

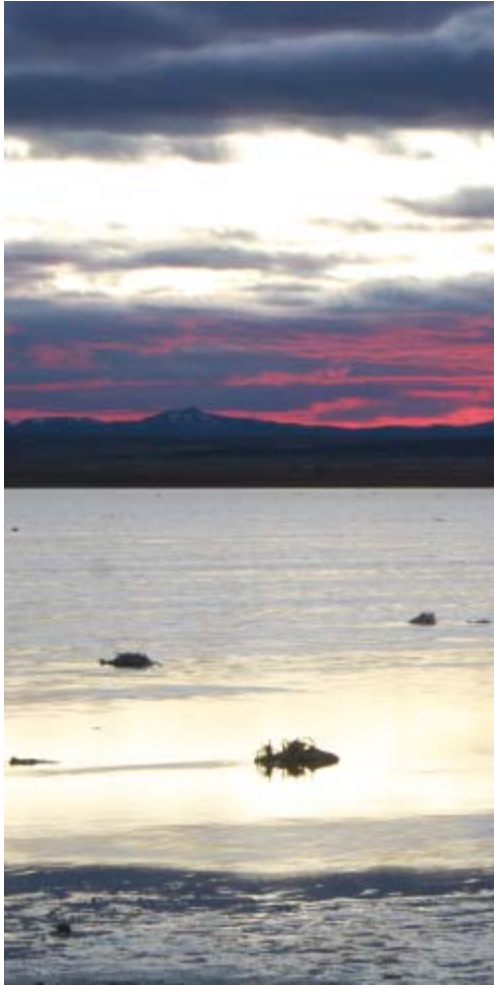


BIRD  
WATCHING

**CONTENTS** Pablo Vicente y Luis Tirado **PHOTOS** Alberto Carreño, Alberto Portero, Antonio Torrijo, Eduardo Viñuales, Ismael González, Javier Ara, Juan Carlos Muñoz, Juan Jiménez, Oscar J. González, Pablo Vicente, Ramiro Muñoz, Toño Martínez, Asoc. Amigos de Gallocanta **DESIGN** Samuel Aznar + Asociados / Miguel Frago



Province  
of Zaragoza



Gallocanta Lagoon. *Photo by Juan Jiménez*



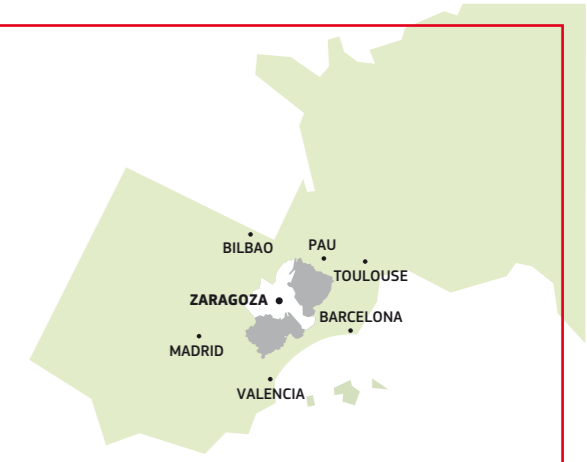
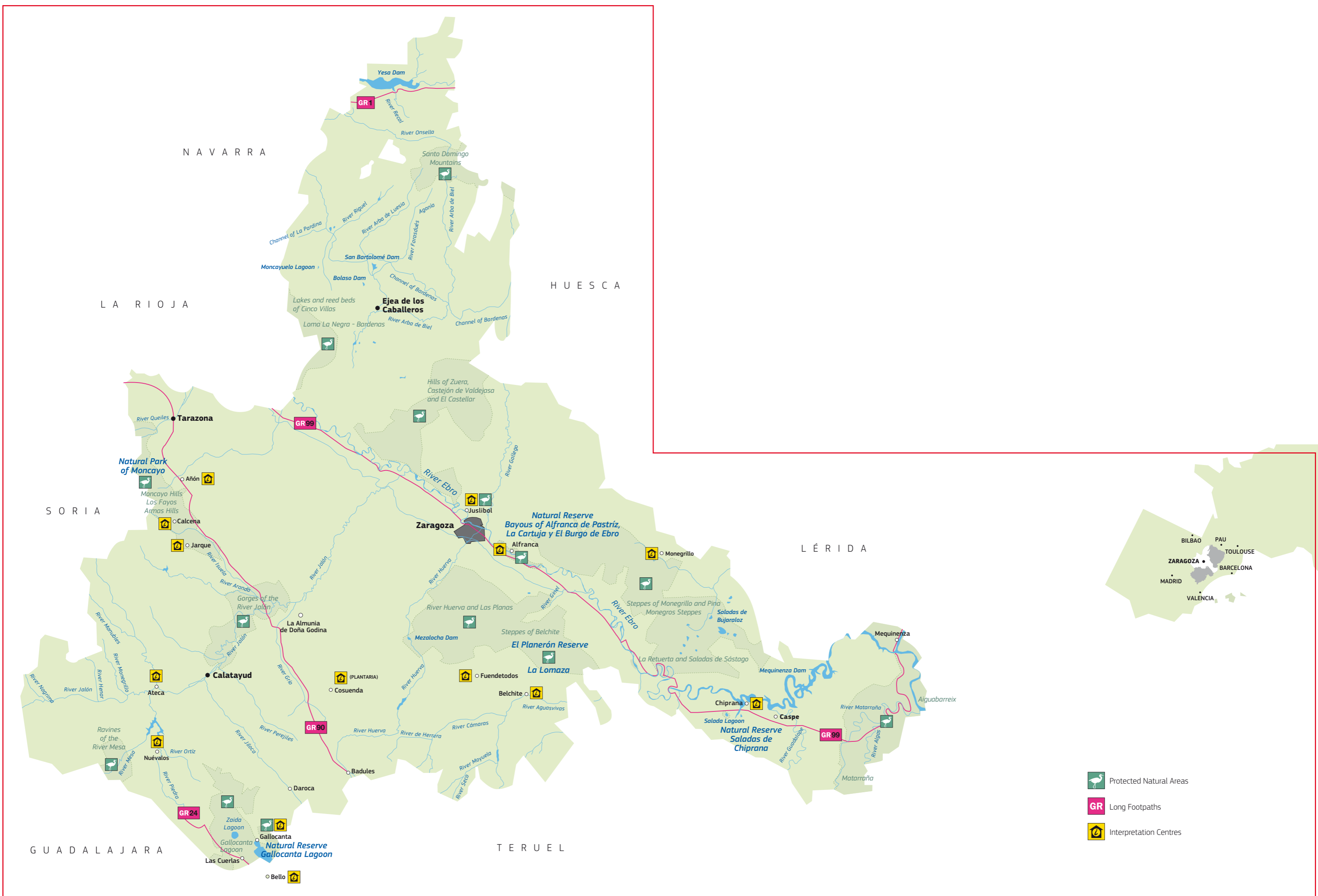
Great Bustards in the Manubles heights. *Photo by Alberto Portero*






Juslibol Bayou. *Photo by Juan Jiménez*

Groves, riversides, deserts, Mediterranean woods, rocky areas, salt lakes, steppes, wetlands... The large variety of ecosystems to be found in the **province of Zaragoza** allow us to easily see birds as different as great bustards, cranes, Egyptian vultures, ferruginous ducks, great bitterns, Dupont's lark, little bustards and red kites among many others. The province of Zaragoza is of great ornithological interest because of both the quantity and the variety of species present for both specialists and for nature lovers who are just beginning to bird-watch. We have suggested some easy routes where the most emblematic birds in each zone - that might pique your interest or those that are endangered - may be found. Zaragoza invites you to meet her ornithological treasures.

