



BIRDING CASTILLA-LA MANCHA



SOMEWHERE IN YOUR LIFE

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Unión Europea
Fondo Europeo
de Desarrollo Regional
"Una manera de hacer Europa"



DEHESAS AND HOLM OAK FORESTS

Spread over the five provinces of the region, Albacete, Ciudad Real, Cuenca, Toledo and Guadalajara, extensive Holm Oak groves and centuries-old *dehesas* expand. These are representative landscapes of some of our best-preserved natural areas, such as Cabañeros, the Alcudia Valley and the Tiétar Valley.

These unique and characteristic ecosystems of the interior of the Iberian Peninsula are home to a varied birdlife. Many raptors stand out, due to their importance, including Spanish Imperial Eagle (fortunately in expansion, with Castilla-La Mancha hosting 40% of the global population of this endangered species) and the Cinereous Vulture (two of the most important colonies in all of Europe are located here).

You will also be able to watch many other bird species in our *dehesas* and Holm Oak groves, such as Black-winged Kite, Iberian Magpie, Western Orphean Warbler, Spanish Sparrow, Iberian Green Woodpecker, Woodchat Shrike, Little Owl, Eurasian Hoopoe and, in autumn and winter, Common Crane.



PLAINS AND STEPPES

The plains and steppes that extend over much of our territory, sometimes almost to the horizon, are home to numerous species of birds of enormous value, among which are some of the our most precious natural treasures.

These open spaces and dry farmlands, cultivated since time immemorial, are the ideal place to look for and enjoy such emblematic birds as Great Bustard, Little Bustard (two thirds of its population in our country are concentrated here), Pin-tailed Sandgrouse (more than half of the total Spanish population, and therefore European, is located in Castilla-La Mancha), Black-bellied Sandgrouse, Montagu's Harrier, Hen Harrier and Eurasian Stone-curlew.

Many other highly attractive birds are also closely linked to these steppe and sparsely wooded ecosystems, such as European Roller, Lesser Short-toed Lark, Great Spotted Cuckoo, Merlin (in autumn and winter) or Eurasian Dotterel (present during migratory periods).



MOUNTAIN AREAS AND HIGH SUMMITS

In Castilla-La Mancha important mountainous areas of great environmental relevance are located. There are several peaks that exceed two thousand meters (more than 6.500 ft) in altitude, especially in the north of the region in the Ayllón massif, but also in the southern limits of our territory, in the remote Sierra de las Cabras.

The rocks and shrub formations located in these higher places can allow you to record many species, such as Common Rock Thrush, Ortolan Bunting and Bluethroat. Other species present in these landscapes are Northern Wheatear, Dunnock, Common Whitethroat, Dartford Warbler and Alpine Accentor (especially in winter).

Among raptors, Golden Eagles locate their territories on the most inaccessible cliffs of our mountains. Do not forget that records of Bearded Vultures in the southern mountains of Castilla-La Mancha, in Albacete, are becoming more and more frequent.



BADLANDS, MOORS AND JUNIPER FORESTS

One of the least known and least valued ecosystems is the high moorlands, such as those found in certain areas of the eastern provinces of Guadalajara and Cuenca.

However, these unique habitats are home to very important bird species, such as Dupont's Lark (Castilla-La Mancha being home to a fifth of the European population), Tawny Pipit, Greater Short-toed Lark and Calandra Lark.

Also located in areas of a certain altitude, there are notable Juniper forests (*Juniperus thurifera*, *Juniperus communis*) in the eastern half of the region. During autumn and winter, we encourage you to enjoy here the noisy flocks of Ring Ouzels (of both subspecies, *torquatus* and *alpestris*), Redwings and Fieldfares, which arrive in our territory, from central and northern Europe, to spend the hardest months of the year.



MEDITERRANEAN FOREST

Halfway between the mountains and the cultivated areas and the meadows, various species of trees and shrubs grow on many slopes, especially in the western half of Castilla-La Mancha. These include Holm Oak, Cork Oak, Kermes Oak, Strawberry tree, Narrow-leaved Mock Privet, Gum Rockrose and Spanish Lavender, forming extensive areas of Mediterranean forest.

