

Last Siberian crane 'Omid' returns to Iran for cold season

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Head of the Department of Environment at the northern province of Mazandaran, Hossinali Ebrahimi, made the announcement and, saying the rare bird arrived in Fereydunkenar wetlands in the north of the country on Monday morning.

Since its first journey to Fereydunkenar in 2007, Omid has been flying to Fereydunkenar in the first week of the eighth Iranian calendar month of Aban falling on the last week of October.

This year, the rare bird has got back home a few days earlier, bringing joy to the environmentalists and birdwatchers.

Omid' is 135cm long and its voice is gentle, melodious and resonant, its feathers pure white, hence its alternative name 'snow crane'.

There are only 3,200 Siberian cranes left in the world, most of which belonging to the eastern population and wintering in the Poyang Basin in China, while 'Omid' is the last remaining bird from the western population which prefers to spend winter in Iran and, previously, India.

Fereydunkenar wetland on the Caspian Sea has one of the richest ecosystems among the northern cities of Iran and hosts thousands of migratory birds each year, including various types of coots, ducks, herons, grebes, and swans.