



Protect

# The Black Vulture

## Protect The Black Vulture

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The Black Vulture (*Aegypius monachus*) is Europe's largest bird of prey, weighing up to 12 kg and with a wingspan of nearly 3 meters.

After being extinct in Portugal for four decades, the species began nesting again in 2010. The population is recovering thanks to conservation efforts in the Iberian Peninsula, but it still holds the status of "Endangered" in our country. As of 2024, there were approximately 100 pairs, distributed mainly across four population centres in the inland areas.

Like other scavenger birds, the Black Vulture feeds on the carcasses of wild animals and domestic ungulates, preferring small and medium-sized species (lagomorphs, pigs, goats, sheep). As an obligate scavenger, it plays an essential role in ecosystems by removing decomposing organic matter, contributing to nutrient recycling, contaminant reduction, and disease control.

## Interactions with Electric Power Lines

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The Black Vulture's large size, less agile flight, and behavioural patterns make this species particularly vulnerable to the risk of:

- Collision with overhead power lines.
- Electrocutation (on distribution lines, especially medium-voltage lines).

The new 400 kV transmission line between Alqueva and Divor, developed by REN, is located in an area used by individuals from the Barrancos population and near a new colony detected in 2024 in the Vidigueira area.

In compliance with the Environmental Impact Statement, REN will implement specific mitigation measures, including:

- Reducing the risk of collision with the line by installing warning devices on the guard wires in sections of greatest importance to the Black Vulture and other threatened/sensitive species.

### Are you the owner or manager of pastureland?

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Avoid depositing or leaving carcasses, placentas, or other animal remains under or near any power lines.

By taking this simple step, you help reduce the risk of mortality among Black Vultures and other scavenger birds.

## Learn More

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REN and its sustainability strategy.

LIFE Aegypius Return



A project for the conservation and recovery of the Black Vulture in Portugal.



Supplementary feeding for scavenger birds. Importance, recommendations, and best practices.



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This flyer was produced by REN – Rede Eléctrica Nacional, S.A., the company responsible for managing Portugal’s national electricity transmission grid.

It constitutes an awareness-raising measure required by the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) issued in November 2024, relating to the “Alqueva–Divor 400 kV Power Line” project (EIS No. 3654).

REN has consistently supported various endangered species and projects vital to the preservation of biodiversity, particularly in regions where the National Transmission Grid operates. As an example in this context, REN has been a partner of Palombar, a leading NGO that is part of the European LIFE Aegyptius Return programme, dedicated to the recovery of the Black Vulture in Portugal – reinforcing the impact of this support on nature conservation.

