



IAIN NICOLSON Audubon CENTER AT ROWE SANCTUARY

Crane River **CHRONICLES**

SPRING 2017



LETTER FROM CENTER DIRECTOR



Dear Friends,

The cranes are back again bringing with them a feeling of renewed life and hope. The largest gathering of cranes in the world invigorates all of the senses with an amazing amount of life force on the Platte River.

The people coming here to witness the crane migration also bring with them joy, enthusiasm, and wonder. This gathering of people and birds each spring is amazing as people from all walks of life bring with them support for our natural world. America's Greatest Migration is a gift shared by all spectators.

We work year-round to restore and protect the Platte River for the cranes, as well as for people. Without this constant effort and stewardship this river would no longer sustain the migration. Our generous supporters make all this possible. From river clearing, grassland restoration, and influencing water policy, to education programs instilling conservation, you make the future bright and bring hope to this river and the cranes.

The cranes provide inspiration for our efforts. This natural wonder brings us all together in wonder and joy. You are a major part of Audubon's success on the Platte River! The challenges our natural world faces will require vigilance as we move into the future. Let us all stand together and create a bright future for the cranes and future generations.

Sincerely,

Bill Taddicken
Director, Rowe Sanctuary

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Sandhill Crane Spring Migration Viewing Experiences

CRANE VIEWING TOURS March 4 - April 9

Fees (sales tax not included):

March 4 - 16: \$25.00/person/tour

March 17 - April 2 (Peak Season):
\$35.00/person/tour

April 3 - 9: \$25.00/person/tour

Make your reservation
by visiting

reservations.rowesanctuary.org

or calling (308) 468-5282

between 9:00 AM and 5:00 PM CST

OVERNIGHT PHOTOGRAPHY BLINDS
March 18 - April 8

Fee: \$225/night

**EVENING PHOTOGRAPHERS ONLY
CRANE TOUR**

March 18 - April 8

Fee: \$60/person

Reservations for these experiences must be made
by calling (308) 468-5282 between 9:00 am and 5:00 pm CST



VOLUNTEERS



Photos by Rowe Staff

If you know a Rowe Sanctuary Volunteer; Thank them.
 If you are a Rowe Sanctuary Volunteer; THANK YOU!
 2016 was another great year for our volunteer program.
 Our volunteers:

- Assisted with Education Programs for 1,900 youth
- Created a 50-Year Site Plan
- Provided \$166,000 in grant match
- Guided 182 Crane Viewing Experiences
- Shared Rowe Sanctuary and the cranes with 22,000+ guests
- Provided 69 Overnight photo blind experiences
- Delivered Crane Behavior Class to 785 people
- Raised over \$300,000 to help support Rowe Sanctuary's conservation
- Constructed four new Photography blinds
- Refurbished and remodeled the cottage and the retreat
- Protected, restored, and expanded crane habitat on the Platte by overseeding 10+ acres of wetlands, collecting 50+ acres of seeds for future restorations
- Finally, volunteers and staff consumed over 10,000 pounds of food during last March.

As the staff reflects on all things accomplished by Audubon's Rowe Sanctuary in 2016, we are reminded of just how important our volunteers are. We COULD NOT do what we do without our volunteers.

Volunteers are our most important resource. From all of us at Audubon's Rowe Sanctuary, thank you to our volunteers for what they do. They make our lives so much more fun.



Photos by Rowe Staff

PLATTE RIVER SAFARI CAMP

At Rowe, we share the belief that when children spend quality time outside it can have a lasting, positive impact on their personal lives.

June 19-22 or June 26-29

Platte River Safari Camp (formerly SOAR) is a nature day camp where children can learn about the Platte River and other natural areas in and around Buffalo and Kearney Counties. Campers take part in a variety of hands-on activities that incorporate natural and physical sciences, language arts, history, agriculture, music, and art, all while having fun. Campers participate in activities not normally offered during the school year like getting wet and muddy – all for the sake of learning!

Platte River Safari Camp is for any student presently in grades 2 - 5. Registration opens March 1, 2017. Please contact Platte River Safari Coordinator Tess Bruner at 308-216-0636 or tbruner@audubon.org for more information.



Photo by Rowe Sanctuary



Photo by Rowe Sanctuary



Photo by Rowe Sanctuary

CONTACT US

Iain Nicolson Audubon Center at Rowe Sanctuary
44450 Elm Island Road
Gibbon, NE 68840-4019

If you would like to receive *The Prairie Sage* electronically, email is at rowesanctuary@audubon.org or call (308) 568-5282.

Looking for a Place to Host an Event?

Remember Iain Nicolson Audubon Center at Rowe Sanctuary when planning business (308) 468-5282 for information and rates.

