

21 Status of the breeding population of Great Cormorants in Spain in 2012

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<http://dce2.au.dk/pub/TR22.pdf>

National summary

In 2012, Spain had 1,605 occupied nests of Great Cormorants (*Phalacrocorax carbo sinensis*) in 21 colonies. This is more than a threefold increase since the last national count of breeders in 2007 (532 nests). A total of 239 sites were visited during the 2012 count and the focus was on reservoirs, dams, reed beds and rivers. It is believed that complete coverage of all breeders was obtained during the 2012 breeding counts.

Distribution

Cormorants bred primarily in central and western Spain (Fig. 21.1) across 12 different regions. Almost three quarters (70%) of the breeding population was located in two regions. The western province of Badajoz was home to 41% of the population (651 nests, four colonies). A further 29% of the population (468 nests, four colonies) was located in the central province of Toledo. The remaining 30% was distributed across 10 different regions (Fig. 21.2). Cormorants breed almost exclusively in trees in Spain with only one small colony (7 nests) reported breeding in reed beds.

Colony size

Spain had 21 breeding colonies of cormorants in 2012. The majority of the colonies had a small number of nests (Fig. 21.3), while on the other hand the two largest colonies contained 63% of the population (1,014 nests, Fig. 21.4). The largest colonies were located on the La Serena reservoir in the Badajoz region (614 nests), and on the Rosarito reservoir in the Toledo region (400 nests). Of the remaining 19 colonies, two had 100-200 nests, two contained 50-100 nests and the remaining 15 had fewer than 50 nests (Fig. 21.3).

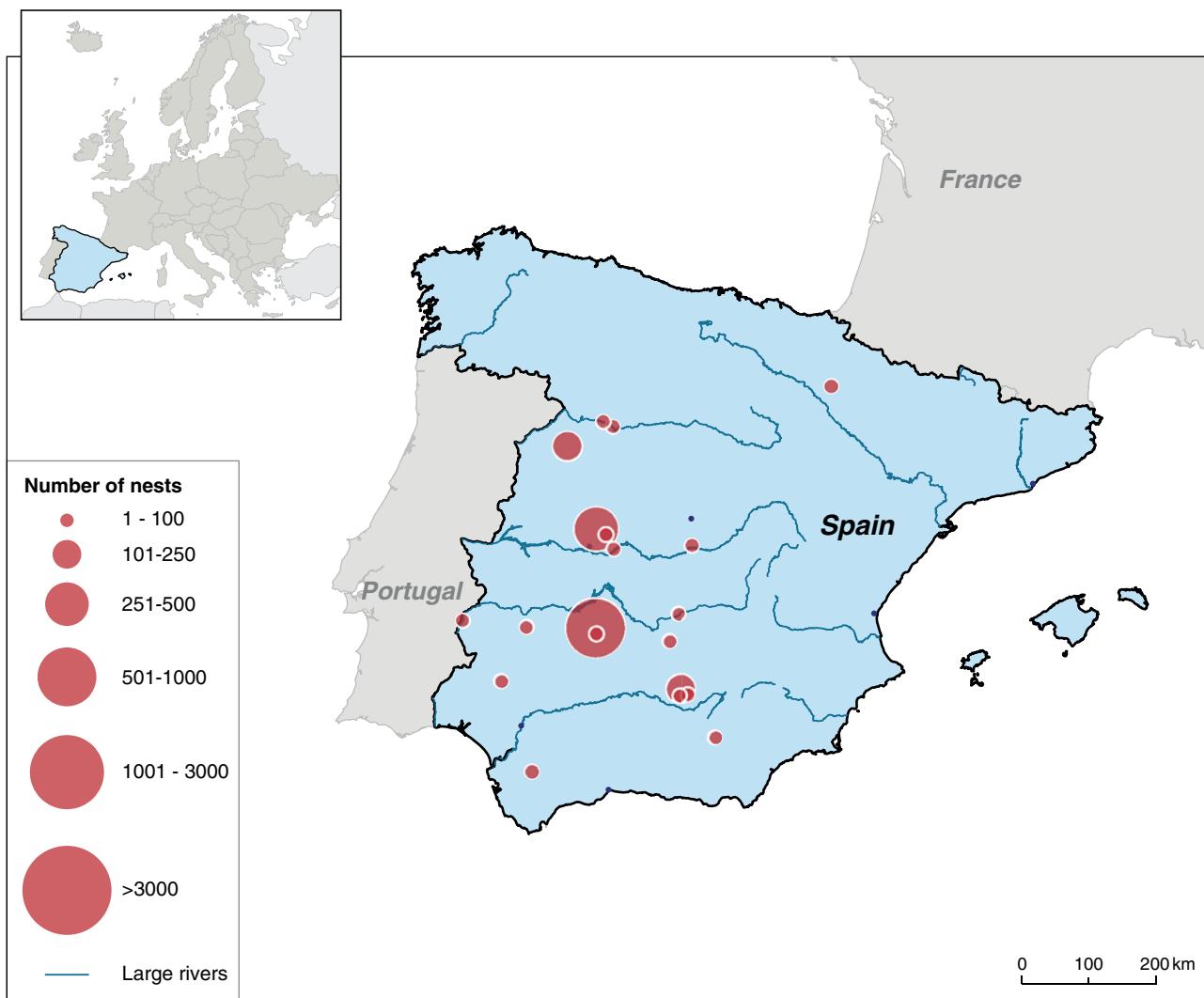
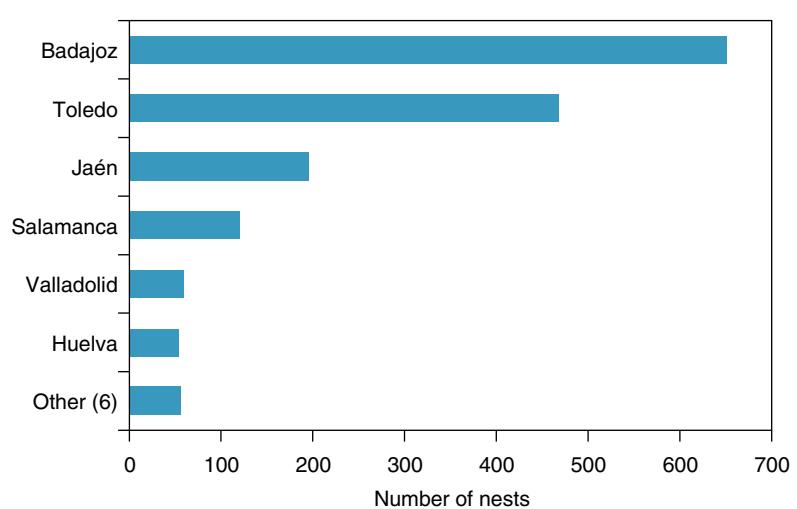


