



IAIN NICOLSON Audubon CENTER AT ROWE SANCTUARY

Crane River CHRONICLES

WINTER 2014



ROWE HAPPENINGS/NEWS

Topic of the Season

Crane Season 2015 is just around the corner. Reservations for Crane Tours and Photo Blinds begin on January 2, 2015 at 9:00 am. Call (308) 468-5282 or visit rowe.audubon.org to make your reservations. Crane Viewing Tours begin March 6, 2015 and end April 11, 2015.

Creating Future Conservation Leaders - *By Aurora Fowler*

I don't remember it, but I went to my first Rivers and Wildlife Celebration when I was three months old. Rowe has always been a part of my life; I grew up exploring the river and listening to the cranes. I used to stand at the front doors when I was little, greet people, and say "Welcome to My Sanctuary."

This place I call home was also my classroom. People like Keanna Leonard and my Peer Leaders at SOAR and Flying Higher camps opened my eyes to the beautiful world around me. Now I get to be that Peer Leader and help kids take time to look at the little things. As a volunteer, in a cold dark blind, I have stood next to people like Michael Forsberg and Jane Goodall. These people who share the same passion for nature and cranes have become my family. Volunteers like Phil, my tall-adopted grandpa from Canada, Margery from California, who was my friend before I knew the building was named in honor of her husband, and Alan, Cyndi, Rob, and Susan, so many I can't even list them. They have all helped to shape the person I am today.

I have sat in the break room late at night and listened to the adults talk about the threats to the cranes and the future of the river. This worry is very real to me. It is very frustrating for me to realize that in the future, the cranes might not be here for everyone to see.

But I see hope for my generation. During the one week at SOAR camp, when I helped as a Peer Leader, I watched my six kids fall in love with the river. They gave me hope.

We are hope. All of us are hope for the future of this river.

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Above | Aurora Fowler Speaking at the
2014 A River Runs Through It Fundraiser



For two weeks in June, over 150 campers connect with nature by dip netting for fish, aquatic insects, and snails in the wetlands and discovering the animals, insects, and plants in the prairies at Rowe Sanctuary.



ROWE HAPPENINGS CONTINUED

Letter from the Center Director – Bill Taddicken

As the cranes head south for the winter, they pass over the Platte River. Many times, they will descend on outstretched wings and cruise past the sandbars and over the wet meadows calling to each other as they wheel around the sky. I imagine this is one of those moments where the parents teach the colts the important points along their migration path. They could be telling them that this is where they will roost and feed this spring on their way back north. Then, after a short tour, they circle back to the heavens and soar off on warm winds to the south where they will spend the winter.



These short visits in the fall are a reminder that the need to protect, restore, and expand the habitat for these cranes on the Platte is an ongoing effort. As little as 10% of the original habitat remains and without ongoing efforts, within as little as five or six years much of that would be gone. Audubon has been here working with people like you for forty years, making sure this place remains for the birds.

I want to thank all of you for ensuring the Platte River will be able to maintain this magnificent population of cranes. It truly is our supporters that make this all possible and give hope for the future. You are essential to the future of this river and the cranes. Even though winter has just begun, the spring migration is just around the corner. Soon we will once again be able to enjoy the greatest gathering of cranes in the world. I always think that when

the cranes return it is a reward and that all of the efforts through the year have been a success.

Please come out this spring and witness as this quiet, unassuming prairie river rejoices with the ancient sounds of thousands of cranes flying in waves in the spring sunshine. You deserve to be surrounded by this amazing migration that you make possible.

Bill Taddicken

Letter from Board Chair – Becky Evers

When my grandson Riley went to an Audubon SOAR camp for the first time, I did not realize that it would have a huge impact on our entire family. We went to the evening program for the campers' families and I was so impressed with the excitement I saw on the faces of those kids. It made me realize that I wanted to get involved at Rowe Sanctuary. Now, three of our grandsons have loved going to SOAR and Flying Higher Camps, and all of our family is involved in some way. We always talked about going to the Owl Prowl Adventure, and this year we did. We took two grandkids and had an unforgettable adventure. I do not think they will let us miss it again.