***Map of the area***



-  Protected Natural Areas
-  Long Footpaths
-  Interpretation Centres





Gallocanta Lagoon. Photo by Juan Jiménez



# 1

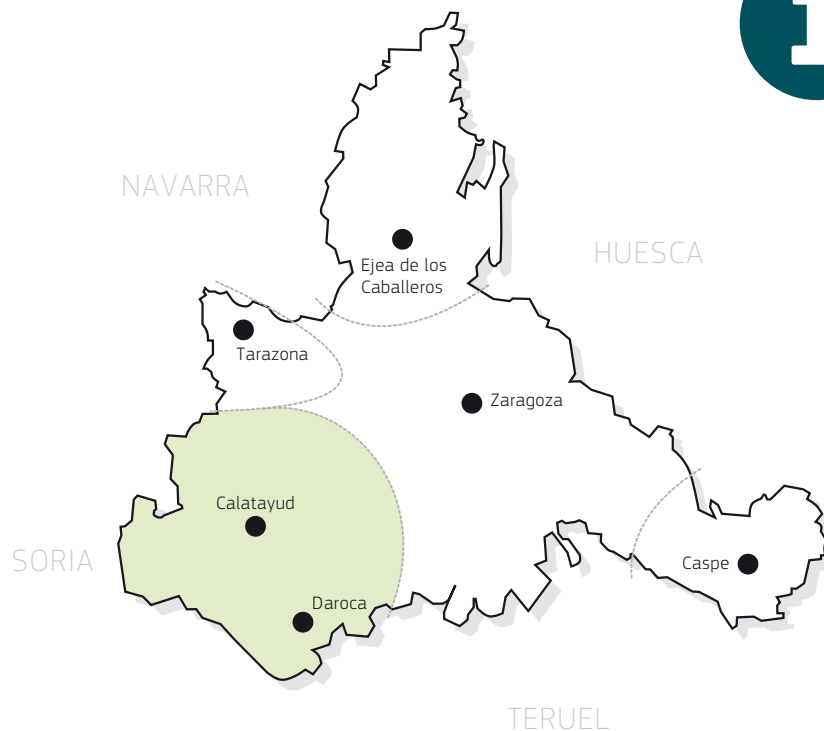
## Aranda, Jalón, Jiloca

Gorges of the River Jalón

Ravines of the River Mesa

Gallocanta

This area is criss-crossed by three great rivers and it is considered one of the most interesting places to watch rock-nesting birds - birds of prey that breed in the rocky cliffs, such as the hawk-eagle. The contrast between the most significant wetlands in Aragon -Gallocanta lagoon- and nature's wonders with thousands of cranes migrating comprise bird watching of note on a European level.



Natural Park  
Route  
A-road  
National Roads  
Local Roads  
Regional Roads  
Autonomous Region Roads



# Aranda, Jalón, Jiloca Gorges of the River Jalón

The River Jalón and its tributaries, Isuela and Aranda, come together powerfully. Vertical erosion is predominant and this leads to deep valleys that form ravines in their middle sections. These are of high ornithological interest because of the large rock-nesting birds of prey - such as the colonies of griffon vultures and Egyptian vultures or the presence of the most endangered bird of prey in Aragon: the hawk-eagle, which has, in Zaragoza, one of the last colonies still in existence. These are difficult places to reach - limited to those watchers who are willing to climb the gorges so as to be able to see these impressive birds.





*Photo by Alberto Portero*

## Hawk-eagle

- > LENGTH **70 cm**
- > WINGSPAN **170 cm**
- > SONG **They can make strident cries as chicks**
- > WHEN CAN THEY BE SEEN **It is resident in its territory all year round**
- > HOW TO SEE THEM **The best way is to go to the habitual roosts or natural viewpoints**
- > WHERE TO FIND THEM **In the gorges in the River Jalón and the Matarraña, to a lesser extent in Moncayo**
- > CATEGORY **In danger of extinction**



*Photo by Óscar González*

## Griffon vulture

- > LENGTH **115 cm**
- > WINGSPAN **280 cm**
- > SONG **In fights over carrion, it snorts**
- > WHEN CAN THEY BE SEEN **They stay all year round**
- > HOW TO SEE THEM **Roosting in cliffside areas or flying over any part of Aragon**
- > WHERE TO FIND THEM **Gorges of the River Jalón, mountains of Santo Domingo, Moncayo, River Huerva and the River Mesa**
- > CATEGORY **Special interest**



# Aranda, Jalón, Jiloca

## Ravines of the River Mesa

As their name suggests, these are major ravines carved out by water erosion constituting spectacularly beautiful chalky rock faces. Here, you can see griffon vultures, Egyptian vultures, golden eagles, peregrine falcons and the elusive Eurasian eagle-owl relatively easily. It is also easy to see the black wheatear and the red-billed chough -also seen in rocky cliffside areas, the main feature of this SPA- because there is an abundance of them in the area. Here, there are some very well indicated routes which make it easy to travel the depths of the narrow valleys and, at the same time, reach impressive viewpoints



*Photo by Óscar González*

## Peregrine falcon

- > LENGTH **38 cm**
- > WINGSPAN **115 cm**
- > SONG **It cries both when roosting and when flying**
- > WHEN CAN THEY BE SEEN **They stay all year round**
- > HOW TO SEE THEM **Roosting or flying over cliffside areas**
- > WHERE TO FIND THEM **Gorges of the River Jalón, mountains of Santo Domingo, Moncayo, River Huerva and the River Mesa**
- > CATEGORY **Special interest**



*Photo by Alberto Carreño*

## Griffon vulture

- > LENGTH **115 cm**
- > WINGSPAN **280 cm**
- > SONG **In fights over carrion, it snorts**
- > WHEN CAN THEY BE SEEN **They stay all year round**
- > HOW TO SEE THEM **Roosting in cliffside areas or flying over any part of Aragon**
- > WHERE TO FIND THEM **Gorges of the River Jalón, mountains of Santo Domingo, Moncayo, River Huerva and the River Mesa**
- > CATEGORY **Special interest**



# Aranda, Jalón, Jiloca Gallocanta

Gallocanta lagoon is in a large valley and it is characterised by its salinity. It is the most important and the largest salt lagoon in Europe and it is the most important migration point in the Western Palaearctic Ecozone on the route of the crane, for which it has been named a RAMSAR site - the highest category for protection and world renown. The area is subject to serious water fluctuation; during the time of a permanent water level, it is possible to also see some of the largest winter populations of the ferruginous duck and red-crested pochard in Spain. Recently, the reedbeds of the lagoon have been established as being of international importance due to the presence of a population of the most endangered small bird in Europe: the aquatic warbler. For our viewing pleasure, the second largest colony of great bustards can be found nearby the lagoon.





