

## PUBLIC AWARENESS AND CRANE PROTECTION

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In addition to all of the scientific interest our meeting and the different papers on breeding, migration and history etc. has generated, we have the goal addressing some new aspects on conservation. I want to contribute a few suggestions as to how we can make our subject "cranes" and especially the ideas about the protection of these wonderful birds more interesting for the public. On a long term — I think we all are aware of the fact that we only can save the cranes with public, which also means with political, support.

This problem, of course, concerns all birds and all other kind of wildlife. In West Germany we have realized that the crane, our *Grus grus*, is a wonderful and very special "leading figure" in nature conservation, and that we can focus a great deal of interest on nature and its protection with the help of this bird. The crane's size, its call, its manner of living in pairs, the long-distance migration between continents, the return in springtime, its marvellous flight in formation, the clandestine breeding in remote areas — all these factors make the crane an attractive species of bird even for people not interested in birds. The crane is not only of interest for nature enthusiasts and ornithologists, it is also of interest for journalists and advertising people.

You can find a good example in your files. Lufthansa, the German airline, is doing a lot of public relations work with the crane, although their symbol since 1926 is a "phantasy bird", which is a designer's Hybrid between crane and heron. However, Lufthansa has decided many years ago that this bird should be a crane. When Lufthansa learned years ago that "their bird" was endangered in West Germany due to loss of habitat, Lufthansa's PR-staff decided to work together with Conservationists to help the bird and generate discussion about the problem. As a consequence, Lufthansa contributed funds for the purchase of some swamps and wetlands, they sponsored books on nature conservation and disseminated information about the crane.

Today, Lufthansa is a well-known factor in crane conservation, and as *George Archibald* can confirm, they also help with international transportation of cranes and those people who care for the birds.

We have heard from George that even the most important political figure in China came to visit a crane reserve, where it was helpful to be able to show him some semi-tame birds. Those who have been to Japan probably have not only seen the gatherings of white-naped and hooded cranes in the south near Izumi and of the red crowned cranes on Hokkaido, but also the gatherings of hundreds of people attracted to the winter feeding places.

Thousands of people gather each spring at Lake Nornborga to observe the cranes who are also the subject of newspaper, radio and television reporters. In Germany, we are considering the construction of an observation-tower near the traditional breeding and feeding place of some crane pairs so that more people can observe the birds

without disturbing them. We have heard about the large roosting areas in France and Spain and believe observation and information-towers in those areas would help generate public awareness of cranes and their need for protection.

The media in the USA pays a great deal of attention to the migration of whooping cranes from their breeding grounds in Wood Buffalo National Park in Canada to their winter area at Arkansas, Texas, on the Gulf of Mexico.

I could give you more examples but you are probably better aware of them than I myself. Therefore, let me concentrate with a few sentences on our work in Germany. *Thomas Neumann* presented the crane and wetland project of WWF-Germany to you. Thanks to him, this is not only the oldest national WWF-project in our country (in the meantime we have more than ten similar projects) but also the most successful one. That is not only because he is an excellent ornithologist but also a good politician and an experienced PR-man.

We have used the crane as an eye-catcher in several brochures, in advertising campaigns and on posters. We realized that the crane always brings an excellent feedback. Not only the response and the flow of coupons were good; with a crane you also can wake up politicians and so-called decision makers much faster than with a frog, a butterfly or a rare plant, if you want to save a swamp or some grassland. Politicians and people working in the administration normally react on media rather intensively.

To get such a result we have built up the crane as a very sensible, rare living being and as an important bio-indicator in our endangered nature. We try to "sell" to the public that it is to the advantage of all of us if everybody can observe this largest bird in Germany. The "save-the-crane-story" sells itself in West Germany because we still have only very few. Of course, it is more difficult to do so in countries where the bird is still as numerous as is the case in Sweden, for example.

In Great Britain, though, the crane story by *John Buxton* — which is really a fantastic story — could do a lot for the protection of these birds in the whole area, especially if the story is set up in the right journalistic or even advertising manner. But as we were told that too much interest by the ornithologists is not even good. The protection of the land against human invasion as we practice it in Germany with sign and guards, will have to be organized before you try to get some help against drainage, spraying, cultivating etc. by public awareness.

If we succeed to get more of this public awareness for the cranes we will get more interest in nature conservation in general. It would be important for the breeding areas as well as for the countries where our birds have their wintering places. Spain, for example. If you can build up the crane as a very special animal with all the international focus on it and if you can make clear that it is not only the hobby of some crazy birdwatchers (and as we can see, the International Crane Foundation and the so-called ambassador of Cranes, *George Archibald*, are working hard in this direction), then it will be more unlikely that people who are not knowledgeable about wildlife, will harm these birds.

Not only all kinds of organisations could support such efforts. As the example of Lufthansa shows there are more ways which can be taken. Japan Air Lines, for instance, also has the Crane as a symbol. There are big manufacturers of industrial cranes. Breweries like to engage themselves in nature conservation. In Germany we will soon have a new magazine called "Kranich" (Crane), and the editor wants to support the crane protection (but we have to wait and see if this ambitious project will be successful).

These are only a few examples. With some phantasy one can organize quite a lot of new activities for better information of the public and maybe, for some funds

to be raised to purchase land, to build up more protection and to influence people in the right way. Let us see what we can add to this subject when we — hopefully — meet in China in 1987.

