



Welcome

Welcome to the thirteenth newsletter of the Great Crane Project - the project that aims to re-establish a population of Eurasian cranes in the Levels and Moors and enrich the Somerset landscape in an inspirational way.

Cranes in Somerset

Over recent weeks up to 60 cranes have regularly been seen feeding on Stan Moor. And among them the sharp-eyed may have spotted an un-ringed wild crane! It was first seen with some of our cranes visiting Slimbridge (where a few remain) and came with them when they returned to Somerset.

The company of cranes



This has been a busy year for artist Melanie Tomlinson, commissioned by Somerset Art Works, with funding from the Arts Council. She's really thrown herself into the life of the project, and developed a genuine passion for these wonderful birds, and we've all greatly enjoyed working with her.

There isn't enough room in this small newsletter to do justice to her beautiful work. We've squeezed in two images but there are many more on her blog <http://thecompanyofcranes.blogspot.co.uk/>

Melanie has also done great work with local schoolchildren, and has produced fantastic online resources which will be available to schools in the New Year.

Crane zoetrope

Melanie specialises in intricate coloured metalwork, including zoetropes and praxinoscopes, which generate moving pictures through a spinning cylinder. This one looks quite Christmassy!



Somerset Levels Zoetrope

© Melanie Tomlinson

Crane World Fact-file: No 6

There are 15 crane species spread across the world in all continents except Antarctica and South America. Each issue of the newsletter will highlight a different species.

Siberian crane. *Grus leucogeranus*

One of the most critically endangered cranes, with fewer than 3,000 remaining. Most breed in north-east Siberia and winter in China. Other more westerly populations have been almost wiped out by hunting. Those wintering in Iran are down to a few birds, while those that wintered in India have not been seen since 2002.



The International Crane Foundation and partners have established captive breeding in the hope of reintroductions into the western population. Efforts have also focussed on protecting Siberian cranes' wetland habitats and migration flyways.

More crane information at www.savingcranes.org

Give cranes for Christmas

Our Crane Safaris are proving popular, and our guests have been getting wonderful views of the cranes.

Now you can give this fantastic experience as an unusual Christmas present, with a Crane Safari gift voucher. It's a lovely day out. After a morning with our experienced crane monitors radio-tracking cranes across the Somerset Levels and Moors and observing their behaviour, there's a delicious lunch at the Willows and Wetlands Centre's Lemon Tree Café. This is followed by a film about the project, plus there's lots to see at the centre itself. And all for only £15.

Crane Safaris run until mid-March. The full details are available in the Events section of our website www.thegreatcraneproject.org.uk

Bookings and gift vouchers are through the Willows & Wetlands Centre on 01823 490249.



© John Crispin

Cranberry sauce

Did you realise cranberries are named after cranes? Not only are they found in marshy places, but also the shape of the flower and stalk reminded some people of the head, bill and long neck of a crane.

More information



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www.thegreatcraneproject.org.uk

A brighter future for Somerset's wetlands

The Great Crane Project (GCP) is a partnership between the Wildfowl & Wetlands Trust (WWT), the RSPB, Pensthorpe Conservation Trust and Viridor Credits Environmental Company. The project aims to re-establish a sustainable population of common cranes in Britain, securing its future as a breeding species.