Photo by Antonio Torrijo

## Great Bustard

- > LENGTH 105 cm
- > WINGSPAN 260 cm
- > SONG During mating season, the males produce a sound that resembles a deep raspberry
- > WHEN CAN THEY BE SEEN It is native, but - following breeding - groups of males gather on one side and females on the other
- > HOW TO SEE THEM Easy to spot in the dry fields of sprouted cereal
- > WHERE TO FIND THEM Almost the entire population in Aragon can be found in Monegros and Gallocanta
- > CATEGORY In danger of extinction



Photo by Eduardo Viñuales

## Crane

- > LENGTH 119 cm
- > WINGSPAN 222 cm
- > SONG Adults emit a trumpeting sound that can be heard from 100s of metres away; the young whistle
- > WHEN CAN THEY BE SEEN It is migratory; from the arrival of cold weather in October to the beginning of March
- > HOW TO SEE THEM In the lagoons and fields next to the wetlands where they set down. Their leaving the roost in the morning and returning at night proves spectacular
- > WHERE TO FIND THEM Mainly in Gallocanta, but it is also easy to spot them in Cinco Villas region and, to a lesser extent, in the El Planerón Reserve in Belchite
- > CATEGORY Sensitive to changes in habitat



El Planerón Reserve in Belchite. *Photo by Juan Jiménez*

# 2

## Mid-Ebro

### Bayous

Monegros (Monegrillo + Pina)

### Belchite

River Huerva (Mezalocha)

### Hills of Zuera



The most significant natural areas in Aragon -Monegros and Belchite- are of keen interest to bird watchers from all over the world because of their still-present steppe birds such as the Dupont's lark and the great bustard. In the Ebro, the bayous and the meanders of the river are used by hundreds of migrating herons and aquatic birds, providing great contrast and beauty to the province of Zaragoza.



# Mid-Ebro Bayous

These are the riverside ecosystems that encompass the best preserved groves and wetlands featuring the greatest biodiversity in the Ebro valley. They are especially important for their colonies of herons - particularly the black-crowned night heron and the purple heron - and they are host to ardeidae in large numbers during the winter. Impenetrable reedbeds allow one to observe the reed bunting - getting steadily scarcer in the Iberian peninsula. During the migratory period, the stars are the populations of passerines as the groves are a real melting pot of species of exceptional quantities and richness. Without a doubt, this is one of the best spots in Zaragoza to enjoy some winter bird watching.





*Photo by Óscar González*

## Black-crowned night heron

- > LENGTH **65 cm**
- > WINGSPAN **100 cm**
- > SONG **Similar to cawing of the crow**
- > WHEN CAN THEY BE SEEN **It is exclusively a summer night bird**
- > HOW TO SEE THEM **Stay close to the entrances and exits to the reedbeds in the wetlands, and also check to see if they are landing in the tamarisks**
- > WHERE TO FIND THEM **Bayous of the Ebro and Aigüabarreix**
- > CATEGORY **Special interest**



*Photo by Juan Carlos Muñoz*

## Purple heron

- > LENGTH **90 cm**
- > WINGSPAN **145 cm**
- > SONG **It is similar to the croak of a frog, though a little deeper**
- > WHEN CAN THEY BE SEEN **It is exclusively a summer bird - it can only be spotted in spring and summer**
- > HOW TO SEE THEM **Stay close to the entrances and exits to the reedbeds in the wetlands, and in the neighbouring agricultural fields**
- > WHERE TO FIND THEM **Bayous of the Ebro and the lakes and reedbeds of the Cinco Villas**
- > CATEGORY **At risk**



# Mid-Ebro

## Monegros

(Monegrillo + Pina)

The fields of junipers in Monegrillo and Farlete (much like the African savannah), the Retuerta in Pina (like the primordial forest formerly in the Monegros) and the saltwater areas in the Sástago-Bujaraloz complex (declared a RAMSAR site for their international relevance) comprise the heart of the most important and unique natural zone in Aragon. It is home to the last remaining steppe birds in danger of extinction such as the great bustard and the lesser kestrel; here, they continue to breed and it is fairly easy to spot them. In spring large numbers of little bustards live up an unforgettable day in the countryside. In particular, in the Retuerta in Pina, it is possible to see quite regularly the Montagu's harrier - which also breeds here.







*Photo by Alberto Carreño*

## Great Bustard

- > LENGTH 105 cm
- > WINGSPAN 260 cm
- > SONG During the mating season the males produce a sound that resembles a deep raspberry
- > WHEN CAN THEY BE SEEN It is native, but - following breeding - groups of males gather on one side and females on the other
- > HOW TO SEE THEM Easy to spot in the dry fields of sprouted cereal
- > WHERE TO FIND THEM Almost the entire population in Aragon can be found in Monegros and Gallocañta
- > CATEGORY In danger of extinction



*Photo by Alberto Carreño*

## Lesser kestrel

- > LENGTH 31 cm
- > WINGSPAN 72 cm
- > SONG It makes a high-pitched strident screech, especially in the colonies of young
- > WHEN CAN THEY BE SEEN It is a summer bird which arrives in February and leaves in September
- > HOW TO SEE THEM Carefully examine the cottages or detached workers' houses with Arabic tiles or the lamp posts or telephone poles
- > WHERE TO FIND THEM In Monegros and, to a lesser extent, in Belchite
- > CATEGORY Sensitive to changes in habitat

..... Natural Park  
■■■■ Route  
■■■■ Local Roads  
■■■■ Regional Roads  
■■■■ Autonomous Region Roads



▲  
48 km to Zaragoza

## Steppes of Belchite El Planerón La Lomaza



A-222

CV-306

Codo

  **Belchite**

A-1307

River Aguasvivas



# Mid-Ebro Belchite

The best-preserved steppes in the Ebro Valley can be found in Belchite; here, you can quite easily see large quantities of Dupont's lark (a small bird under great threat of extinction) as well as sandgrouses and black-bellied sandgrouses. The reserve at La Lomaza and the SEO/BirdLife ornithological reserve at El Planerón - rescued at the eleventh hour from being ploughed over by the CAP (Common Agricultural Policy) - are nowadays an obligatory stop on the map for bird watchers from all over the world. Tales of the most beautiful sunsets in Aragon - those over the landscape of La Lomaza in Belchite - are recounted because of the outstanding countryside that is truly worthy of admiration. In winter, cranes and hen harriers can be seen flying across this magnificent sunset heading back to their roosts.