Here you will be able to find species such as Subalpine Warbler, Black-eared Wheatear, Red-rumped Swallow, Thekla's Lark, European Bee-eater, Woodlark, Short-toed Snake Eagle and Red-necked Nightjar, a fascinating migrant species with twilight habits.

In many of these places, the rivers have carved steep rocky outcrops, where most of the elusive Black Stork that nest in Castilla-La Mancha are located, as well as other species such as Blue Rock Thrush, Black Wheatear, White-rumped Swift or Eurasian Eagle-Owl, more active during the nights of the colder months.



GORGES AND CLIFFS

Among the most important ornithological ecosystems of Castilla-La Mancha, without a doubt, we must highlight the imposing river gorges and the countless rocky cliffs that are scattered throughout the region.

In the Alto Tajo and in the Serranía de Cuenca, as well as in the Calares del Mundo and de la Sima, in the Sierra Norte de Guadalajara and in the narrower sections of the rivers Júcar and Gabriel, there awaits truly spectacular landscapes.

A complete line-up of birds of prey will surely capture your attention in these cliffs, such as Griffon Vulture (very abundant, with more than 3,600 breeding pairs in Castilla-La Mancha), Egyptian Vulture (with more than 200 territories), Bonelli's Eagle (present in Albacete, Ciudad Real, Cuenca, Guadalajara and Toledo) and Peregrine Falcon. You will also be able to locate other species such as Alpine Swift, Eurasian Crag Martin, Red-billed Chough and the striking Wallcreeper (only during the winter months).

PINE FORESTS, OAK FORESTS AND OTHER FORESTS

The different types of forests, such as the pine forests of the Sierra del Segura and the Cuenca mountains; La Alcarria Portuguese Oak forests; the Pyrenean Oak and Chestnut forests; remote Beech forests, such as Tejera Negra and the riverside forests that accompany our rivers, will give you the opportunity to enjoy a multitude of bird species.

The ornithological list associated with our forests is as varied as it is extensive. Western Bonelli's Warbler, Lesser Spotted Woodpecker, Eurasian Golden Oriole, Citril Finch, Long-eared Owl, Tawny Owl, European Honey Buzzard, Eurasian Nuthatch and Eleonora's Falcon are just some of the many bird species linked to our forest ecosystems.

The presence of reproductive species typical of Eurosiberian areas deserves a special mention. These include Eurasian Woodcock, Tree Pipit (in cleared forests) and Red-backed Shrike (in open areas, with rose bushes and thorns).



LAGOONS AND WETLANDS

The wetlands, such as lagoons and reservoirs, are possibly the ecosystems that concentrate the largest number of bird species in Castilla-La Mancha. They are also, we must remember, very fragile habitats that need all possible protection.

The importance of the area called La Mancha Húmeda, a stream of wetlands located in the centre of the region, is well recognized. We also highlight for its value, among many other places, the Pétrola, Salobrejo and Corral-Rubio lagoon complex; El Hito lagoon as well several reservoirs, such as El Vicario, Rosarito, Navalcán, Castrejón, Azután, Finisterre, Almoguera and Buendía.

Throughout the year in our wetlands, you have a good chance of seeing species such as Greater Flamingo, White-headed Duck, Black-necked Grebe, Red-crested Pochard, Purple Swamphen, Purple Heron, Whiskered Tern, Moustached Warbler, Savi's Warbler and dozens of species of waders, as well many other birds.

