

Red-crowned Crane

Grus japonensis



Class: *Aves*

Order: *Gruiformes*

Family: *Gruidae*

Characteristics:

Also known as Japanese crane or Manchurian crane the red-crowned crane gets its name from the bright red patch of plumage on top of its head. It has a black neck and tail and a white body with a wide white stripe behind the eye that extends down to the start of the neck. They are among the largest cranes with a wingspan of over seven feet!

Behavior:

Well-known for their elaborate courtship dances, red crowned cranes usually pair for life and their synchronized dance reinforce their bond. The pair will also call in unison to one another to advertise their territory, competition with other pairs, and formation of pair bonding. Usually the female initiates the call and then the male follows (Woodland Park Zoo).

Reproduction:

Red crowned cranes breed in the spring and summer months and the female lays two eggs that hatch following a 29-34 day incubation period. Chicks fledge at around 95 days.

Diet:

Wild: Insects, fish, rodents, plants

Zoo: Greens, feline diet, capelin, crane pellets

Conservation:

Red crowned cranes are listed as endangered due to the destruction of their breeding grounds and loss of habitat along migration routes.

FYI:

Considered the sacred crane of the orient, red-crowned cranes are a symbol of fidelity in marriage, good luck, long life and love. They are the second rarest crane in the world, behind the whooping crane.



Range & Habitat:

Marshes and deep wetland areas in spring and summer. In winter, they live along rivers, coastal salt marshes and freshwater wetlands.



Lifespan: around 25 years in captivity and in the wild.

Special Adaptations: The red-crowned crane and Siberian crane are the two most aquatic of the species of crane; they both prefer to forage in deep water.

IUCN Conservation Status:

Endangered