*Photo by Eduardo Viñuales*

## Dupont's lark

- > LENGTH **18 cm**
- > WINGSPAN **31 cm**
- > SONG **Beautiful flute-like sound that is produced on the ground or when flying at night**
- > WHEN CAN THEY BE SEEN **It is native and virtually does not leave the area**
- > HOW TO SEE THEM **Better to say, when to hear them: in spring and during September/October, given it is very difficult to spot them**
- > WHERE TO FIND THEM **In Belchite (El Planerón reserve and La Lomaza)**
- > CATEGORY **In danger of extinction**



*Photo by Toño Martínez*

## Black-bellied sandgrouse

- > LENGTH **36-39 cm**
- > WINGSPAN **55-70 cm**
- > SONG **When flying the black-bellied sandgrouse coos and the Iberian bird makes a sort of squawk**
- > WHEN CAN THEY BE SEEN **They are native; in winter, they gather together in large numbers**
- > HOW TO SEE THEM **Search in arid areas, fallow land, alfalfa crops or in dry area cropland**
- > WHERE TO FIND THEM **In Belchite (SEO/BirdLife El Planerón) and, to a lesser extent, in Monegros**
- > CATEGORY **At risk**



## Pin-tailed sandgrouse

- > LENGTH **32 cm**
- > WINGSPAN **63 cm**
- > SONG **Reminiscent of the cawing of the jackdaw**
- > WHEN CAN THEY BE SEEN **They are native; in winter, they gather together in large numbers**
- > HOW TO SEE THEM **Search in arid areas, fallow land, alfalfa crops or in dry area cropland**
- > WHERE TO FIND THEM **In Belchite (SEO/BirdLife El Planerón) and, to a lesser extent, in Monegros**
- > CATEGORY **At risk**





## Little bustard

- > LENGTH 45 cm
- > WINGSPAN 115 cm
- > SONG Only during mating season does this bird make a characteristic short raspberry sound
- > WHEN CAN THEY BE SEEN It is native but it is most visible in spring as part of the population migrates
- > HOW TO SEE THEM In summer in the dry area cereal fields, surrounded by fallow land, uncultivated areas and natural vegetation; in winter, in the alfalfa and leguminous plants
- > WHERE TO FIND THEM In Monegros and, to a lesser extent, in Belchite
- > CATEGORY At risk



# Mid-Ebro

## River Huerva (Mezalocha)

This is a very varied and intermittent land that always surprises the visitor: from almost perfectly flat areas to deep gullies, great rocky walls to well conserved neighbouring stands of pine and holm oak - all winding along the course of the River Huerva. Emblematic species from Aragon - such as the hawk-eagle or the impressive Eurasian eagle-owl - can be seen in their natural roosts, together with other birds of prey such as the griffon vulture, the golden eagle and the Egyptian vulture. Also present are the booted eagle and the short-toed eagle coming from the woods and it is possible to see hunting during days of unforgettable bird watching.





*Photo by Óscar González*

## Golden eagle

- > LENGTH **90 cm**
- > WINGSPAN **227 cm**
- > SONG **A very quiet species**
- > WHEN CAN THEY BE SEEN **They stay all year round**
- > HOW TO SEE THEM **Flying over gorges and cliffs or in the pine trees in the Ebro valley**
- > WHERE TO FIND THEM **Gorges of the River Jalón, River Mesa, River Huerva, hills of Zuera, mountains of Santo Domingo, Loma Negra and Moncayo**
- > CATEGORY **Special interest**



*Photo by Óscar González*

## Eurasian eagle-owl

- > LENGTH **60 cm**
- > WINGSPAN **180 cm**
- > SONG **At night, makes a profoundly deep sound**
- > WHEN CAN THEY BE SEEN **They stay and can be spotted all year round**
- > HOW TO SEE THEM **Always around rocky cliffs - their nocturnal habitat**
- > WHERE TO FIND THEM **Gorges of the River Jalón, River Mesa, River Huerva, hills of Zuera, mountains of Santo Domingo, Loma Negra and Moncayo**
- > CATEGORY **Special interest**

..... Natural Park   ■■■ Route   ■■■■ Motorway   ■■■■■ A-Road   ■■■■■■ National Roads   ■■■■■■■■ Local Roads   ■■■■■■■■■■ Regional Roads   ■■■■■■■■■■■■ Autonomous Region Roads



# Mid-Ebro Hills of Zuera

The island-like effect of a large pine forest in the midst of the treeless Ebro valley brings with it large numbers of forest birds of prey. This is an unequalled opportunity in this area of Aragon to see golden eagles, black kites and the endangered red kite, as well as the booted eagle and the short-toed eagle. Fires have assaulted this area in recent years and part of this forested area's charm has been lost but it continues to have abundant bird populations. Among the gypsum outcrops - in line with the orography - we are surprised to find a colony of the increasingly scarce black wheatear and, in winter, there is the visit of the hen harrier flying at near-ground level among the farmed fields.



13 km to Zaragoza



Photo by Javier Ara

## Milano negro

- > LENGTH 60 cm
- > WINGSPAN 180 cm
- > SONG It makes two types of sound: one like a miaow and the other like a whinny
- > WHEN CAN THEY BE SEEN They are summer birds
- > HOW TO SEE THEM Always around rocky cliffs - their nocturnal habitat
- > WHERE TO FIND THEM Gorges of the River Jalón, River Mesa, River Huerva, hills of Zuera, mountains of Santo Domingo, Loma Negra and Moncayo
- > CATEGORY Special interest



Photo by Juan Carlos Muñoz

## Short-toed eagle

- > LENGTH 70 cm
- > WINGSPAN 188 cm
- > SONG When young, it makes a plaintive sound
- > WHEN CAN THEY BE SEEN They are summer birds
- > HOW TO SEE THEM Flying over pines in the Ebro valley and surrounding areas
- > WHERE TO FIND THEM The hills of Zuera and Loma Negra and, to a lesser extent, around the Rivers Huerva and Matarraña
- > CATEGORY Special interest



Aiguabarreix in Mequinenza. Photo by Eduardo Viñuales

# 3

## Lower Ebro

### Matarraña - Aiguabarreix

Located in plateaus, this area has high numbers of steppe birds - such as the little bustard and the sandgrouse - and pine trees to form very well conserved Mediterranean forests. Several dams and small lakes round out the landscape and provide the chance to see a large number of species of high-on unbeatable quality.







# Lower Ebro Matarraña - Aiguabarreix

Moving down the Rivers Ebro and Matarraña, we find the second largest colony of herons after that at La Alfranca Bayou, with sporadic sightings of great bitterns and squacco herons and the second largest colony of hawk-eagles in Aragón: all three species are in danger of extinction. The bodies of reeds on one side and the cuts and isolated and rarely visited cliffs on the other create the habitat necessary for the colonies of endangered birds to find a haven of peace and tranquillity. In the hills there are cultivated fields and slopes covered with well-preserved pines plus there is a steadily expanding population of rabbits. In some parts, the Ebro and the Matarraña become wilder and feature ravines and drops of tens of metres with spectacular views and amazing landscapes.







