

CINEREOUS VULTURE.

AEGYPIUS MONACHUS

THE LARGEST OLD WORLD VULTURE



CONSERVATION STATUS

Worldwide • Near Threatened (population decreasing)

Spain • Vulnerable

Portugal • Endangered

DIET

Animal carcasses (e.g. rabbits, wild and domestic herbivores)

HABITATS

Forested areas in hills and mountains

LIFESPAN

Approximately 20 years in the wild and up to 35 in captivity

BREEDING BEHAVIOUR

Monogamous pairings

Sexual maturity at 5-6 years of age

Lays only one egg per breeding season

Nests on trees

MAIN THREATS

Illegal poisoning

Other wildlife crimes, e.g. shooting

Contamination with lead, veterinary drugs (NSAIDs), etc

Misconceptions leading to increasing human-wildlife conflicts

Human disturbance during the breeding season

Habitat degradation and increasing fires

Limited food availability

Electrocution and collision with energy infrastructure

Vultures play a crucial and irreplaceable role in maintaining the delicate balance of our ecosystems.

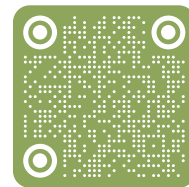
Unfortunately, wildlife crimes like illegal poisoning and shooting still threaten highly protected species like the Cinereous Vulture.

Combatting these crimes requires action from everyone, not just conservationists.

If you witnessed a wildlife crime incident or suspect someone of such illegal activities, please take action!

In **Portugal**, call GNR/SEPNA at the phone line 'SOS Ambiente e Território' 808 200 520.

In **Spain**, call SEPRONA at 976 711 409 / 915 241 400 or the Guardia Civil at 062



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LIFE Aegyptius Return is co-financed by the EU's LIFE Programme and has a budget of 3.7 million euros. Its success relies on the involvement of all relevant stakeholders and the extensive collaboration of the project partners.

Coordinating beneficiary



Associated beneficiaries



CONSOLIDATING AND
EXPANDING THE CINEREOUS
VULTURE POPULATION IN
PORTUGAL AND WESTERN SPAIN



LIFE AEGYPIUS RETURN

Formerly widespread in Iberia, the Cinereous Vulture became increasingly scarce in the region over the 20th century, mostly due to habitat loss, wildlife poisoning and direct persecution. In the 1970s, the breeding population went extinct in Portugal, and only around 200 pairs remained in Spain. Following the implementation of legal protection and targeted conservation measures, the species started recovering in Spain and naturally recolonised Portugal, with the first breeding pair detected in 2010. Since 2021, four colonies are known.

The recovery process has been steady, although slow and limited, and urgent action is needed.

The LIFE Aegyptius Return project aims to enhance and accelerate the return of Cinereous Vultures in Portugal and Western Spain using a transnational and multidisciplinary approach.

OBJECTIVES.



Double the breeding population in Portugal from 40 to 80 pairs



Increase breeding success



Increase number of colonies in Portugal, from 4 to at least 5



Enhance the connectivity between colonies



PROJECT ACTIONS.

MANAGE AND ENHANCE HABITAT

- Sign 120 agreements with local landowners
- Manage 570 ha around colonies
- Create 25 km of fire prevention strips

IMPROVE BREEDING SUCCESS / NEST AVAILABILITY AND SAFETY

- Construct 120 new nest platforms
- Maintain/Repair 105 existing natural or artificial nests

REINFORCE CINEREOUS VULTURE POPULATION

- Soft release of 20 rehabilitated Cinereous Vultures into the Douro Internacional colony

IMPROVE FOOD AVAILABILITY AND QUALITY

- Establish 2 new supplementary feeding stations
- Set up 66 unfenced vulture feeding areas

MITIGATE THREATS TO REDUCE MORTALITY

- Evaluate movements and behaviour by tagging 60 birds
- Reduce nest disturbance
- Fight against poisoning
- Monitor physiological parameters
- Assist hunters in transitioning to lead-free ammunition
- Improve capacities to mitigate poisoning and other wildlife crime