



# IAIN NICOLSON Audubon CENTER AT ROWE SANCTUARY

## *Crane River* **CHRONICLES**

WINTER 2015



## ROWE HAPPENINGS/NEWS



Dear Friends,

Hope is the essential element in creating a better future. I am not talking about the kind of hope where you sit on your hands and "hope" that all will get better. I am talking about the kind of hope you provide - the kind of hope where people say, "I can do something to make a better future."

Throughout the years many people have come to the Platte River with this kind of hope. When there were only 15 Whooping Cranes remaining, people hoped to keep this magnificent bird from going extinct. Today, we have more than 300 Whoopers in the flyway and there is still hope for total recovery of this bird as people continue to take action to help.

In the early 1970's, people had hope that they could protect and restore this river for the crane migration. Because of that hope, Audubon established the Lillian Annette Rowe Bird Sanctuary and today Audubon's Rowe Sanctuary has grown to 2,400 acres. That same hope created awareness of this river and the cranes which in turn inspired action to keep water in the river for wildlife for the past 42 years.

All of you are nurturing hope for the future of this river. Because of you the Platte River has a voice, to protect it far into the future. Your voices and actions today are inspiring people now and into the future, to care about the cranes, the Platte River and the future of our natural world.

I want to thank you for providing hope for the future of the cranes and the Platte River. You are what hope looks like to a bird. You are making a difference!

Sincerely,

Bill Taddicken

### Important Changes to Crane Tours

In response to visitor surveys over the past two years, we will be making some important changes to the crane tours in 2016. This will improve the experience for our visitors and help protect the cranes. These changes are a direct response to visitor requests and the need to protect the birds.

1. Tripods will no longer be allowed in the viewing blinds due to space issues and tripping hazards. Monopods will be allowed. This will provide a more comfortable and safer experience.
2. There will be a time during each tour where camera use will be allowed, and a point during each tour where all cameras and electronic devices must be turned off and stored. (No flash or continuous mode.) This will assist with the increasing difficulty in managing camera LCD screens, flashes, and noise.
3. Pricing will be changed to better manage the season. The blinds will be open from March 5 – April 9. During March 18 through April 2, the cost of the tours will be \$35.00. All remaining dates will be \$25.00.
4. New Photography-only Tour will be introduced. Each evening from March 18 – April 9 we will offer a blind for photographers that allows tripods and the use of continuous mode. (Schedule is due to better light conditions later in March.) This tour will cost \$60 and there will be limited space to allow for more room for the participants.

We appreciate your support of these new policies to help protect the cranes from disturbance.

## 2015 Sandhill Crane Migration



## ROWE HAPPENINGS CONTINUED

*"Someone's sitting in the shade today because  
someone planted a tree a long time ago."*

*Warren Buffett*

I view my service on the Rowe Sanctuary Stewardship Board as an opportunity to help "tend the garden." The Platte River Valley is a special, unique place - a garden of sorts. There are a multitude of interests on the river. Some take more than they give, others give back as they can. My board responsibility is to work to guide, guard, and keep the River - and to educate others to do the same - for future generations.



Stan Dart

## CALENDAR OF EVENTS

### Crane Season Volunteer Training

#### TRAINING #1 – "ALL ABOUT ROWE"

February 4, 2016 - 2:00- 3:30 pm

February 7, 2016 - 2:30- 4:00 pm

#### TRAINING #2 – "ALL ABOUT CRANES"

February 11, 2016 - 2:00-3:30 pm

February 14, 2016 - 2:30-4:00 pm

#### TRAINING #3 – "MORE THAN CRANES"

February 18, 2016 - 2:00-3:30 pm

February 21, 2016 - 2:30-4:00 pm

#### TRAINING #4 – BLIND TRAINING

March 5, 2016 - 3:00-6:00 pm

### Distant Volunteers

#### SUNDAY TRAINING (occurs every Sunday through out Crane Season)

2:00-3:00 pm Volunteer Meeting (ALL VOLUNTEERS)

3:00-4:00 pm New Volunteer Arrivals Orientation (Volunteers)

5:00 pm-dark Blind Trip

### Burn Training Workshop

#### TUESDAY, MARCH 1, 2016

Workshops provide guidance and instruction for completing safe and effective prescribed fires. During this training, learn why, when and how to plan and complete a safe and effective prescribed fire. Registration fee of \$10 includes meal and training materials. Visit [www.NebraskaPF.com](http://www.NebraskaPF.com) to register.