*Photo by Óscar González*

## Common buzzard

- > LENGTH **57 cm**
- > WINGSPAN **130 cm**
- > SONG **Very similar to a shouted miaowing**
- > WHEN CAN THEY BE SEEN **It is resident in its territory all year round**
- > HOW TO SEE THEM **The best way is to pay attention to the telephone poles or roosts, both artificial and natural**
- > WHERE TO FIND THEM **Anywhere in Zaragoza**
- > CATEGORY **Special interest**



*Photo by Taño Martínez*

## Little egret

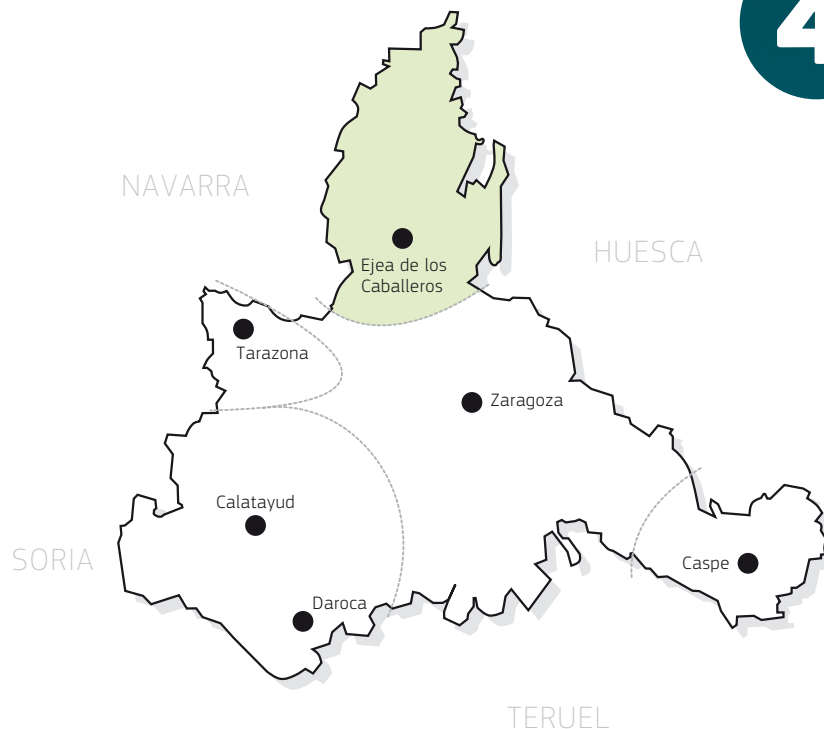
- > LENGTH **65 cm**
- > WINGSPAN **106 cm**
- > SONG **Though generally silent, occasionally it makes a husky noise**
- > WHEN CAN THEY BE SEEN **Almost all year round, though they do not breed**
- > HOW TO SEE THEM **Watch the riverside reeds and woods that they choose as their roosts and, at times of farm work, behind tractors**
- > WHERE TO FIND THEM **Bayous of the Ebro and Aigüabarreix**
- > CATEGORY **Special interest**



Bardenas. Photo by Juan Jiménez

# 4

## Foothills of the Pyrenees and the Cinco Villas

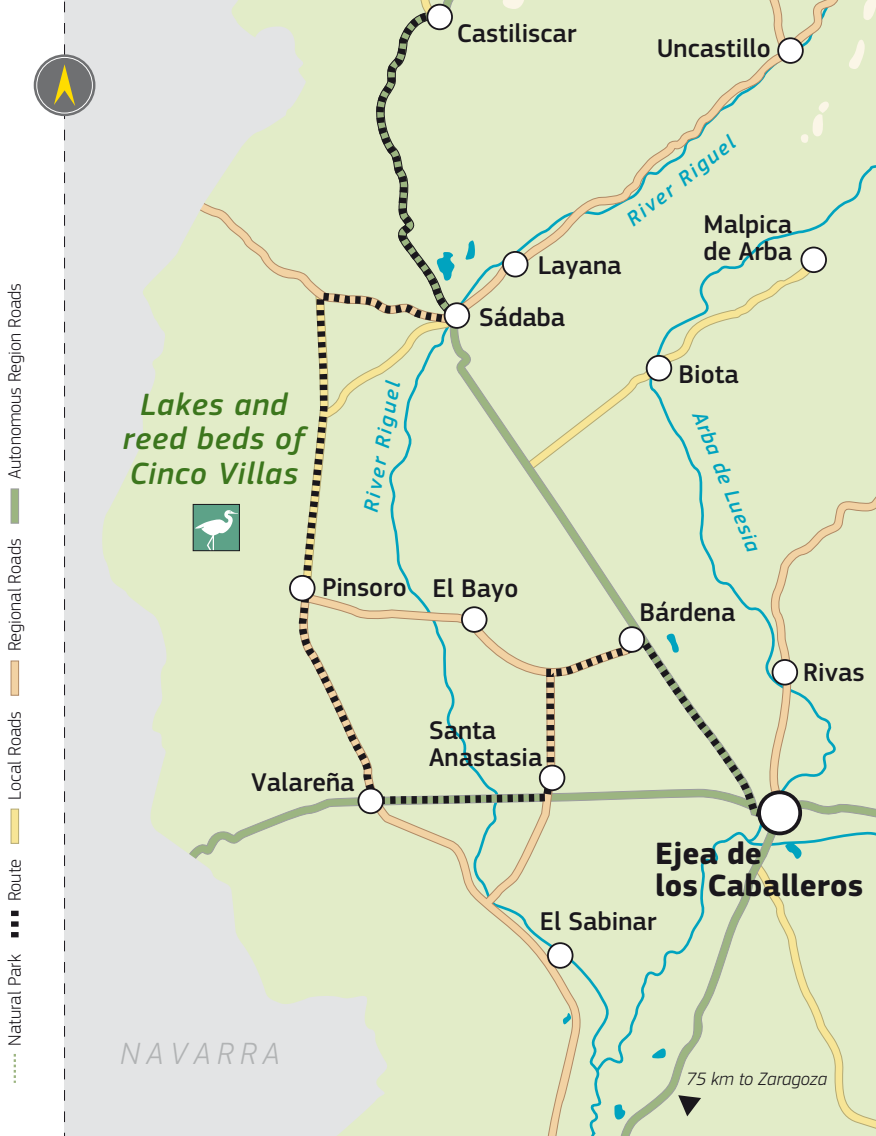


**Lakes and reedbeds**

**Santo Domingo mountains**

**La Loma Negra - Bardenas**

From the steppes to the mountains we find some of the most interesting viewpoints in Zaragoza from which to spot gliding birds, such as the bearded vulture and the Egyptian vulture. The series of lakes comprise the most significant freshwater wetlands in Zaragoza, with aquatic birds of great interest including the great bittern and the ferruginous duck.



