



EASTERN CRANE BULLETIN

March 2015

The Eastern Crane E-bulletin is distributed to those interested in cranes in general, and specifically, the Eastern Populations of Sandhill and Whooping Cranes, as well as the continuing work for the protection of these birds and their habitats.

Canada:

Wood Buffalo National Park to offer first Whooping Crane tours

Visitors will be able to visit Wood Buffalo National Park (WBNP) this spring to view Whooping Cranes on their breeding grounds for the first time since they were discovered in the park in 1954. The UNESCO World Heritage Site in northern Alberta and the Northwest Territories contains the only natural nesting place in the world for this endangered species.

According to a recent article in the [Edmonton Journal](#), after conferring with wildlife experts and conservation groups on both sides of the border, the Parks Canada service has arranged interpretive flyovers of the nesting area in a small plane on June 1-4, Aug. 17-20 and Aug. 24-27, as well as guided helicopter hike-in tours from May 25-28. The May hike-in tours include a hike through boreal wetlands to a camouflaged blind placed carefully within the nesting area. The cost of the tours range from \$1,400 to \$3,900 per person, with Fort Smith, a nearby town in the Northwest Territories, as the starting point.

Tours will be limited to a total of 75 people combined.

For further information contact Parks Canada staff at [1-867-872-7960](tel:1-867-872-7960); email WBNP.info@pc.gc.ca or click here: [Parks Canada](#)

Download WBNP information brochure here: [WBNP_InfoSheet_EN_2015_02_03.pdf](#)

Editor's Note: As an individual who has long championed the plight and recovery of the Whooping Crane, the experience of observing the WBNP nesting cranes would be an *amazing* opportunity. **HOWEVER, one needs to stop and ask whether the obvious, seemingly inevitable possibility of disturbing a critically endangered species on its breeding grounds is really in the cranes' best interest?** Will tour fees be used for the continued preservation/protection of the cranes and their WBNP breeding habitat? It seems the gantlet of human disturbance and environmental dangers encountered by the cranes during migration to and from Aransas is already too much and predicted to become worse in the future. As the only known breeding ground for the critically endangered species, there is no question that Wood Buffalo National Park has to continue to be a safe haven for the Whooping Cranes to nest and raise their young. The species' long-term recovery and very survival depend on it. Thanks to all who work tirelessly towards this goal.

Louisiana:

14 Juvenile Whooping Cranes Added to Louisiana's Experimental Population

On December 5, 2014 the Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries (LDWF) biologists received a fifth cohort of juvenile Whooping Cranes. LDWF's Whooping Crane reintroduction program has released cranes into the wild from [White Lake Wetlands Conservations Area](#) in Vermilion Parish each year since 2011. *Read the LDWF press release here:* <http://www.wlf.louisiana.gov/news/38703>

The White Lake WCA location provides temporary shelter for the birds prior to their release into the wild. The cranes were raised at the [U.S. Geological Survey \(USGS\) Patuxent Wildlife Research Center](#) in Laurel, Md., and the [International Crane Foundation \(ICF\)](#) in Baraboo, Wis., and flown to Louisiana by the Windway Capital Corporation. *Read more about the cranes from ICF here:* <http://www.savingcranes.org/whats-new/2014/12/louisiana-welcomes-icf-whooping-cranes/>

With the addition of this cohort, the Louisiana Whooping Crane population now numbers 40 cranes. Over time the surviving cranes of earlier cohorts have dispersed to locations that include east Texas, as well as settling in the Louisiana parishes of Acadia, Avoyelles, Rapides, Vermilion, Jefferson Davis, Calcasieu and Cameron.

Cajun singer-songwriter Zachary Richard lends voice to Whooping Crane Public Awareness Effort

The Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries' (LDWF) has announced that a new Whooping Crane public awareness television message will feature Louisiana singer-songwriter and environmentalist Zachary Richard.

In the 30-second television message, scheduled for distribution at the end of February, Richard emphasizes the importance of the Whooping Cranes' return to Louisiana and advises the public to observe the birds from a distance. The message includes a number to call if anyone sees cranes being harmed – the toll free [1-800-442-2511](tel:1-800-442-2511) LDWF Enforcement Division's Operation Game Thief hotline.

The television spot announcements were funded by Chevron as part of a grant administered by the Louisiana Wildlife and Fisheries Foundation (LWFF). Chevron has provided financial support for the department's Whooping Crane reintroduction project since 2011.