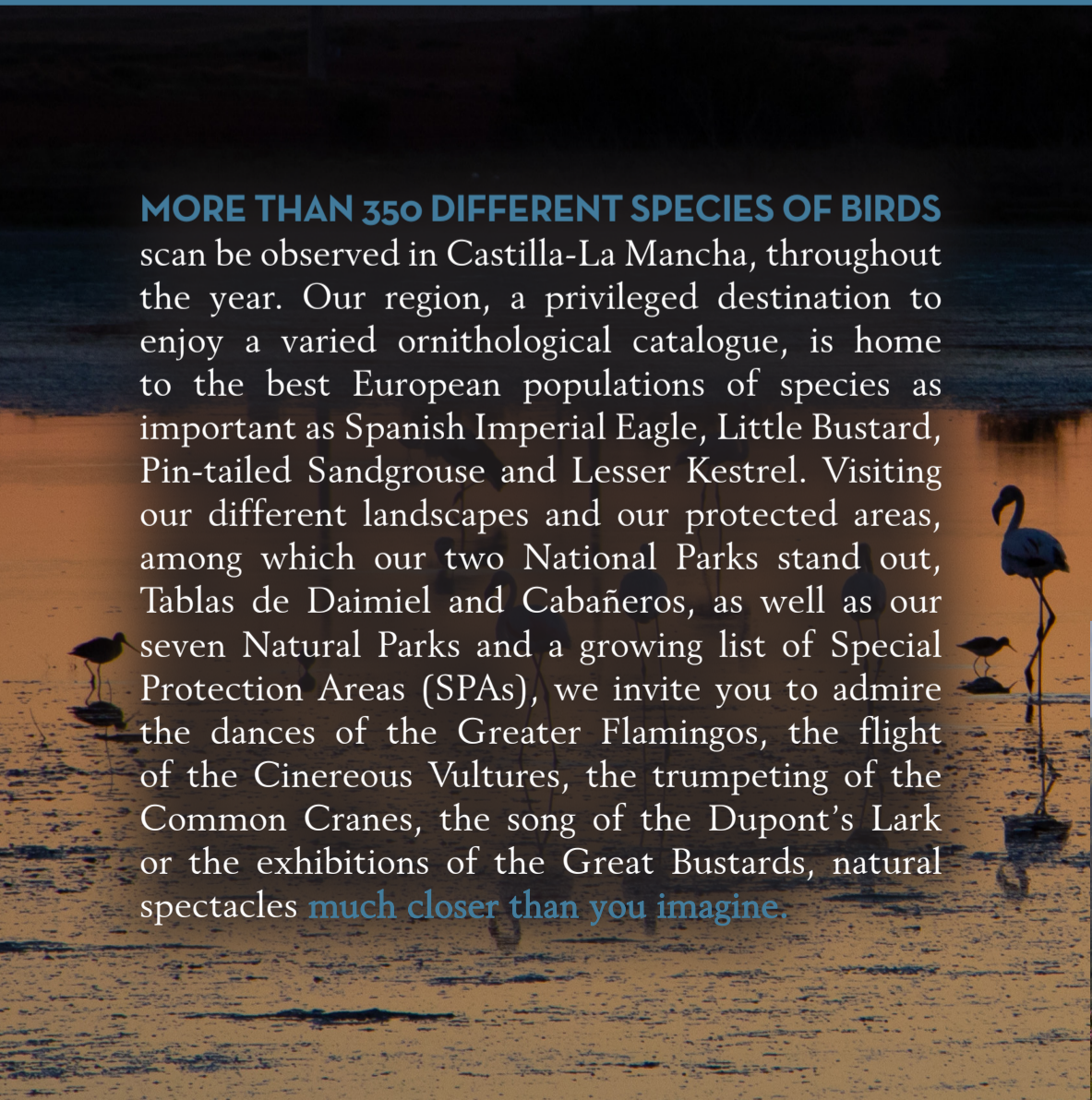


VILLAGES AND TOWNS

In addition to the undeniable cultural and historical attraction that our towns, villages and cities possess, many of which are famous tourist destinations, the urban areas of Castilla-La Mancha are home to a huge variety of birds.

Among many other species, with more than 2,800 pairs, the Lesser Kestrel population in Castilla-La Mancha stands out as the largest in Spain. Very associated with historical buildings and farmhouses, this small raptor is seeing its numbers seriously decline in other regions in recent years.

In turn, visiting our urban environments you will detect other birds such as White Stork, Spotless Starling, Western Jackdaw, Common Swift, Barn Swallow, Common House Martin, House Sparrow and Black Redstart. And hopefully you might enjoy the silent flight of the Barn Owl as night falls.



NATIONAL PARKS

Declared in 1973, the **Tablas de Daimiel National Park** 1, in Ciudad Real, is one of our most visited protected areas. In addition to many other species of fauna and flora, in this wetland located at the confluence of the Guadiana and Cigüela rivers it is possible to observe dozens of birds, with an exceptional ornithological variety in rainy periods.