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## **Tömeztájékoztatás és daruvédelem**

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Német Szövetségi Köztársaság

A tudományos értékű vizsgálatok és természetvédelmi intézkedések mellett a nagyközönség is sokat tehet a darvak védelmében. A tömegek e célú mozgósítására a tömeztájékoztató eszközök megfelelő bevetése szükséges. Egyik jó példa erre a munkára a Lufthansa légitársaság, amelynek szimbóluma egy stilizált daru, és reklám- és propagandacélból a vállalat sok segítséget nyújt a daruvédelemhez. A természetvédelem iránt nem fogékony embereket is megmozgatja egy olyan érzelmet kiváltó madár, mint a daru, s így rá lehet őket vezetni az élőhely megóvására is.



# CRANE (GRUS GRUS) MIGRATION IN FINLAND

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Finland

## Introduction

The crane migration has been extensively studied in the surroundings of Helsinki. In the spring, the cranes lose height when they have to cross the Gulf of Finland. Usually the migration takes place during a period of a few days only. In the autumn the cranes leave the coast at greater heights than when arriving in the spring. The autumnal migration period lasts about two months. Thus the crane migration of the spring is easy to observe: the cranes arrive in a few days and fly low. Therefore study of the migration has traditionally been concentrated on the spring migration.

In this paper, only the spring migration will be discussed. The details of the migration are given in terms of the main route passing close to Helsinki. Then, some comments will be made on the cranes of western Finland. Finally, a general description will be given. The exceptional year 1981 will be mentioned.

The extensive literature concerning the migration observations in Finland will not be given. Most of the main papers are given in Rinne (1972, 1983).

## The migration on the main route

The main route passes to the west of Helsinki, about 15 kms from the city. The migration can be said to be rather regular. Nearly all of the birds are seen between April 15th—May 2nd, mostly from April 25—30th. The migration begins sharply at 10.45 (8.45 GMT), i.e. 6 hours after sunrise. No night observations are known from the spring time. The main migration route is often within a band of approx. 10 kms. As an extreme case in 1959, 4000 cranes were observed on 26th April. No other observations are known from that spring.

Of course the migration never follows precisely the average description. There are cases of early morning migrations. Rather often the migration begins first in the afternoon. Some migrations at very high altitudes have also been observed.

The yearly numbers vary to a considerable extent. Small spring numbers are explained by assuming that the migration has passed the observational network without having been seen. There may have been days or locations without observations. It is obvious that sometimes the flight altitude can be very great. Sometimes migrations above a fog layer have been observed. It is possible that the migration can occur above clouds.

The maximum number of the cranes can be derived from the observations. In the surroundings of Helsinki, this figure is between 6000 and 7000.

The migration is depends on weather to a great extent. The main factors are temperature and wind. The relationship between these and the migration could be given as rules derived from observations. These rules were tested in 1971 by an attempt to forecast the actual day's migration. There was a reasonable success.

Migration is sensitive to the wind. In days with a strong western (eastern) wind component the main route can deviate over 30 kms eastward (westward) from the mean line. More precisely, the deviation is 7 km for an east-west component of 1 m/s.

The Helsinki migration is described in detail in *Rinne* (1972).

### The western population

Another route is found some 100 kms west of Helsinki, somewhere between Hanko and Turku. A new feature is that these cranes are interpreted as forming another population. In addition to the separation in space there is a separation in time. The migration occurs mainly during the first half of April. Thus the main migration there happens before the beginning of the main movement on the Helsinki route. As an extreme case, 300 cranes were observed on a return migration on 6th April, 1981, i.e. at a time when only occasional cranes were observed in the Helsinki area.

### Migration in Finland

The main direction is north. Thus at Tampere, which is located some 200 kms north of Helsinki, the observations seem to be correlated with those in Helsinki. The observations are often made during the afternoon, i. e., some hours later than in Helsinki.

The birds seem to fly directly to the nesting areas because no stages like the Matsalu Bay in Estonia are known.

Along the western coast the migration is weak. Some cranes have been observed to continue to the Swedish side of the Gulf of Botnia.

It must be noted, however, that apart from this there is no migration from Finland to Sweden or vice versa.

There is some sporadic migration in May. It is believed that these birds do not nest eventually.

Migration over the eastern part of the country seems to be rather weak.

It is estimated that during normal springs the population sizes are as follows:

Western cranes	3 700
Helsinki cranes	6 300
Eastern Finland	2 500
May migration	1 000

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13 500

These figures include the non-nesting birds as well. Thus the size of the breeding population is 6000 pairs or less. The estimate is not accurate. However, the total sum of 13 500 cranes does not differ very much from the estimates of other authors.

## Spring 1981

In spring 1981, the migrating populations were estimated to be as follows:

Western cranes	5 200
Helsinki cranes	12 800
Eastern Finland	2 500
May cranes	1 000
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	21 500

There exists no explanation of these exceptional masses. The number of cranes in Helsinki has always been less than 6500 ind.

The estimation of the bird numbers of 1981 in comparison to normal springs is given in Rinne (1983).

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### References

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### A daru (*Grus grus*) vonulása Finnországban

J. Rinne

Finnország

Finnországban a darvak vonulása két útvonal mentén történik, a fő útvonal Helsinkitől mintegy 15 km-re keletre esik. A tavaszi vonulás április közepétől május végéig tart, és általában 6 órával napfelkelte után érkeznek meg dél felől. A tavaszi vonulás során 6000—7000 daru vonul el ezen az útvonalon. A vonulás erősen függ az időjárástól, és különösen a keleti (nyugati) szél módosíthatja az útvonalat, akár 30 km-rel is. A kevésbé jelentős nyugati útvonal Helsinkitől mintegy 100 km-re húzódik, és jóval kevesebb madár vonul erre. Átlagos időjárású tavasszal kb. 13 500 daru vonul Finnországban, ez alapján a fészkelő párok száma kb. 6000.