To read the entire LDWF press release click here: <http://www.wlf.louisiana.gov/category/news/whooping-cranes>

Reward offered in shooting death of Whooping Crane in Vermilion Parish

The injured Whooping Crane was found just south of Zaunbrecher Road and north of Gueydan on November 2, 2014 with an apparent bullet wound to her upper left leg. Due to the severity of the injury she had to be euthanized. Necropsy results confirmed that the crane had been shot. This crane was hatched at the Patuxent Wildlife Research Center in Maryland and released as part of the fourth cohort of juvenile Whooping Cranes in Louisiana in January 2014.

Up to \$10,000 is being offered by various groups for information leading to the arrest and conviction of the person or persons responsible for the illegal killing of this whooping crane.

Anyone with information regarding this illegal killing should call the Louisiana Operation Game Thief hotline at [1-800-442-2511](tel:1-800-442-2511) or use LDWF's tip411 program. To use the tip411 program, residents can text LADWF and their tip to 847411 or download the "LADWF Tips" iPhone and Android app from the Apple

App Store or Google Play free of charge. The hotline and the tip411 are monitored 24 hours a day. Upon request, informants can remain anonymous. *To read the LDWF press release click here:* <http://www.wf.louisiana.gov/news/38835>

Texas:

Wintering Whooping Crane found shot in Aransas Bay, Texas

According to Game Warden Capt. Henry Balderamas, the partially decomposed body of a Whooping Crane was found January 4, 2015 along the central Texas coast near a duck blind in [Aransas Bay](#) near Sand Lake. The preliminary necropsy report shows the Whooping Crane was an adult, one of the estimated 304 Whoopers that winter in Texas and breed in Canada's Wood Buffalo National Park.

Necropsy results also show that the Whooping Crane may have been handled after death.

A \$27,500 reward for information leading to the arrest and conviction of the shooter(s) includes contributions from the [International Crane Foundation \(ICF\)](#), [Friends of Aransas and Matagorda Island](#), [Friends of the Wild Whoopers](#), [Whooping Crane Conservation Association](#), [Audubon Texas](#), [Aransas Bird and Nature Club](#) and [San Antonio Bay Foundation](#), the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department (TPWD).

Anyone with information about the crane's death should call the Fish and Wildlife Service's Houston Office of Law Enforcement at [\(281\) 876-1520](tel:2818761520), or Operation Game Thief at **(800) 792-GAME (4263). Callers may remain anonymous.**

New signs aimed at increasing public awareness of Whooping Cranes

In the face of this tragedy, the [International Crane Foundation](#)'s collaborative work with partners in Texas includes increasing public awareness of this rarest crane in the world. ICF has partnered with the TPWD, San Antonio Bay Partnership, and others to install educational signage at 18 public access areas and boat ramps within the Whooping Crane's wintering area in the Aransas and San Antonio Bays.

ICF staff are currently conducting an inventory to identify signs for replacement, as well as locating potential new sites for signage within the Lavaca-Matagorda Bays to the northeast. Each winter, more Whooping Cranes are documented in this new area and are staying for longer periods – an indication of the population's expansion along the Texas coast. Proactive awareness activities such as these are linked to ICF's continuing work to identify potential new crane habitats under future sea-level rise and changing climate conditions.

To see the "Game Bird or Nongame Bird? Maybe an Endangered Species?" sign and to read more from the ICF, click here: <http://www.savingcranes.org/whats-new/2015/02/5307/>

Fingerprints 'breakthrough' for wildlife crime investigators

This BBC article brought to mind the unsolved shooting cases of Whooping Cranes in both the migratory eastern population and the wild flock. If the new forensics are not yet being used in the U.S. cases they need to be. The wave of indiscriminate crane killings needs to stop.

Shooting, trapping and poisoning of birds of prey is an ongoing problem in the United Kingdom (UK) as well as in other parts of the world (including the United States). Unfortunately, incidence of such is on the rise rather than the decline. Historically, especially in remote areas, it has been difficult to catch criminals leading to a conviction. That is, until now.

According to a recent report on the BBC, scientists from the University of Abertay, in Dundee Ireland, have shown that with the help of fluorescent powders, fingerprints can be found and lifted from the flight feathers of birds of prey as well as from eggs (confiscated from the illegal egg trade). This research comes as a major step forward in the use of forensics to solve crimes against wildlife. If a dead bird has been handled when discarded, evidence in the form of latent fingerprints may be gathered and used in identifying the suspect.