I am looking forward to this year as Chair of the Stewardship Board, and it is my hope that we are able to provide camps and adventures for everyone who wants to join us. Please find time in your busy schedules to join us at Rowe to experience the magic.

CONTACT US

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If you would like to receive the *Crane River Chronicles* electronically, email us at rowesanctuary@audubon.org or call (308) 486-5282.

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AUDUBON NEBRASKA

Letter from State Director - Marian Langan

Greetings!

As the end of 2014 draws near, we reflect on this year's activities. I don't have to do that for very long before I just have to say, "Wow, look what people can do when they work together." Thank each of you for your part in the conservation successes of this year. The result is that more kids are loving rivers and prairies, more habitat is protected for birds and other wildlife, and we have more of a chance that the beautiful habitat and birds that we love so much will survive into the future. The very tangible result of our inaction

means destroyed habitat, fewer birds, and a much paler version of life for future children. Thank you in advance for your patience in the coming year when we ask for your time, talent, and treasure to help make sure this doesn't happen – we can and do make a difference.

Thank you and I hope you all enjoy the holidays!

Marian Langan



A RIVER RUNS THROUGH IT 2014

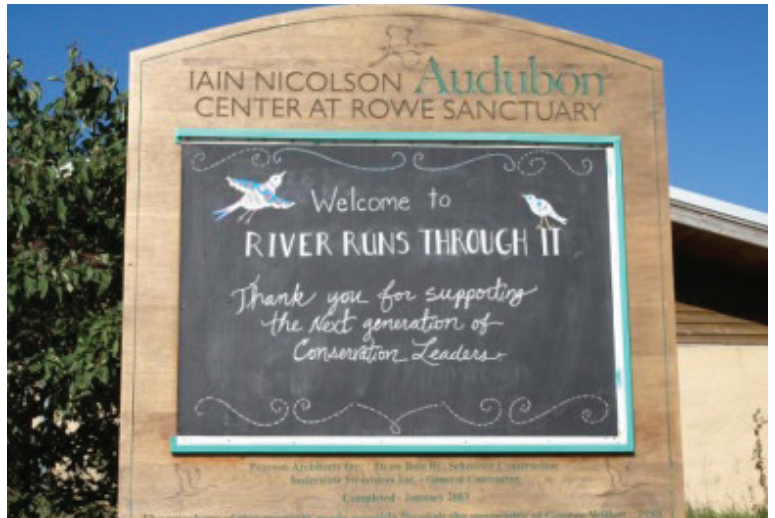
One word describes the evening enjoyed by the 75 attendees at the *A River Runs through It Fundraiser* – AMAZING! Over \$20,000 was raised to support the *Next Generation of Conservation Leaders*.

Attendees were entertained by the Kearney High School Sophomore Quartet, were able to purchase a hand painted clay bird, and enjoyed a gourmet meal prepared by Jill O'Brien and Val Flanagan with Wild Buffalo Catering, the evening ended with a live auction.

Thank you to everyone who attended...we look forward to seeing you next year!

Sponsors for the *2014 A River Runs Through It* were Bill's Liquor; Jon & Kathy Bokenkamp; Hellman, Main, Coslor, & Kathol P.C; Alan Henry; Edgar Pooschke; Ben & Christie Hirschfeld; Steve & Jeni Homan; Tobin & Cindy Houlden; HyVee; Dr. Walter & Jenni Martin; Wild Idea Buffalo Company

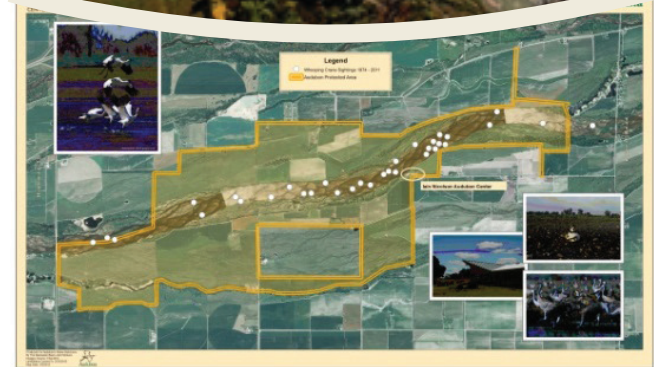
Our deepest thanks to committee members: Molly Trettle; Rebecca Evers; Jennifer Homan; Joel Johnson; Jennifer Martin; Carol Wahl; Greg Williams.