PHONE: (308) 468-5282

EMAIL: rowesanctuary@audubon.org

WEBSITE: rowe.audubon.org

FACEBOOK: [audubonsrowesanctuary](https://www.facebook.com/audubonsrowesanctuary)

TWITTER: [rowesanctuary](https://twitter.com/rowesanctuary)

CRANE CAM: rowe.audubon.org/crane-cam

HABITAT



Photo by Rowe Staff

Audubon's Rowe Sanctuary is known around the world for hosting a spectacular natural event each spring; the annual migration of Sandhill Cranes. During this time more than 500,000 Sandhill Cranes, endangered Whooping Cranes, and millions of waterfowl and shorebirds converge on the Platte River in central Nebraska, and the Sanctuary literally offers people a front row seat.

For more than 40 years, Rowe Sanctuary has protected habitat along the Platte River for the benefit of migratory birds in the Central Flyway. While our mission is to conserve a globally important bird resource, the Iain Nicolson Audubon Center's unique outdoor, experienced-based education is the heart of what we do. Conservation and education are both at the forefront of an exciting new project to be completed during the next two years.

With funding and support from the Nebraska Environmental Trust and other partners, Rowe Sanctuary is improving habitat for cranes and other wildlife on the recent expansion at the core of the contiguous, protected complex. The project centers on restoring upland prairie and wet meadow habitat, increasing native plant



Photo by Rowe Staff

It is fitting that work to remove the above-ground powerlines began in a thick January fog. Common during spring migration, reduced visibility due to fog heightens the risk for bird collisions with powerlines.

diversity, and reducing habitat fragmentation and removing hazards to at-risk species. On-the-ground work will include reseeding former cropland, tree removal, and the development of grazing management infrastructure. One especially beneficial outcome of the project will be the removal of a nearly one mile above-ground power line bisecting the grasslands. The line represents a significant threat of bird collisions due to its proximity to one of the largest crane roosts in the world.



Photo by Rowe Staff

Seed Gathering

Perhaps the most exciting piece to the project is a new opportunity for outreach and education related to this and other work being completed at the Sanctuary. A new vehicle pull-out is being constructed where visitors can learn more about the species and habitats that Rowe Sanctuary protects, and take in views of one of the largest, intact wet meadows remaining in the Platte River valley and a significant daytime feeding and loafing location for migrating Sandhill Cranes.

This project represents early steps toward the realization of a new, long-term vision of a biologically rich and diverse Platte River, buoyed by the work and resources at Rowe Sanctuary, where people locally and globally can connect with nature.



Photo by Rowe Staff

Prescribed Fire

EPA GRANT PROJECT

Audubon's Rowe Sanctuary has begun to lay the groundwork for the creation of an educational Wetland at the new Kearney High School (KHS). Project Coordinator Cody Wagner, Project Leader Bill Taddicken, and Director of Conservation Andrew Pierson, together with KHS and Kearney Public Schools (KPS) representatives have begun identifying students, teachers, and community members who will assist with the creation of the outdoor classroom. Baseline studies of the area will be conducted this spring allowing students to observe the changes that occur after the wetland's construction.

Students will be critical to the success of the outdoor classroom as curriculum is being developed that will allow them to participate in wetland design and restoration. Rowe Sanctuary and local conservation partners will be leading the design process for this new wetland. After wetland construction KPS students will help plant native species, conduct monitoring projects as the area is restored, and will take on management under the guiding hand of Rowe Sanctuary and educators.



Photo by Rowe Staff

This area south of the new KHS will be transformed into an outdoor classroom

Our early indications are that the community of Kearney is enthusiastic about this project. We hope that the community building we are undertaking with this educational wetland will further tie together Audubon's Rowe Sanctuary and the Kearney area. The thousands of students who will learn and grow with this wetland over the years will strengthen the conservation ethic of central Nebraska into the future.



Photo by Rowe Staff



Photo by Rowe Staff



Photo by Rowe Staff

Blind Repair

CREATE YOUR LEGACY

What Will Your Legacy Be?

Rowe Sanctuary's conservation efforts reach new heights year after year. Consider investing in the future of our work on the Platte River. You can help make a better future for the cranes, other birds, and wildlife by including Audubon's Rowe Sanctuary in your estate plans.

Naming our programs in your estate plan can be as simple as adding this language:

I bequeath (dollar amount or % of estate) to the National Audubon Society, Inc., a not-for-profit organization, with its principal offices located at 225 Varick Street, 7th Floor, New York, NY 10014, for the permanent endowment of Iain Nicolson Audubon Center at Rowe Sanctuary. Tax ID # 13-1624102.

If you choose to include Rowe Sanctuary in your estate plan, please let us know so we can express our gratitude.