### Crane Tours Begin

#### SATURDAY, MARCH 5, 2016

### Rowe Sanctuary Crane Carnival

#### SATURDAY, MARCH 12, 2016 10:00 AM – 4:00 PM

at Rowe Sanctuary

### Crane Behavior Workshops

#### MARCH 11 AND 25, AND APRIL 1 AND 8, 3:30 PM

fee is \$10/person

### Habitat Tours

#### MARCH 5, 26, APRIL 2 AND 9, 1:00 PM

### Audubon's Nebraska Crane Festival

#### MARCH 17-20, 2015

Holiday Inn, Kearney NE





## LETTER FROM STATE DIRECTOR *Marian Langan*



Many of you are aware of the large tourism industry in the northeast states called "leaf peeping," built around the fall tree leaves turning color. A few years ago we began talking about "prairie peeping" season. The amazing turn of color in the fall prairies deserves as much attention as the leaves! As autumn

brings cooler temperatures, the vibrant greens of summer turn into glowing oranges and even reds depending on the time of day. When the rays of a stunning fall sunset hit the prairie grasses just right, they glow – it truly makes your heart leap to see it.

We wish we could capture those moments for all of you that are making them possible. I can say that my heart leaps equally when I think about everything that has been made possible by the big clan of people here at Audubon. Your support by sharing your time, talent, and treasure sets the conditions to make all kinds of hearts leap – a visitor's seeing a fall sunset on a prairie, a child's holding their first frog, and I hope yours, when you reflect on the difference you have made for the birds and wildlife of Nebraska.

Sincerely,

*Marian Langan*



To prevent window collisions by birds, window coverings were recently installed on the Iain Nicolson Audubon Center. The material was purchased from CollidEscape, who specializes in this product.

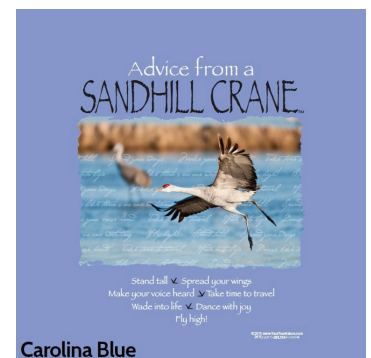


### Gift Shop

Looking for that perfect gift for Christmas? Then you'll want to check out the new arrivals at the Nature Store at Rowe Sanctuary. New arrivals include Sandhill Crane house and garden flags, cranes in the moonlight pins from Judie Gumm, handmade fired clay pendant necklaces with cranes, and, of course, books galore with something for all ages.



Have you ever wondered what advice a Sandhill Crane would give you if they could talk? Well you no longer need to wonder!! Check out the new arrival of long sleeve and short sleeve t-shirts with advice from a Sandhill Crane at the gift shop. And while you're at it, pick up a



matching mug. Not looking for advice but really crazy about cranes? Then you'll want our new "Certified Craniac" t-shirt. What better way is there to share your love of cranes and support Audubon's Rowe Sanctuary at the same time.

# HABITAT

Birds depend on a lot of different habitats, and the threats that confront them are equally varied. Many of America's most beloved and biologically rich landscapes are in danger. Rowe Sanctuary protects critical habitat within an iconic and globally important bird area. It's an exciting time in our conservation legacy's history. A new 5-year Habitat Restoration and Management Plan and 50-year Master Site Plan provide strategic direction for accomplishing our mission. We are integrating a new, core habitat, purchased a year ago, and continuing to expand and improve the land protected by Audubon. Work happening now and during the next couple years will reconnect the Platte River with native wet meadows on either bank at an unmatched scale, benefitting both Sandhill Cranes, Whooping Cranes and other at-risk species that depend on the unique, braided channel as well as a rapidly declining suite of grassland nesting birds that rely on large tracts of native prairie. With just two years of data from intensive grassland breeding bird surveys, we have already seen that management activities such as prescribed burning and removing invasive trees in and from our grasslands increases both the number of birds utilizing those areas and the percentage of those birds that are imperiled target species.