Read the BBC story here: <http://www.bbc.com/news/science-environment-30802401>

Research was published in the journal *Science and Justice*. To read the *Science and Justice* article, "An investigation into the detection of latent marks on the feathers and eggs of birds of prey" by Helen McMorris, Kevin Farrugia and Dennis Gentles, *click the following*.

[**Science and Justice An investigation into the detection of latent marks on the feathers and eggs of birds of prey.pdf**](#)

The UK's [Royal Society for the Protection of Birds \(RSPB\)](#) was founded in 1889 to speak out against the fashion trade in plumes for women's hats. Since then it has been involved with conservation issues not only throughout Great Britain but internationally.

To read the RSPB report "Birdcrime 2013 - Offences against wild bird legislation in 2013," *click here*: http://www.rspb.org.uk/Images/birdcrime_2013_tcm9-384665.pdf

"Texas Representative" joins Friends of the Wild Whoopers staff

Lee Ann Linam has joined [Friends of the Wild Whoopers \(FOTWW\)](#) staff as the "Texas Representative." With the addition of her expertise, FOTWW looks forward to becoming an even stronger advocate and spokes group for the protection of the Aransas/Wood Buffalo population of Whooping Cranes.

Linam is well qualified to serve as FOTWW's "Texas Representative." Her 30-year career with the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department (TPWD) involved work with wetlands, alligators, waterfowl, and endangered species as well as the development of citizen science opportunities for volunteers in Texas. Throughout Linam's career she maintained an interest in Whooping Cranes and worked on research projects that focused on their economic value as well as the effects of human disturbance on them. Linam served as TPWD's representative to the U.S. [Whooping Crane Recovery Team](#) and as the Texas contact for the Contingency Plan. Most recently she developed a Texas Whooper Watch citizen science program: http://tpwd.texas.gov/huntwild/wild/wildlife_diversity/texas_nature_trackers/whooper-watch/

Read the International Whooping Crane Recovery Plan, here: <http://www.fws.gov/uploadedFiles/WHCR%20RP%20Final%207-21-2006.pdf>

Environmental Impact Issues:

Nothing exists by itself. Inherently, nature is about connections and balance. So, when something is done by humans to change that balance, whether by drilling for oil/gas, fracking, erection of wind turbines on land and in the ocean, developing and spraying GMO crops in order to produce a greater yield, etc. repercussions are felt throughout an ecosystem and all that depend on it for survival. These "ripples" may be so minute they go unnoticed (at first) while others are immediately obvious. Seemingly good ideas, initiated to resolve pressing energy or food supply needs can have far-reaching, devastating impacts on wildlife. Tunnel vision needs to be replaced with consideration for the whole picture – how will this affect wildlife and the environment, now and in the future? Whooping Cranes are a prime example of how little time it takes to push a species to the edge of extinction and what it takes to come back from it.

American Bird Conservancy Files Petition to Regulate Wind Industry

The American Bird Conservancy (ABC) has filed a formal petition with the U.S. Department of the Interior (DOI) calling for the agency to establish new regulations governing the impacts of wind energy projects on migratory birds including large birds of prey, threatened species and species of concern.

The [ABC petition](#) was filed on February 12, 2015 and includes substantial revisions to an earlier petition filed by ABC in December 2011 that also called for wind industry regulatory action that would reduce the projected 1.4-2 million bird deaths expected to be caused by the industry when it reaches projected build out levels.

"This petition includes new information that further makes the case for wind industry regulation," said Dr. Michael Hutchins, National Coordinator of ABC's Bird Smart Wind Energy Campaign. "We have added examples of new science and prototype mechanisms that would make it possible to finally enforce the Migratory Bird Treaty Act (MBTA)."

"...Nearly 30,000 wind turbines have already been installed within areas identified as being of high importance to federally-protected birds in the United States, with more than 50,000 additional turbines planned for construction in similar areas. *These include more than 18,000 in the migration corridor of the Whooping Crane-one of the nation's rarest and most spectacular birds...*"

ABC believes the projected number of wind related deaths will be exceeded significantly, as the estimates do not include mortality at associated power lines and towers, which are also undergoing massive expansion and currently kill over 6.8 million birds annually. Further, wind energy projects are expected to impact, through loss or modification of essential habitat, almost 20,000 square miles of terrestrial habitat and another 4,000 square miles of marine habitat.