HABITAT

This summer Rowe Sanctuary was able to protect the core of a critical habitat complex by acquiring an essential parcel of land. Situated in the center of Rowe Sanctuary, the new property will bring the total acres protected at Rowe to just over 2,800 acres.

Since that time, a number of habitat management activities have been initiated in order to protect and restore roosting, foraging and loafing habitat for migrating Sandhill and Whooping Cranes, increase-nesting success for Least Terns and Piping Plovers, and improve suitable habitat for declining grassland bird species in wet meadows.



Vegetation was disked on 52 acres of low-lying accretion ground adjacent to the active channel of the Platte River. This will provide immediate benefits to many species and provides the first step in the restoration of wet meadow and backwater slough habitat.

Sixty-six acres of native grassland were cleared of invasive Russian olive and Eastern red cedar trees. This clearing removed visual obstructions from native grasslands and riparian areas, assisting in restoring native plant communities and improving conditions for migratory birds and resident wildlife species.



A combination of manual removal and herbicide application was used to bring invasive species in select portions of the prairie under control. A grassland management plan that will utilize grazing, haying, prescribed fire and rest is currently under development.

Before

After



This year SOAR campers learned about pollinators and their importance to our food supply. Then under the guidance Pheasants Forever staff and volunteers, the campers planted the two-acre plot just south of the center with seed and plant species critical to pollinators. Though it will take several years to become established, the garden will be good habitat for several species of prairie birds.



EDUCATION/OUTREACH

Over the past four years, Keanna Leonard, Education Director at Rowe has been working with University of Nebraska-Kearney Assistant Professor Dena Harshbarger to incorporate outdoor educational opportunities into science methods classes for pre-service teachers. The collaboration is designed with a three-fold purpose.



One is to positively impact pre-service teachers' ability and willingness to incorporate inquiry learning and outdoor educational experiences into their future classrooms. A landmark study entitled *Closing the Achievement Gap* concludes that by incorporating the environment into the education process students become engaged and enthused about learning, demonstrate greater pride and ownership in their work, and exhibit noticeably fewer discipline problems in the classroom. The result is that students perform dramatically better on standardized academic measures in all core subjects.

The second objective is to reconnect pre-service teachers with nature and foster understanding, appreciation, and conservation of our natural heritage. We encounter pre-service teachers who lack

a true understanding and personal connection to the places that affect their daily lives and are often unaware of local conservation issues. By demonstrating how easy and accessible nature is to incorporate into an existing curriculum, we are developing a conservation ethic in pre-service teachers that will impact thousands of elementary and middle school children for years to come.

A few comments from our students after taking the course:

"I never really thought about how important the outdoors was in the classroom, but now after this semester I will be using the outdoors as much as I possibly can. I also have learned how easy it is to integrate other subject areas into science. There is so much to do with our local environment. We need not take it for granted and let our students experience it."

"I want my students to have an opportunity to learn about nature by exploring nature. I think that allowing students the chance to see nature first hand is a great learning tool, one that cannot be recreated indoors."

"My attitude has changed a lot. I now really appreciate how important it is to keep our local environment clean and safe. This course has taught me that it is very beneficial for students to study their own environment and appreciate it."

The third objective is to introduce Audubon's Rowe Sanctuary and all we have to offer to a new generation of teachers.

"...before this semester I didn't even know that Rowe Sanctuary and the Iain Nicolson Audubon Center existed. A local resource shouldn't be overlooked. ... You don't HAVE to take a field trip to Washington D. C. for great learning opportunities. It's right in your backyard."

This collaboration is truly providing beneficial opportunities for all involved.



UNK Students learning to use nature as a classroom.

THE ABC'S OF A GOOD WILL

Everyone agrees that having a will is important. And having a “good” will is even better. A will should be—legally binding, up-to-date, easily amended, a true reflection of your wishes, and provide you with peace of mind.