Figure 21.1. Distribution and size of breeding colonies of Great Cormorants in Spain, 2012. Source: SEO/Bird Life.

Figure 21.2. Regional distribution of the breeding population of Great Cormorants in Spain in 2012. Source: SEO/BirdLife.



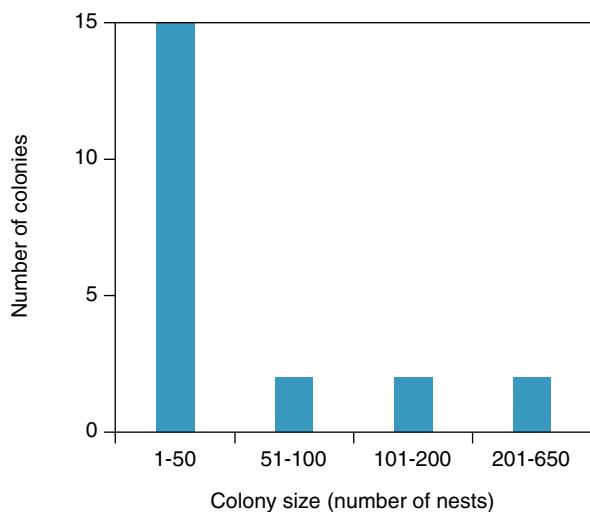


Figure 21.3. Size distribution of Great Cormorant colonies in Spain in 2012. Source: SEO/BirdLife.

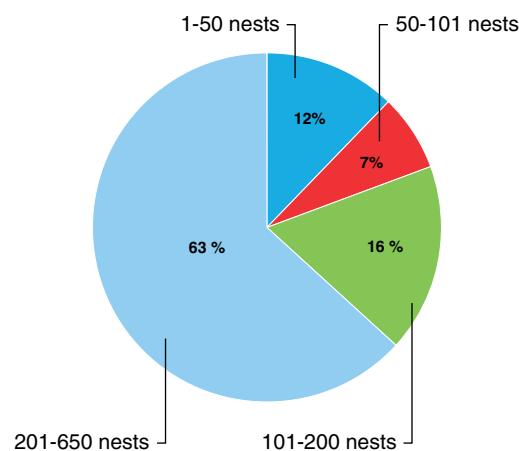


Figure 21.4. Distribution (%) of the total breeding population of Great Cormorants in relation to colony size in Spain in 2012. Source: SEO/BirdLife.

Human intervention in colonies

No management of cormorant breeding colonies was carried out in Spain in 2012.

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A breeding colony of Great Cormorants at La Serena reservoir, Extremadura, Spain, May 2012. Photo: Ángel Sánchez.