Read more here: [Industryhttp://www.flyrodreel.com/blogs/tedwilliams/2015/february/petition-regulate-industry](http://www.flyrodreel.com/blogs/tedwilliams/2015/february/petition-regulate-industry)

To read ABC's letter to the Honorable Sally Jewell, Secretary of the U.S. Department of the Interior, and ABC's petition, "Updated Rulemaking Petition to the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service for Regulating the Impacts of Wind Energy Projects on Migratory Birds" *click here:* http://www.abcbirds.org/PDFs/Wind_petition_letter&petition.pdf

EPA Approval of toxic herbicide may harm Whooping Cranes and Indiana Bats

Back when the federal government first approved the use of GMO crops, supporters said that they would lead to less weeds which would mean less use of herbicides. However, the reality is that now there are "superweeds," or herbicide-resistant weeds and the numbers are increasing as well as the amount of herbicides needed to control them.

In 2014, the [Natural Resources Defense Council](#) (NRDC) became the first environmental group to file suit in an attempt to block the rollout of the latest GMO crop and weed killer system, *Enlist Duo* (a powerful, toxic pesticide blend: glyphosate - Roundup - and 2,4-D), developed by Dow AgroSciences. The NRDC claims the EPA ignored possible health and safety risks to both humans and Monarch butterflies (the nationwide use of Roundup has decimated food plants used by Monarchs resulting in a devastating decline in numbers).

In February 2015 a coalition of farmers and environmental groups - including [Center for Food Safety](#) and [Earthjustice](#) filed a motion to stay the [Environmental Protection Agency's \(EPA\)](#) October 2014 decision to approve for initial use, in six Midwestern states (Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Ohio, South Dakota, and Wisconsin), on fields of genetically engineered soybeans and corn.

The motion claims that the EPA violated the [Endangered Species Act \(ESA\)](#) by failing to consult with U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service (USFWS) regarding laboratory findings of the impact *Enlist Duo* could have on two endangered species in those states – the Whooping Crane and [Indiana bat](#).

Whooping Cranes regularly forage during migration stopovers in harvested fields for waste corn and anthropods. Preliminary studies by the EPA showed that any prey exposed to the 2,4-D found in *Enlist Duo*, could, in sufficient quantities, be toxic to cranes. However, the agency went on to say that while approval of the pesticide "may affect" Whooping Cranes it is "not likely to adversely affect" them.

Listed as endangered in 1967, the population of [Indiana bat](#) has continued to decline despite conservation and recovery efforts. As of 2009, there were an estimated of 387,000 Indiana bats, *less than half* of the estimated population when the species was listed as endangered.

In addition to habitat loss and cave disturbance, scientists have attributed pesticide contamination of the Indiana bats' food supply as a reason for their continued decline. A significant source of natural insect control, Indiana bats typically consume up to half of their body weight in insects each night. The EPA's screening analysis revealed that the Indiana bat likely will suffer reproductive harm by consuming 2,4-D-tainted prey. Laboratory tests showed exposure to the pesticide "produced reduced pregnancies, and skeletal malformations and well as a reduction in the survival of pups."

To read more of the October 2014 Earthjustice lawsuit brought against the EPA, click here:

<http://earthjustice.org/news/press/2014/coalition-of-farmers-and-environmental-groups-to-challenge-epa-over-herbicide-approval-0>

To read the February 2015 Earthjustice motion, click here: <http://earthjustice.org/sites/default/files/files/2015-2-6%20Motion%20to%20Stay%2024D.pdf>

Read the February 2014 petition filed by the Natural Resources Defense Council (NRDC) concerning use of pesticide glyphosate (Roundup) and the decline of Monarch butterflies, here:

http://docs.nrdc.org/wildlife/files/wil_14022101a.pdf

Habitat matters!

Ohio:

Help protect wildlife and nature preserves through tax donations

“When Ohioans give a tax donation to wildlife or state nature preserves, they are actively supporting conservation in our great state,” said Ohio Department of Natural Resources (ODNR) Director James Zehringer. “These donations help fund programs that protect endangered wildlife species, provide for the removal of non-native invasive species and help fund facility improvements in Ohio’s state nature preserves.”