Not far away, between the provinces of Ciudad Real and Toledo, is the **Cabañeros National Park** 2. Some of our most emblematic bird species, including Spanish Imperial Eagle and Cinereous Vulture, find refuge in the *dehesas*, meadows and slopes covered by a dense Mediterranean forest. It is highly recommended to take a guided tour inside this protected area.

Have you already visited our National Parks? ☐ Tablas de Daimiel ☐ Cabañeros

NATURAL PARKS

To date, seven natural parks have been declared in Castilla-La Mancha:

- 1 **Lagunas de Ruidera**, of great scenic appeal. ☐
- 2 **Alto Tajo**, an impressive group of river cliffs and gorges. ☐
- 3 **Barranco del Río Dulce**, also of great importance for rock species. ☐
- 4 **Calares del Mundo y de la Sima**, a spectacular mountainous area in the south of Albacete. ☐
- 5 **Serranía de Cuenca**, with extensive pine forests and rocky areas. ☐
- 6 **Sierra Norte de Guadalajara**, which includes high mountain areas and valuable forests, unique in the region. ☐
- 7 **Valle de Alcudia y Sierra Madrona**, with *dehesas*, pastures and mountains, on the border of Ciudad Real with Andalusia. ☐

1 More information: <https://areasprotegidas.castillalamancha.es>

SPECIAL PROTECTION AREAS (SPAs)

- | | | |
|---|---|---|
| 1 Tablas de Daimiel <input type="checkbox"/> | 15 Hoz del río Gritos y páramos de Las Valeras <input type="checkbox"/> | 29 San Clemente <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 2 Sierra de los Canalizos <input type="checkbox"/> | 16 Laguna de El Hito <input type="checkbox"/> | 30 Pinar de Almorox <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 3 Valle del Tiétar y embalses de Rosarito y Navalcán <input type="checkbox"/> | 17 Serranía de Cuenca <input type="checkbox"/> | 31 Valle del Tajuña en Torrecuadrada <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 4 Sierra Morena <input type="checkbox"/> | 18 Sierra de Altomira <input type="checkbox"/> | 32 Área Esteparia de la Margen Derecha del río Guadiana y Laderas Vertientes <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 5 Humedales de La Mancha <input type="checkbox"/> | 19 Sierra de Ayllón <input type="checkbox"/> | 33 Carrizales y Sotos del Jarama y Tajo <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 6 Alto Tajo <input type="checkbox"/> | 20 Valle y Salinas del Salado <input type="checkbox"/> | 34 Navas de Malagón <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 7 Montes de Toledo <input type="checkbox"/> | 21 Barranco del Río Dulce <input type="checkbox"/> | 35 Ríos de la Cuenca Media del Guadiana y Laderas Vertientes <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 8 Parameras de Maranchón, Hoz del Mesa y Aragoncillo <input type="checkbox"/> | 22 Estepas Cerealistas de La Campiña <input type="checkbox"/> | 36 Lagunas de Puebla de Beleña <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 9 Área Esteparia del Este de Albacete <input type="checkbox"/> | 23 Llanuras de Oropesa, Lagartera y Calera y Chozas <input type="checkbox"/> | 37 Lagunas y Parameras del Señorío de Molina <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 10 Zona Esteparia de El Bonillo <input type="checkbox"/> | 24 Río Tajo en Castrejón, Islas de Malpica de Tajo y Azután <input type="checkbox"/> | 38 Ríos de la Margen Izquierda y Berrocales del Tajo <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 11 Sierras de Almadén, Chillón y Guadalmazán <input type="checkbox"/> | 25 Área Esteparia de La Mancha Norte <input type="checkbox"/> | 39 Colonias de cernícalo primilla en iglesias de Almodóvar del Campo y Tirteufuera <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 12 Campo de Calatrava <input type="checkbox"/> | 26 Hoces del río Júcar <input type="checkbox"/> | |
| 13 Áreas Esteparias del Campo de Montiel <input type="checkbox"/> | 27 Sierras de Alcaraz y de Segura y Cañones del Segura y del Mundo <input type="checkbox"/> | |
| 14 Hoces del Gábriel, Guadazaón y Ojos de Moya <input type="checkbox"/> | 28 Rentos de Orchova y Páramos de Moya <input type="checkbox"/> | |

☐ Mark all the natural and protected areas that you have already visited.