As for the river, the results of enormous management efforts at Rowe Sanctuary and by partners throughout the critical reach of the Central Platte River will be on full display again next spring when 600,000 Sandhill Cranes and millions of other migrating water birds descend on the valley. This year, thanks to management efforts and record late-spring flows, the river is in ideal condition for the annual stopover whether you're a crane or a crane watcher.



*A portion of our visitors who reserve a stay in one of our coveted, over-night photography blinds, pictured above, this coming crane season will experience new and improved blind design. With suggestions from annual user surveys and consultation with some of our patron photographers, volunteers are constructing 1-2 new blinds for use this spring. The new design provides more space, improved window design, and better protection from the elements.*

## ROWE SANCTUARY HABITAT TOURS

This fall Rowe Sanctuary staff guided four habitat tours exploring seldom seen areas of the sanctuary. Some of the highlights included observing prairie flowers, beaver dams, and an eagle nest.





## EDUCATION/OUTREACH



Rowe Sanctuary Nature Nerds is an afterschool program designed to engage students in science and writing through at-school programming and outdoor experiences at Rowe Sanctuary. The at-school programs prepare the students for their trips to Rowe Sanctuary. At Rowe Sanctuary, the students explore and learn first-hand about the

Platte River and the associated wetlands and wildlife. The multiple visits both to the schools and to Rowe Sanctuary allow us to work with the students so they become comfortable exploring outdoors first in their neighborhoods and then into the unfamiliar world of the Platte River ecosystem. We accomplish this by introducing them to the outdoors through fun observation skills and inquiry-based, exploratory activities. This type of informal education allows for different learning styles and multiple intelligences to be on equal footing.

### Owl Prowl

The evening began with over 80 participants learning about three injured owls courtesy of our friends from Fontenelle Raptor Recovery. The group was then divided into small groups and headed out into the crisp evening to see if they could call for owls. The night ended with a marshmallow roast.



*Michelle Arehart, Kearney Community Learning Center (KCLC) Director wrote:*

"The students in our program are school age and are from poverty-stricken families. These children don't have the means or opportunity to play and explore outdoors without the assistance of Rowe Sanctuary. Audubon staff are working with KCLC students to develop a broad understanding of the river ecosystem and to help nurture the next generation of leaders in conservation."

### Moon Party

Over 50 people attended the Lunar Eclipse Party in late September. Participants were treated to a clear sky to watch the total eclipse, lunar folklore, poetry, and refreshments inspired by the moon.



## RNR (ROWE NATURE RETREAT)



Rowe Sanctuary partnered with Nebraska Master Naturalists on this relaxed, fun day of learning fundamental naturalist skills. Eleven adults tried their hands at insect collection and identification, birdwatching, and even seining for fish.

# CREATE YOUR LEGACY

## A Triple Play of Benefits

Do you have stocks that have increased in value? Donating appreciated securities enables you to support Iain Nicolson Audubon Center at Rowe Sanctuary, conserve cash for other uses, and avoid potential 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](mailto:rmosa@audubon.org). And, don't forget to call us at (308) 468-5282 to let us know your gift is on the way!



*Melissa Filipi*

You can also use appreciated stocks to fund a larger gift that will pay you an income for life. Please call Melissa Filipi at (402-797-2301) or Shari Kolding at (512) 236-9076 for more details.

One cup of coffee can  
make a **HUGE** difference.



## Community Service Fund

Audubon Nebraska is a proud member agency of Community Services Fund. Donations may also be designated for Iain Nicolson Audubon Center at Rowe Sanctuary or Spring Creek Prairie Audubon Center by contacting [nebraska@audubon.org](mailto:nebraska@audubon.org), (402) 797-2301.