A good will is accurate. It will follow all legal requirements of your state, it is prepared and signed according to those requirements, and it outlines how your estate should be distributed. A good will also provides for the guardianship of your children, the transfer of business interests, it states any other final declarations you want or need to make, and it covers any other important matters that may be needed.



A good will is benevolent.

A good will does well. It addresses the needs of your spouse, your children, and other dependents. It provides for the

needs of anyone who is in your circle of responsibility. It may also provide for charitable organizations that reflect your values and address causes you support.

A good will is current. This cannot be stressed enough, your will should be updated as needed to reflect changing circumstances. Changes constantly occur in the tax laws, in your family situation, in your financial situation. Many professionals recommend reviewing your will annually to ensure that it is up-to-date.

Have you considered including us in your will? The correct way to list us in your estate plans is: The National Audubon Society, Inc., a not-for-profit environmental organization with its principal offices located in New York City, NY, for the permanent endowment of Audubon Nebraska programs.

If you would like additional information on wills and estate planning, please contact Melissa Filipi, Director of Philanthropy at mfilipi@audubon.org or (402) 797-2301.



MAKE A DIFFERENCE

There are many ways that you can help us fulfill our mission of conserving the Platte River and the birds that rely on it. Support of all types makes such a difference, with your help we can make the world a better place!

- Become a volunteer. Our volunteers are an important part of our successes. There are many opportunities available that can fit in to any schedule. We're happy to play “matchmaker” and find the perfect volunteer opportunity for your interests, skills, and time!
- Tell your friends and family about us! Raising awareness of our work opens many doors, and introduces a new group of volunteers, donors, and supporters to our mission.
- Donate. We rely on the generous support of our donors for the work that we do. We do not receive funding from any national organization. All money raised here, stays here. You can return a gift in the envelope provided, visit our website to donate online, or stop by our Education Center to make a gift in person.
- Commemorate a life event with a gift in honor or memory of friends, family, or occasions.
- Take a look at our wish list on page 8 for additional gift ideas.
- Become a monthly donor. You can provide regular, ongoing support for our work by visiting our website, rowe.audubon.org.
- Include us in your estate plans. There are several simple, flexible, tax-advantaged options that can benefit your heirs and Rowe Sanctuary at the same time.

IT'S BEEN A GOOD YEAR FOR STOCKS

Did your portfolio increase in value this year? Donating appreciated securities enables you to support Audubon while conserving cash for other uses, and helps you avoid capital gains tax on the appreciation. Donated shares must be appreciated in value and owned for longer than one year.

It is important to note that the legal date – and value – of your gift depends on when Audubon receives it, not when you instruct your

broker to make the transaction. If you would like to make a gift of stock, have your broker contact Raji Mosa at (212) 979-3167 or rmosa@audubon.org. And, don't forget to call us at (308) 468-5282 to let us know your gift is on the way!

You can also use appreciated stocks to fund a larger gift that will pay you an income for life. Please call Shari Kolding at (512) 236-9076 for more details.

VOLUNTEERISM

Seeking Volunteers

As a Rowe volunteer, you have the opportunity to assist with the valuable conservation work at Rowe, spend time at the River, and HAVE fun!

Volunteers for our habitat management programs, assist with prescribed burns, trail maintenance, and/or mowing. Education program volunteers assist with nature camps, presentations, and

education programs. Center volunteers work in the Nature store; assist with day-to-day office work, and building maintenance.

No special skills are required; we look for a passion for conservation, the willingness to learn, and a desire to be a part of the valuable work at Rowe Sanctuary.

To learn about volunteer opportunities contact Diana Luscher at (308) 468-5282 or dluscher@audubon.org



Water Conservation and Sustainability Group

A group of community members, facilitated by Bill Taddicken and Diana Luscher, began meeting in June to promote clean water and more efficient water use for the Platte River Basin to enhance the future of the Sandhill Crane migration.