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!
- 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.
- 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.
- 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. Several simple, flexible, tax-advantaged options can benefit your heirs and Rowe Sanctuary at the same time.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

For more information on upcoming events call (308) 468-5282 or visit rowe.audubon.org and click Rowe Events.

Crane Viewing Tour Reservations

Reservations can be made on-line at reservations.rowesanctuary.org or by calling (308) 468-5282. More information available at Rowe.Audubon.org.

Crane Viewing Tours

MARCH 4 - APRIL 9

More information available at Rowe.Audubon.org.

Crane Behavior Basics

DAILY THROUGH APRIL 9, 9-10AM OR 3:30-4:30 PM

\$10 per person

Space is limited, tickets sold on a first come, first served basis at the center. Want to make your crane viewing experience more enjoyable? You will be introduced to Sandhill Crane behaviors easily observed in the fields and viewing blinds. This program is not suitable for children under 12 years of age.

Habitat Tours

FRIDAY AND SATURDAY, MARCH 4-APRIL 9, 10:30 AM 12:00 PM AND 1:30 PM - 3:00 PM, PROGRAM NOT OFFERED SATURDAY, MARCH 11

\$10 per person

Space is limited, tickets sold on a first come, first served basis at the center. Enjoy a hayrack ride around Audubon's Rowe Sanctuary with a knowledgeable guide to learn more about conservation efforts on the Platte River. The hayrack ride can be very cold so please dress appropriately.

47th Annual Audubon's Nebraska Crane Festival

MARCH 16 - MARCH 19, 2017

More information available at NebraskaCraneFestival.org.

GIFT SHOP

Spring in Nebraska heralds the arrival of the Sandhill Cranes! Do you know what a juvenile crane is called? How about an adult male? Why are their feathers sometimes brown and not grey? What is that red patch on their heads? Now is the time to learn all you can about these magnificent birds. Check out all of our books on cranes and other birds at our web-store (store.rowesanctuary.org) and be sure to order yours today.



Welcome to Rebekah (Beka) Yates!

We are excited to introduce Beka Yates as the Education Manager for Audubon's Rowe Sanctuary. From Belleville, IL, Beka received her Bachelor of Science in Biological Sciences: Sequence of Organismal Biology and Public Outreach from Illinois State University in 2012. After graduation she was employed in a variety of education focused positions at the Saint Louis Zoo, including Early Childhood Instructor, Education Assistant, and most recently as an Education Instructor. She brings with her experience developing inquiry based activities for all ages.

Her passion to conserve our world and educate the community makes her an ideal addition to the Rowe team. Please reach out to Beka at (308) 468-5282 or ryates@audubon.org to welcome her to the Audubon family.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS continued

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CHRONICLES

Iain Nicolson Audubon Center at 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 river, please
go to <http://rowe.audubon.org/crane-cam>.*

*The mission of Iain Nicolson Audubon Center at Rowe Sanctuary is
to conserve and restore the Platte River ecosystem, focusing on cranes, other wildlife, and their
habitats for the benefit of humanity and the earth's biological diversity.*



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
Andrew Pierson - Director of Conservation
Kent Skaggs - Operations Manager
Anne Winkel - Community Outreach Coordinator
Cody Wagner - Habitat & Outreach Program Assistant
Beka Yates - Education Director
Sharon Ingram - Nature Store Manager/Buyer
Autumn Taddicken - Project Manager

Audubon Nebraska

Marian Langan - Executive Director
Carey Collingham - Corporate and Foundation Coordinator
Cindy Houlden - Donor Relations Coordinator
Kevin Poague - Important Bird Areas Project Coordinator

Stewardship Advisory Board

Charles Bicak - Chair	Jacy Dunham
Ed Berglund - Vice Chair	Ben Hirschfeld
Leslie Abegglen	Carol Lindstrom
Rob Ahlschwede	Jennifer Martin
Susan Ahlschwede	Brian Moody
Kate Benzel	Margery Nicolson
Stan Dart	Greg Williams

Rowe Wish List

EDUCATION PROGRAMS

- (40) 4" Fine Mesh Aquatic Dip Nets - \$2.50 each
- (40) 5X 60mm Magnifier Pocket Folding Magnifying Glass Loupes - \$5 each
- (40) Private Eye Loupe-on-a-Lanyard - \$5 each
- (10) Telescoping Inspection Mirrors - \$9 each
- (6) Two-way Bug Viewers - \$10 each
- Electric Pencil Sharpener (good quality) - \$20
- (6) Binoculars for public use - \$150 each

HABITAT PROGRAMS

- SP1 Professional Backpack Sprayer, 4-Gallon - \$150
- Drone - \$2000
- (2) 40" Flat-screen TVs for display use - \$300 each
- 3-point Post Hole Digger - \$800
- (4) Trail Cams - \$200 each



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.