# Foothills of the Pyrenees and the Cinco Villas

## Lakes and reedbeds

The series of lakes are the most significant freshwater wetlands in Zaragoza, characterised by the abundance of marshy vegetation, reedbeds and impregnable canebeds. It is home to a significant collection of great bitterns, endangered herons and small birds such as the marshy emberizidae - indicators of a good state of health. Here, there are artificial lakes as well as open water all at different depths, which allows for the presence of a number of special aquatic species such as the red-crested pochard and the ferruginous duck. In the agricultural zone - between the lakes - we are surprised by the ever increasing number of cranes that come to winter and the purple herons (also endangered) that come in the summer. The western marsh harrier flies over the area throughout the year and, in the winter, the hen harrier can be found over the increasingly rare non-irrigated fields.



*Photo by Ramiro Muñoz*

## Great bittern

- > LENGTH 80 cm
- > WINGSPAN 135 cm
- > SONG Striking and sonorous bellowing
- > WHEN CAN THEY BE SEEN It is native but the population grows in winter
- > HOW TO SEE THEM Difficult because they hardly ever leave the wetland's marshy vegetation
- > WHERE TO FIND THEM Lakes and reedbeds in the Cinco Villas and La Alfranca bayou
- > CATEGORY In danger of extinction



*Photo by Javier Ara*

## Ferruginous duck

- > LENGTH 42 cm
- > WINGSPAN 67 cm
- > SONG It is very quiet but the male makes a nasal sound during mating season
- > WHEN CAN THEY BE SEEN They are winter birds
- > HOW TO SEE THEM Always near open water in the wetlands together with other more common ducks
- > WHERE TO FIND THEM Foothills of the Pyrenees and Cinco Villas, lagoons and reedbeds
- > CATEGORY In danger of extinction





# Foothills of the Pyrenees and the Cinco Villas

## Santo Domingo mountains

The vultures in these mountains are in an ideal place to be observed - the standouts are the bearded vulture, a significant colony of griffon vultures and the Egyptian vulture. In these areas of forested hillsides and slopes, featuring not especially favourable pines (as part of the reforestation), they are accompanied by: honey buzzards, black kites, red kites, short-toed eagles, booted eagles and golden eagles. Somewhat more hidden and difficult to spot - compared to other sites - are the peregrine falcon and the Eurasian eagle-owl. Other species of note here include: the abundant great spotted woodpecker, woodlark and red-billed chough colonies. This leaves us thinking about the wonderful combination of rocky and wooded landscape of these places. As this is the gateway to the Pyrenees in Aragón, it is possible to see the migration of many species - including the osprey and the crane - while viewing the snowy mountaintops of the central Pyrenees from natural viewpoints from which the sights are moving.





Photo by Eduardo Viñuales

## Bearded vulture

- > LENGTH **120 cm**
- > WINGSPAN **290 cm**
- > SONG **Only during mating season does it whistle long and powerfully**
- > WHEN CAN THEY BE SEEN **It is native and any time of year is good**
- > HOW TO SEE THEM **One must be attent to the flights that they make close to the hillsides**
- > WHERE TO FIND THEM **In the Santo Domingo mountains**
- > CATEGORY **In danger of extinction**



Photo by Javier Ara

## Red kite

- > LENGTH **66 cm**
- > WINGSPAN **170 cm**
- > SONG **Reminiscent of a cat's miaow but a little more tuneful**
- > WHEN CAN THEY BE SEEN **They are native to the mountains but they can be spotted in abundance throughout the Ebro valley when the winter population arrives from Central Europe**
- > HOW TO SEE THEM **Their way of seeking food gliding over vast areas makes them easy to spot in agricultural areas**
- > WHERE TO FIND THEM **The hills of Zuera and the mountains of Santo Domingo in spring and throughout the Ebro valley in winter**
- > CATEGORY **Sensitive to changes in habitat**



# Foothills of the Pyrenees and the Cinco Villas

## La Loma Negra-Bardenas

On the edge of the Bardenas Reales Natural Park in Navarre, the slopes towards the Aragon side have a rocky and Aleppo pines covered habitat that is incredibly beautiful. Here, you can find the largest colony of Egyptian vultures in Zaragoza, as well as other species of note such as the short-toed eagle, the golden eagle and the Eurasian eagle-owl. There are a number of natural viewpoints that should be used at dusk so as not to have the sun in your eyes - as the slope faces east - where the birds of prey seem to float in mid-air right by your side. Notable in winter are the colonies of griffon vulture which use the cliffs as an area to rest and to roost. Though there are only a few of them, in summer it is possible to spot the Montagu's harrier flying much like a glider just a few metres off the ground.





Photo by Alberto Carreño

## Egyptian vulture

- > LENGTH 70 cm
- > WINGSPAN 150 cm
- > SONG This is a very quiet species
- > WHEN CAN THEY BE SEEN It is a summer bird, during spring and summer
- > HOW TO SEE THEM On rocky cliffs, around carrion or flying over workers' cottages
- > WHERE TO FIND THEM In the Loma Negra, River Jalón, River Mesa, River Huerva, mountains of Santo Domingo and Moncayo
- > CATEGORY At risk



Photo by Óscar González

## Booted eagle

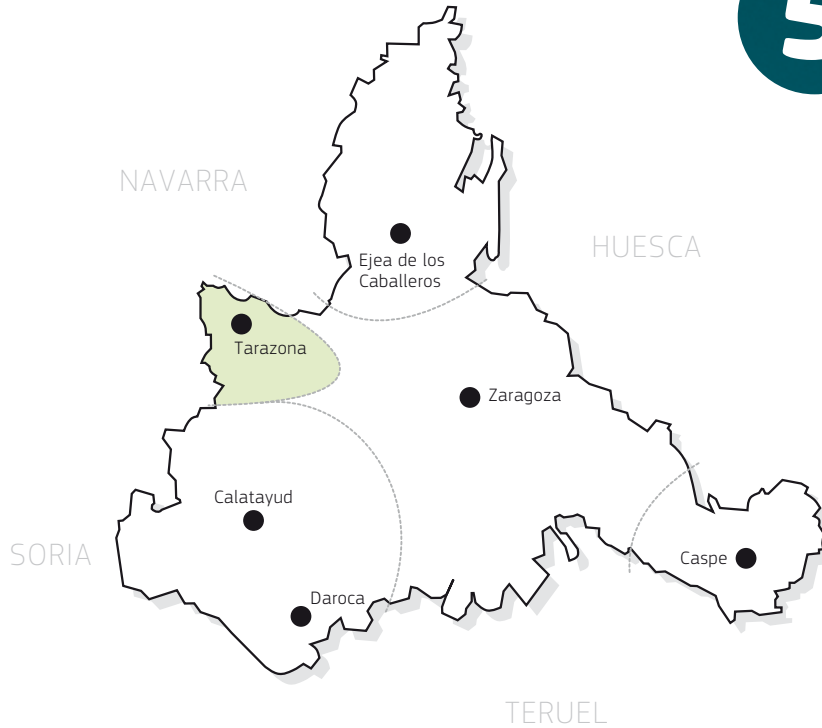
- > LENGTH 50 cm
- > WINGSPAN 130 cm
- > SONG It makes a scream somewhere between strident and flute-like
- > WHEN CAN THEY BE SEEN It is a summer bird, during spring and summer
- > HOW TO SEE THEM Flying over pines in the Ebro valley and in the woods and their fringes in the mountains
- > WHERE TO FIND THEM Hills of Zuera, Loma Negra, Moncayo, mountains of Santo Domingo and the River Huerva
- > CATEGORY Special interest



The Moncayo. Photo by Eduardo Viñuales

# 5

## Moncayo



The Iberian system has the greatest variety of leafy forest birds in Zaragoza - of interest all year round. The lower hills and the slopes covered in pine facing the valleys allow all sorts of birds of prey and mountain birds to be spotted; the biodiversity is marked between cropland and scrubland.