The group identified four mission critical goals:

- Develop environmental focused water conservation suggestions to be incorporated into the City of Kearney's Comprehensive Plan.
- Develop methods for Community Based Water Conservation Education.
- Identify and promote methods for community members to reduce their personal water consumption.
- Develop a partnership with schools (KPS, CCC, and UNK) and facilities (Veteran's Home) to assist with funding water conservation based education.

For more information on the project or to join the group, contact Diana Luscher at (308) 468-5282 or dluscher@audubon.org.



CALENDAR OF EVENTS



FAMILY PROGRAMS

A Naturally Good Time for Everyone! Future programming is listed below. For additional details and to verify dates, please give us a call at (308) 468-5282.

Reservations for Crane Tours and Photo Blinds Begin
JANUARY 2, 2015

Birdwatching Made Easy & Great Backyard Bird Count
FEBRUARY 15 – 2:00PM

Crane Viewing Tours

MARCH 6 – APRIL 11

\$25 per person – call (308) 468-5282 beginning January 2, 2015 to reserve your space.

Family Crane Carnival

MARCH 7 – 10AM – 4PM

Audubon's Nebraska Crane Festival

MARCH 19 – 22, KEARNEY, NE

Featuring author and naturalist Scott Weidensaul. Festival details at <http://nebraskacrane festival.org/>.

Rowe Habitat Tours

MARCH 14, 28 & APRIL 4, 11AM – 1PM

\$5 per person. For more information or to reserve your spot, call (308) 468-5282.

Rowe Speaker Series

for more information, call (308) 468-5282

MARCH 14 – Doreen Pfost - Audubon's Rowe Sanctuary and the Platte River – Forty Years of Conservation, Education, and Celebration – 10AM - \$5 person.

MARCH 28 – Speaker TBD - 10AM - \$5 person.

APRIL 4 – Speaker TBD - 10AM - \$5 person.

APRIL 11 – Birdwatching Beyond Cranes - 10AM - \$5 person.

Crane Behavior Workshop

MARCH 14, 28, & APRIL 4, 11AM – 1PM

\$10 per person. For more information, call (308) 468-5282.

Crane River CHRONICLES

Rowe Sanctuary
44450 Elm Island Road
Gibbon, NE 68840-4019

CONNECTING PEOPLE WITH NATURE

NON-PROFIT
ORGANIZATION
U.S. POSTAGE PAID
PERMIT NO. 22
GIBBON, NE 68840

*Crane Cam - To watch the crane cam, please
go to <http://rowe.audubon.org/crane-cam>.*

The mission of Rowe Sanctuary is to conserve Platte River ecosystems for cranes and other wildlife.



100% POST CONSUMER WASTE

IAIN NICOLSON Audubon CENTER AT ROWE SANCTUARY

44450 Elm Island Road
Gibbon, NE 68840
Phone: (308) 468-5282
rowe.audubon.org

Open Monday - Friday 9 - 5; Sunday 1 - 4
Open 7 days a week Feb. 15 – April 15

Bill Taddicken - Director
Keanna Leonard - Education Director
Diana Luscher - Outreach Coordinator
Andrew Pierson - Director of Conservation
Kent Skaggs - Office Manager
Sharon Ingram - Gift Shop Manager

Audubon Nebraska

Marian Langan – Executive Director
Melissa Filipi – Director of Philanthropy
Carey Collingham - Corporate and Foundation Coordinator
Cindy Houlden – Donor Relations Coordinator

Stewardship Advisory Board

Rob Ahlschwede	Jennifer Martin
Susan Ahlschwede	Janice McGregor
Ed Berglund	Brian Moody
Charles Bicak	Margery Nicolson
Stan Dart	Carol Wahl
Becky Evers	Greg Williams
Jennifer Homan	
Roger Jones	



Thanks to all of you who have liked us on Facebook. Be sure to
check out our page to see what's happening throughout the year.

Rowe Wish List

3 Point Box Scraper for Tractor

Commercial Vacuum Cleaner

Samsung W300 HD Camcorder

Microphone/Sound System

Digital Projector

HDMI Ready Flat Screen TV

8 GB or larger SD photo cards

Adobe InDesign Software

IPad

ATV Trailer

\$5 Million Endowment