Several different species of wildlife statewide have benefited from Ohioans’ tax donations, including peregrine falcons, trumpeter swans, Karner blue butterflies, Sandhill Cranes, and bald eagles. Donations made through the Wildlife Diversity Fund tax donation help support critical ecological management activities in Ohio, including efforts to remove non-native and invasive species that pose a serious and ever-growing threat to sensitive habitats. *Learn more here:* <http://naturepreserves.ohiodnr.gov/support-natural-areas/donate-on-your-taxes>

Texas:

BP Deepwater Horizon oil spill settlement money benefits Coastal Bend conservation projects

These projects were developed by the Texas Parks & Wildlife Department, Texas Commission on Environmental Quality, Texas General Land Office, with help from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, [The Conservation Fund](#), [The Nature Conservancy](#), [Artist Boat](#), [Coastal Bend Bays & Estuaries Program](#), [Galveston Bay Foundation](#), Ducks Unlimited, and [Scenic Galveston](#). Each is designed to remedy or reduce harm to natural resources affected by the 2010 Deepwater Horizon oil spill, according to a news release from the fish and wildlife foundation.

In all, plea agreements in the court settlement awarded \$2.544 billion to the foundation to distribute over five years. In the second round of awards none were for the Coastal Bend area.

Then in November 2014 it was announced that \$1.5 million was awarded for marsh restoration in Egery Flats, a 600-acre wetland near Bayside on the west side of Copano Bay not far from the Aransas National Wildlife Refuge.

The [Egery Flats](#) project has ties to the endangered flock of wild Whooping Cranes that spend winter in and around nearby [Aransas National Wildlife Refuge](#), according to Wade Harrell, U.S. Whooping Crane Recovery Coordinator at the refuge. The flock of about 300 birds faces many threats, including drought and limited freshwater from the over-tapped Guadalupe River, which reduces habitat and food for the birds. Possibly as a result of these threats, cranes in recent years have begun expanding their winter territory into unprotected areas of the coast. This project has potential to provide habitat for the expanding population.

Essentially the bays and estuaries program will use the money to channel bay water through culverts to inundate what is called emergent wetlands to improve or return about 600 acres of habitat to a semblance of what was there before two roads blocked the natural flow. This type of estuarine habitat is essential to the health of myriad marine creatures and as feeding grounds for waterfowl, wading birds and shore birds. The project is expected to enhance the overall health of the Aransas Bay complex.

To read more about restoration/enhancement projects for 2013 and 2014, click here: http://www.caller.com/news/local-news/bp-money-benefits-coastal-bend-conservation-projects_60752911

Read more about the coastal restoration funding for Texas from the Deepwater Horizon oil spill, click here: <http://www.restorethetexascoast.org/>

EMP Whooping Crane Update - January 1 to 31, 2015

According to the [Whooping Crane Eastern Partnership \(WCEP\)](#), the maximum size of the eastern migratory population at the end of the report period was 100 birds (53 males, 47 females). Estimated distribution at the end of the report period included 26-29 Whooping Cranes in Indiana, 7 in Kentucky, 10 in Tennessee, 34 in Alabama, 3 in Georgia, 13 in Florida, 2-5 at unknown locations and 2 long term missing. The total for Florida includes 7 newly released juveniles.

To read the entire report click here:

<http://www.bringbackthecranes.org/technicaldatabase/projectupdates/2015/01JanTo31Jan2015.html>

Individual Information about each Whooping Crane in the eastern flock

Click on an individual Whooping Crane number in the pdf to learn the history of, and current information about, that particular crane: <http://www.bringbackthecranes.org/pdf/PopListFebruary2015.pdf>

Thanks to [Journey North](#) and the [Whooping Crane Eastern Partnership \(WCEP\)](#) for providing this information.

Update: Eastern Population of Sandhill Crane hunt seasons

Kentucky ends 4th year of experimental season

As posted on the USFWS Federal eRulemaking site in June 2014, the Atlantic and Mississippi Flyways Councils recommended that Kentucky be allowed a 1-year continuation of the Sandhill Crane season for 2014-2015 "under harvest guidelines approved for their experimental season." 96 cranes were killed this season. Of those, 93 were killed in Barren County where the only Sandhill Crane festival in Kentucky is held.

Kentucky has now applied for an "operational season" and waits for approval by the Flyways Council. If approved, the Kentucky Department of Fish and Wildlife Resources (KDFWR) Commission will decide on details of the permanent hunt based on the 2010 Eastern Population Management Plan. There will be an opportunity for opposition to the hunt to speak at the KDFWR Commission meeting in May and June. However, as the state process is exactly the same as in the process leading up to the 2011 approval of the KY season, it is pretty much a given that public opinion will not sway the final outcome.

