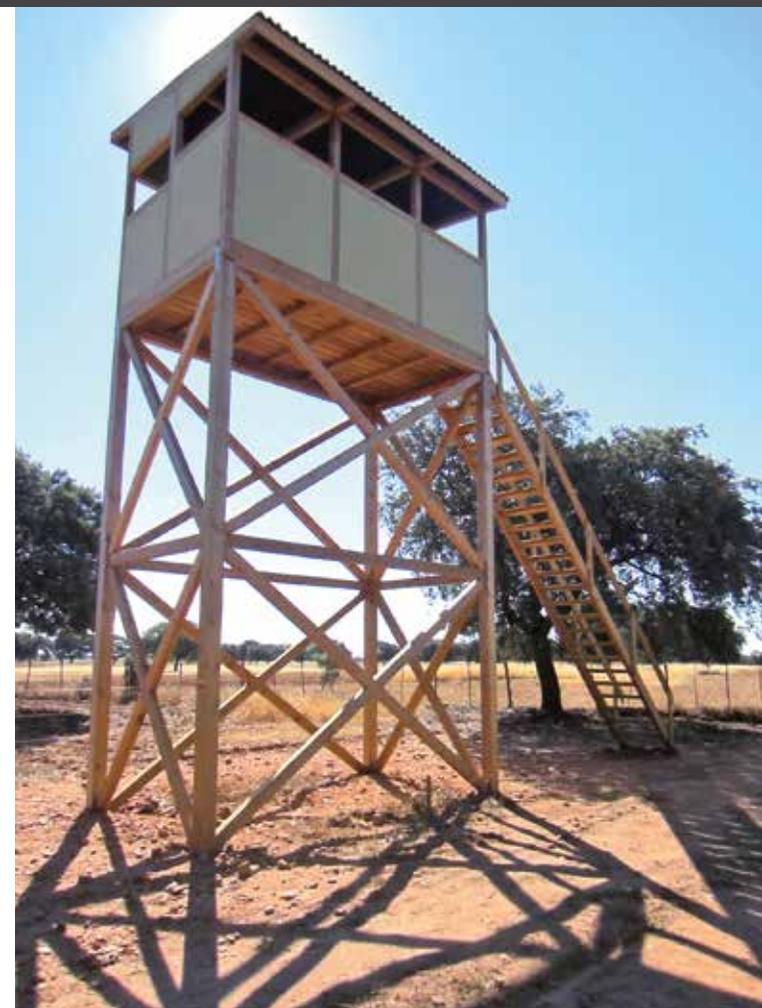
Partner institution:



Co-financing:



July 2015 / 2500 copies



Walking path description



Crane (*Grus grus*). Welcome to one of the few spots in the country where the cranes are regularly sighted during their wintering period, from early November to late February.

This is a linear walking path that follows the border very closely, at one of the easternmost points of the Portuguese territory. This path begins next to the church of the Sanctuary of N. Sr.^a da Enxara, on the left bank of Xévorá River.

It passes through an extensive area of low density *montado*, on essentially flat ground. This rare configuration causes the incipient courses of water to leave the soil saturated and swampy in the periods of the year with more abundant rainfall, due to the difficulties in drainage. The path follows a dirt road and to facilitate the observation of birds it is equipped with an observatory.

In fact, this path is especially laid out with birdwatchers in mind. The success of any birdwatching session depends on the time of year, the equipment, discretion and silence. It is one of the few places in the country especially designed for the observation of cranes, a wintering bird usually sighted here between November and February, feeding on these areas of wide-open *montado*.

A → B
linear

type of path

4.7 Km

distance

1.45^H

time

uphill
8 m

altitude variation

I
very easy
●○○○○

grading

213 m
▲
201 m

altitude max/min



gradient profile



The difficulty level is determined according to 4 different factors, each of which is assessed on a scale of 1 to 5 (from easiest to most difficult)

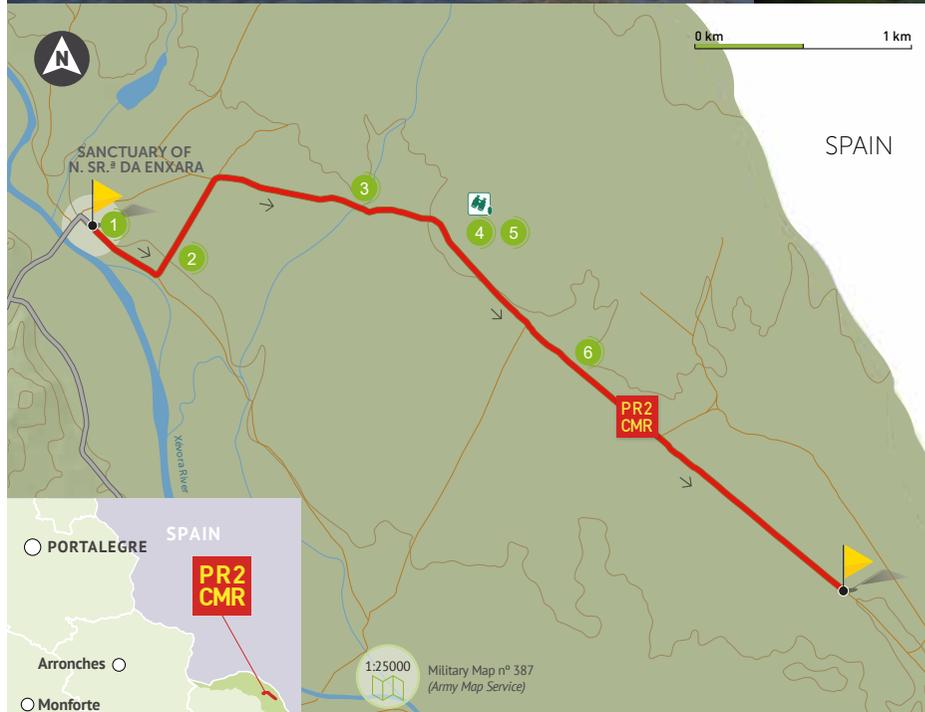
difficulty level



Riverside vegetation



Bee-eater (*Merops apiaster*)



SPAIN

Places of Interest

- 1 Sanctuary of N. Sr.^a da Enxara
- 2 Birdlife
- 3 Riverside vegetation
- 4 Observatory for birdwatching
- 5 The cranes and the *montado*
- 6 SPA (Special Protection Area)



Campo Maior Special Protection Area

This is an area of almost 9600 ha of open and scattered *montado*, agricultural areas mainly for growing cereal crops, and where the Abrilongo and Xévorá rivers flow. It is a critical area for the conservation of steppe birds - great bustard (*Otis tarda*) and little bustard (*Tetrax tetrax*), along with other bird species that deserve mention: black vulture (*Aegypius monachus*), red kite (*Milvus milvus*) and black-winged kite (*Elanus caeruleus*). The area is important for the wintering of cranes (*Grus grus*).

Caption

- Walking path
- Asphalt road
- Asphalt road

Starting: Sanctuary of N. Sr.^a da Enxara, Ouguela (GPS: 39°04'51, 21"N; 7°00'59, 24"W)
Ending: near Lagoa da Garrota, Ouguela (GPS: 39°04'04, 26"N; 6°58'44, 49"W)

Recommended direction of the walking path: West - East

- Information on site
- Landscape