..... Natural Park  
■ ■ ■ Route  
— Local Roads



# Moncayo

An unrivalled mountain: rising from the plains of the steppe areas, it is covered with forest of all kinds in relation to its height and, on the peaks, we can find the most attractive pastureland and screeland in the Iberian system. For this reason, the bird community is more varied: from the large numbers of griffon vulture, to the golden eagle, Egyptian vulture, peregrine falcon and the seriously endangered hawk-eagle to the singular honey buzzard and the elusive goshawk and sparrowhawk. The forest birds are the true rulers of Moncayo: beautiful blue tits, great tits, Eurasian nuthatches, robins and, of course, great spotted woodpeckers. They provide the birdwatcher with delights all year round and, in summer, routes to walk in the always refreshing shade. The presence of the water pipit and the Alpine accentor are particularly surprising as they make their nests in the high mountain pastureland; this is indicative of a noticeable climate change that will negatively affect this kind of species in the future.





Photo by Óscar González

## Alpine accentor

- > LENGTH **18 cm**
- > WINGSPAN **19 cm**
- > SONG **Sings with a very varied trill both on the ground and in flight**
- > WHEN CAN THEY BE SEEN **They stay all year round**
- > HOW TO SEE THEM **On rocks and in mountain pastureland**
- > WHERE TO FIND THEM **Very high up on Moncayo - from about 1,800 m**
- > CATEGORY **Special interest**



Photo by Óscar González

## Eurasian nuthatch

- > LENGTH **14 cm**
- > WINGSPAN **17 cm**
- > SONG **Uses a short call repeatedly or with more space between the calls**
- > WHEN CAN THEY BE SEEN **They are native, so stay all year round**
- > HOW TO SEE THEM **Examine the lower parts of the trunks of large trees**
- > WHERE TO FIND THEM **Easily in Moncayo and in the mountains of Santo Domingo mainly**
- > CATEGORY **Special interest**

# Endangered birds calendar

ALL YEAR ROUND   SUMMER   WINTER

JAN FEB MAR APR MAY JUN JUL AUG SEP OCT NOV DEC



Monegros. Photo by Juan Jiménez



Great bittern

Photo by Ramiro Muñoz



Great bustard

Photo by Antonio Torrijo



Bearded vulture

Photo by Eduardo Viñuales



Dupont's lark

Photo by Eduardo Viñuales



Pin-tailed sandgrouse

Photo by Óscar González



Black-bellied sandgrouse

Photo by Toño Martínez



Little bustard

*Photo by Toño Martínez*



Lesser kestrel

*Photo by Alberto Carreño*



Hawk-eagle

*Photo by Alberto Portero*



Egyptian vulture

*Photo by Alberto Carreño*



Montagu's harrier

*Photo by Toño Martínez*



Tawny owl

*Photo by Óscar González*



Red kite

*Photo by Javier Ara*



Red-billed chough

*Photo by Eduardo Viñuales*



Purple heron

*Photo by Juan Carlos Muñoz*



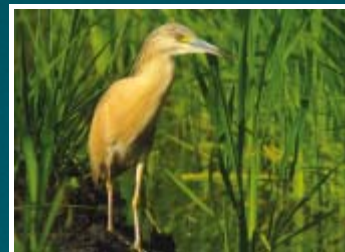
Crane

*Photo by Alberto Carreño*



Ferruginous duck

*Photo by Javier Ara*



Squacco heron

*Photo by Óscar González*



# Birds of special interest calendar

ALL YEAR ROUND
  SUMMER
  WINTER

JAN FEB MAR APR MAY JUN JUL AUG SEP OCT NOV DEC



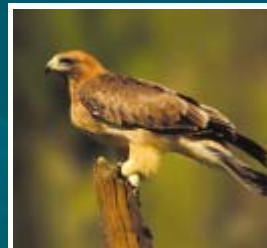
Golden eagle

Photo by Óscar González



Short-toed eagle

Photo by Javier Ara



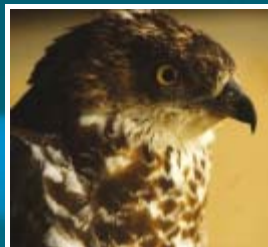
Booted eagle

Photo by Óscar González



Griffon vulture

Photo by Alberto Carreño



Honey buzzard

Photo by Eduardo Viñuales



Robin

Photo by Óscar González



Great tit

Photo by Óscar González



Crested tit

Photo by Alberto Carreño



Great spotted woodpecker

Photo by Ismael González



Eurasian nuthatch

Photo by Óscar González



Red-crested pochard

Photo by Javier Ara



Western marsh harrier

*Photo by Ismael González*



Black-crowned night heron

*Photo by Óscar González*



Eared owl

*Photo by Óscar González*



Peregrine falcon

*Photo by Juan Carlos Muñoz*



Eurasian eagle-owl

*Photo by Óscar González*



Black kite

*Photo by Javier Ara*



Black wheatear

*Photo by Juan Carlos Muñoz*



Dartford warbler

*Photo by Javier Ara*



Orphean warbler

*Photo by Óscar González*



Eurasian stone-curlew

*Photo by Javier Ara*



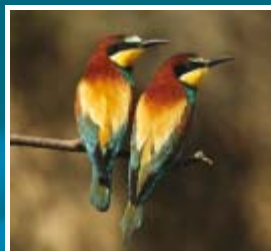
Common kingfisher

*Photo by Óscar González*



Goshawk

*Photo by Juan Carlos Muñoz*



European bee-eater

*Photo by Ismael González*



Blue tit

*Photo by Alberto Carreño*



Alpine accentor

*Photo by Óscar González*

# Nature guides companies

## **Aragón Birding**

[www.aragonbirding.com](http://www.aragonbirding.com)

Contact person:

David Bowyer

+34 976 54 49 19

+34 616 779 993

[aragonbirding@gmail.com](mailto:aragonbirding@gmail.com)

## **Aragón Natur**

Contact person:

Kees Woutersen

+34 619 123 999

[info@aragonnatuur.com](mailto:info@aragonnatuur.com)

## **Andurriales**

### **Rutas turísticas**

(Tourist routes)

[www.andurriales.com](http://www.andurriales.com)

Contact person:

Inma Zarralanga

+34 691 321 249

+34 976 662 095

[info@andurriales.com](mailto:info@andurriales.com)

## **Boletas**

+34 974 26 20 27

[aves@casaboletas.com](mailto:aves@casaboletas.com)

## **Grulla Guía**

(Crane Guide)

Contact person:

Carmina Franco

+34 600 315 120

[frgcarmina@yahoo.es](mailto:frgcarmina@yahoo.es)

## **L'auca**

[www.grupolauca.com](http://www.grupolauca.com)

Contact person:

Álvaro Gajón

+34 976 165 969

[info@grupolauca.com](mailto:info@grupolauca.com)

## **Tichodroma SC**

Contact person:

Nuria Grasa

+34 645950595

[tichodroma@hotmail.com](mailto:tichodroma@hotmail.com)





# Nature protection sites and organisations

## Aragon protection sites and organisations

**Natural Reserve:** Protected area with scientific purpose and strict protection of nature

**National and Natural Parks:** Their main objective is ecosystem protection and conservation, but there are also recreational goals.

