

Illustrated Lectures by Ralph & Brenda Todd

Over the past 35 years we have given illustrated talks to many clubs and organisations around the country including RSPB and National Trust Groups and Photographic Societies. All talks include an interval for tea/ coffee although this can be removed upon request and all timings are approximate. Fee for 2011/12 is £75 plus expenses. We can provide all our own equipment but would welcome the use of local facilities where they exist. It is essential halls can be completely blacked out.

On the Trail of the Crane – part 1 A journey through Europe

For many years a family of birds we have found to be most interesting and enigmatic. That they live in some wonderful areas of the world is an added bonus. Of the 15 species in the world we have seen and photographed 11 but what experiences they have given us. In this first part we take a brief look at the crane family and some of the conservation issues that surround them. For the most part however we shall take an in depth look at the Eurasian (common) Crane which breeds in Northern Scandinavia. We have followed its fortunes on its migration route from Extremadura in Spain, through Northern France into Sweden where they congregate to fulfil their courtship ritual and dances and finally into Finland where its success depends on the vast wilderness areas to be found there. We shall also touch on the history and future of Cranes in England. We hope to show that by following the fortunes of just one species we can enjoy a whole range of other wildlife, particularly birds, and some rather pleasant places to stay on route. Duration 80 minutes.

On the Trail of the Crane – part 2 – A journey into four continents

Journey with us to Kenya where Crowned Cranes wander with the plains with big game, to South Africa and the Cape region for the Blue Crane and also enjoy the wonderful plants and other wildlife. The rare Siberian Crane took us to China and India where we also met up with Sarus Crane and had a very close encounter with the majestic Indian Tiger. Winter in Japan we made contact with five species including Red-crowned, White-naped and Hooded plus two sea-eagles (White-tailed and Steller's) along with some interesting cultural challenges! Finally to North America and the states of Texas and New Mexico where the rare and endangered Whooping Crane hangs on but the Sandhill Crane can be found in tens of thousands.

A wonderful mix wildlife and cultures through 4 continents brought together in pursuit of one enigmatic family - the Crane. Duration 80 minutes

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