Learn more about CSF at [www.CommunityServicesFund.org](http://www.CommunityServicesFund.org).

## Just in Time for the Holidays! New Gift Ideas!

What to give someone who has everything? Are you looking for a new way to honor a special person or event in your life? Or to offer a tribute to someone who has been important to you? Our new Prairie Patch may be the perfect solution. Support Rowe Sanctuary with your \$100 donation and receive an exclusive set of two handmade, biodegradable sheets embedded with native Nebraska prairie seeds. Use these sheets to share your thoughts with others, to plant at Iain Nicolson Audubon Center at Rowe Sanctuary, or to create your own native garden.

Let your creativity run free with these custom papers, uniquely designed for you.

Help us seed the prairie, help us spread the word about conservation, and become an important part of our work – purchase your Prairie Patch today!

These creative packages are available all year. Stop in today to purchase your Prairie Patches, or order online at [rowe.audubon.org](http://rowe.audubon.org) (shipping charges may apply).

# 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 a difference and 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 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 the back page for additional gift ideas.
- Become a monthly donor. You can provide regular, ongoing support for our work by visiting our website, [rowe.audubon.org](http://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.



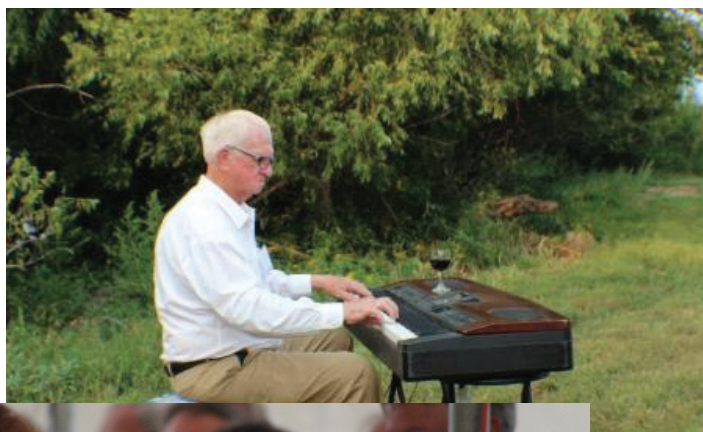
# A RIVER RUNS THROUGH IT



On Saturday August 29, 100 supporters raised over \$20,000 to support the conservation efforts of Iain Nicolson Audubon Center at Rowe Sanctuary. All proceeds raised at "A River Runs Through It" support the efforts of Audubon's Rowe

Sanctuary to conserve this very important habitat and to conduct programs, for all ages, to experience the joys of nature.

The Celebration began with an Open House at Iain Nicolson Audubon Center with music provided by Jim Cudaback. Guests enjoyed a gourmet dinner prepared by Chef Michael Park with Park Place Catering. A live auction completed the amazing evening by the river.



Event sponsors included: Bill's Liquor, Steve and Jennifer Homan, Ben and Sara Homan, Ben and Christie Hirschfeld, Jenni and Walter Martin, Nebraska Fire Sprinkler Corporation, Michael and Ann Marie Park, and Dr. John and Reven Wright

Our deepest thanks to committee members: Leslie Abegglen, Jacy Dunham, Jennifer Homan, Jenni Martin, Molly Trettel, Carol Wahl, and Nancy Williams



# Crane River 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](http://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  
Andrew Pierson – Director of Conservation  
Kent Skaggs – Operations Manager  
Anne Winkel – Outreach Coordinator  
Sharon Ingram – Nature Store 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
Kate Benzel	Brian Moody
Charles Bicak	Margery Nicolson
Becky Evers	Carol Wahl
Ben Hirschfeld	Greg Williams
Jennifer Homan	
Roger Jones	

## Rowe Wish List

4x4 Utility Tractor - \$25,000 remaining

iPad - for breeding bird surveys

InDesign Annual Subscription - \$240

Snow blade for Honda ATV - \$500

One year of Crane Cam streaming - \$3,000

\$5 Million Endowment

## Recent Donation

Thank You to Quentin Skinner  
for the generous donation of the  
small Sony camcorder.



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.