Tennessee Sandhill Crane Hunt

The second experimental season Sandhill Crane hunt took place with the late waterfowl season on Nov. 22 - 23, 2014 and Nov. 29, 2014 - Jan. 1, 2015. The hunt zone remains south of Interstate 40 and east of State Highway 56 in southeast Tennessee. 400 permits were drawn in an earlier lottery and daily bag, season bag, and possession limit was three Sandhill Cranes. While regulation requirements state that hunters must mail permits containing harvest information per bird each day of the hunt, as of this writing, 2 months post-hunt, the preliminary numbers for Sandhill harvest in Tennessee stand at 309 with an additional 43 "un-retrievable" ("crippling loss").

Alberta, Canada considering 2015 Sandhill Crane hunt

In far northern Alberta, straddling the border with Northwest Territories is the Wood Buffalo National Park, home to the only existing group of wild Whooping Cranes in the world. Each fall the population leaves this secluded breeding ground to migrate south to spend the winter at the Aransas National Wildlife Refuge in Texas. The migration route takes the cranes through the length of Alberta.

After years of lobbying by hunters, the government now appears to be seriously considering a Sandhill Crane season for Alberta. Until now, concern for the safety of the endangered Whooping Cranes by conservation groups such as the [Alberta Wilderness Association](#) and others working to safeguard this population has kept the government from moving forward with such a hunt.

While the Canadian provinces of Saskatchewan and Manitoba already have Sandhill Crane seasons, [Environment Canada](#) regulations give federal wildlife officials the power to prohibit hunting of Sandhill Cranes in specific areas where there are also Whooping Cranes.

Alberta listed the Sandhill Crane as a sensitive species in 2010, 2005 and 2000 on a government website. It is not clear if that official designation has changed. The government would have to amend legislation to designate the Sandhill Crane as a game bird.

Read more here:

[Environment Canada: National Conservation Plan](#)

[Environment Canada: Bird Conservation Regions and Conservation Strategies](#)

2015 Crane Festivals

Festival of the Cranes

[Wheeler National Wildlife Refuge](#)

January 10, 2015

Decatur, Alabama

<http://www.friendsofwheelerrefuge.org/events/?eventID=74&date=01/10/2015>

The 3rd Annual Festival of Cranes held at Wheeler NWR, sponsored by the Friends of Wheeler and TORAY, attracted 2000+ visitors to the all-day celebration. Events included an early morning bird walk lead by Refuge expert Dwight Cooley, Operation Migration film, fun children's activities, storytelling with John James Audubon and two presentations by the Auburn University Southeastern Raptor Center. Unusually cold weather caused the wintering waterfowl to gather by the thousands in the unfrozen slough right outside the heated observation building on the refuge. The fields were "gray" with Sandhills, dancing, feeding, calling...coming and going all day long. But by far the special visitors of the day were the Whooping Cranes. At times 6 Whoopers were in full view for all to enjoy. 2 Bobcats were spotted on the far side of the slough and a visit by a River Otter topped the treats the sunny cold day had to offer.

Mark your calendar for the next Festival of Cranes...January 9th, 2016...and join us for a wonderful day on the Refuge!

Whooping Crane Festival

February 19-22, 2015

Port Aransas and Mustang Island, Texas

<http://www.whoopingcranefestival.org/>

Over 700 registered participants from 36 states and four countries—Canada, China, Mongolia and Australia attended the 19th Annual Whooping Crane Festival in Port Aransas. Many out-of-state participants traveled to Port Aransas specifically for the festival. Speakers included representatives from [Wood Buffalo National Park](#) and [Operation Migration](#), both located in Canada; the [International Crane Foundation](#), headquartered in Wisconsin; and a biologist from Mongolia who presented on the endangered cranes in his country. The Whooping Crane Festival provided an opportunity for the public to interact with representatives from all four Whooping Crane conservation and reintroduction projects and learn about current recovery efforts.

<http://www.whoopingcranefestival.org/whooping-crane-festival-wrap-up/>

Marsh Madness Sandhill Crane Festival

March 6-7, 2015

Goose Pond WMA, Greene Co. IN

<http://marshmadness.info/marsh-madness/marsh-madness-info>

The 45th annual Audubon's Nebraska Crane Festival

(Formerly known as *Rivers and Wildlife Celebration*)

March 19-22, 2015

Kearney, Nebraska

<http://nebraskacranefestival.org/>

If you have any friends or co-workers who would like to receive this quarterly E-bulletin please have them contact:

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