**Natural Monument:** Intended for conservation of specific natural characteristics.

**Protected Landscape:** As its name suggests, the objective is to conserve the natural landscape and then, secondly, it has recreational uses.

## Natura 2000 Network (protection granted by the European Union)

**SPA** Special Protection Area for birds. These are zones where colonies of endangered species gather.

**SCI** Sites of Community Interest. Places with the most endangered habitat, mammals, insects and plants can be found and which are in need of conservation.

## International Protection

**RAMSAR:** Group of wetlands of international relevance, particularly for the conservation of aquatic birds - though not exclusively.





Birdwatching. Photo by "Amigos de Galloanta"

# Recommendations for a visit to a protected natural area

- > No activity or action is permitted that could lead to the destruction, deterioration, transformation or disfiguring of the characteristics of the place (flora or fauna) with special reference to the mating season and post-mating and wintering times.
- > It is forbidden to throw rubbish away or to use soaps or detergents in springs, rivers or other water-courses.
- > It is forbidden to light a fire without authorisation.
- > Camping is forbidden.
- > In some Protected Natural Areas there are sections where access is restricted or regulated: it is important to be aware of the rules.
- > For further information, please contact the Nature Protection Wardens, councils, Civil Guard, refuges or guides in the area. As well as the Interpretation Centres or Tourist Information.

## **Recommendations on equipment**

- > You are recommended to take at least 8 x binoculars - there are many types at different prices on the market.
- > It is of interest to have a spotting scope for the wetlands and the natural viewpoints, though not vital.
- > There are beginner's guides to birdwatching where the main species that can be spotted appear together with their descriptions.
- > It is also of interest to have CDs or DVDs of birdsong that help to identify the most elusive species such as the Dupont's lark or the great bittern, for example.

# Interpretation Centres



## **Ebro Valley Steppes Interpretation Centre**

Address Ronda de Zaragoza, s/n  
Tel. No.: 976 37 33 08 - 679 55 20 90  
Belchite (Zaragoza)



## **Juslibol Bayou Interpretation Centre**

Tel. No.: 976 724 241 - 974 724 230  
Zaragoza



## **International Water and Environment Centre (CIAMA)**

Address Finca de La Alfranca de Pastriz, s/n  
Tel. No.: 976 10 58 40  
Pastriz (Zaragoza)



## **Algairén Mountain Interpretation Centre and Nature Hall PLANTARIA**

Address Plaza de España, s/n  
Tel. No.: 976 62 70 81 (Cosuenda Council)  
Cosuenda (Zaragoza)



## **Gallocanta Lagoon Interpretation Centre**

Address Ctra. Gallocanta - Berruoco, s/n  
Tel. No.: 976 80 30 69  
Gallocanta (Zaragoza)



## **Gallocanta Lagoon Interpretation Centre**

Address Ctra. Tornos - Bello, s/n  
Tel. No.: 978 73 40 31  
Bello (Teruel)



## **Puerta de Manubles Nature Interpretation Centre**

Address C/ Areal Bajo, 47  
Tel. No.: 976 84 20 05  
Ateca (Zaragoza)



## **Fauna (Fish) Interpretation Centre**

Address Monasterio de Piedra (Afueras)  
Tel. No.: 902 196 052  
Nuévalos (Zaragoza)



## **Nature Interpretation Centre**

Address Lower Floors of the Schools' building  
Tel. No.: 976 829 230 / 976 829 318  
Calcena (Zaragoza)



## **"El Guayén" Nature Interpretation Centre**

Address Calle Mayor, 1  
Tel. No.: 976 820 468 / 976 820 998 / 976 548 090  
Jarque de Moncayo (Zaragoza)



## **Nature Interpretation Centre**

Address Plaza de España, s/n  
Tel. No.: 976 64 92 96  
Añón de Moncayo (Zaragoza)



## **Monegros Steppes Interpretation Centre**

Arrange a visit: 657 67 99 55 - 618 62 99 15  
Monegrillo (Zaragoza)



## **Fuendeverde Environmental Zone**

Address C/ Pilón Alto, s/n  
Tel. No.: 976 14 38 95 - 669 09 43 03  
Fuendetodos (Zaragoza)



## **Saltwater Herbarium**

Address Calle Mayor, 25  
Tel. No.: 976 637 228  
Chiprana (Zaragoza)

# "Make your own CHECK LIST"

List of birds to be filled in as new specimens spotted

## ENDANGERED SPECIES CALENDAR

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- Hawk-eagle
- Montagu's harrier
- Hen harrier
- Egyptian vulture
- Great bittern
- Great Bustard
- Lesser kestrel
- Red-billed chough
- Sandgrouse
- Squacco heron
- Purple heron
- Crane
- Red kite
- Black-bellied sandgrouse
- Bearded vulture
- Ferruginous duck
- Dupont's lark
- Little bustard

## OF INTEREST

---

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> European bee-eater    | <input type="checkbox"/> Crested tit               |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Honey buzzard         | <input type="checkbox"/> Black-crowned night heron |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Alpine accentor       | <input type="checkbox"/> Common kingfisher         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Short-toed eagle      | <input type="checkbox"/> Black kite                |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Golden eagle          | <input type="checkbox"/> Red-crested pochard       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Booted eagle          | <input type="checkbox"/> Robin                     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Western marsh harrier | <input type="checkbox"/> Great spotted woodpecker  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Griffon vulture       | <input type="checkbox"/> Eurasian nuthatch         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Eurasian stone-curlew | <input type="checkbox"/> .....                     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Goshawk               | <input type="checkbox"/> .....                     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Water pipit           | <input type="checkbox"/> .....                     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Eurasian eagle-owl    | <input type="checkbox"/> .....                     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Great tit             | <input type="checkbox"/> .....                     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Black wheatear        | <input type="checkbox"/> .....                     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Orphean warbler       | <input type="checkbox"/> .....                     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Dartford warbler      | <input type="checkbox"/> .....                     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Peregrine falcon      | <input type="checkbox"/> .....                     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Blue tit              | <input type="checkbox"/> .....                     |



# BIRD WATCHING

## Province of Zaragoza

Plaza de España, 2  
50001 Zaragoza  
T. 00 34 976 212 032  
turismo@dpz.es  
[www.zaragozalaprovincia.es](http://www.zaragozalaprovincia.es)