



IAIN NICOLSON Audubon CENTER AT ROWE SANCTUARY

Crane River **CHRONICLES**

FALL 2017



CONSERVATION

“Where are the cranes?”

It's a common question this time of year at the Iain Nicolson Audubon Center. Most who ask have been to Rowe Sanctuary in the spring or have heard about the spectacle of migrating Sandhill Cranes. It's reasonable to expect, then, that those cranes will be back in the fall... and some will.

As you are reading this, 600,000 Sandhill Cranes and 300 Whooping Cranes, new offspring in tow, are on their way back to warmer wintering grounds in Texas, New Mexico, and Mexico. In spring, individual birds “stage” on the Platte River for up to 4 weeks to rest and build energy reserves for the remainder of their journey. This staging results in the accumulation of huge numbers of birds in March. However, in fall, necessary staging takes place north of Nebraska in southern Canada, the Dakotas, and northwestern Minnesota. Birds that nested at the southern edge of their breeding range may take a more direct route south, bypassing the central Platte River altogether.

The earliest we typically see (or hear) cranes is late September – this year it was the 22nd – with the peak of migration occurring from late October through early November and ending sometime in December. During this time the cranes rarely stay for an extended period, usually just overnight. This year they'll notice some big changes to the landscape at Rowe Sanctuary.

This summer we've continued work to improve the core of the Sanctuary for cranes and other wildlife. Building on work completed last year, which included improving livestock grazing infrastructure and removing nearly one mile of overhead power lines, will be the removal of trees from two miles of river's edge. This will connect some of the largest tracts of wet meadow spanning the central Platte River and improve habitat functionality. This fall and winter we'll seed 75 acres of farm ground back to native grassland completing a two-year project with funding from the Nebraska Environmental Trust, US Fish and Wildlife Service, and Nebraska Game and Parks Commission.

On the river, islands were disked in September during low water times to clear vegetation, and staff will work through the winter to mow back willows and other small trees encroaching on the river's edge opening up the wide, meandering channel critical for migrating cranes. All of this work will mean more habitat and less stress for Sandhill Cranes and Whooping Cranes next spring.

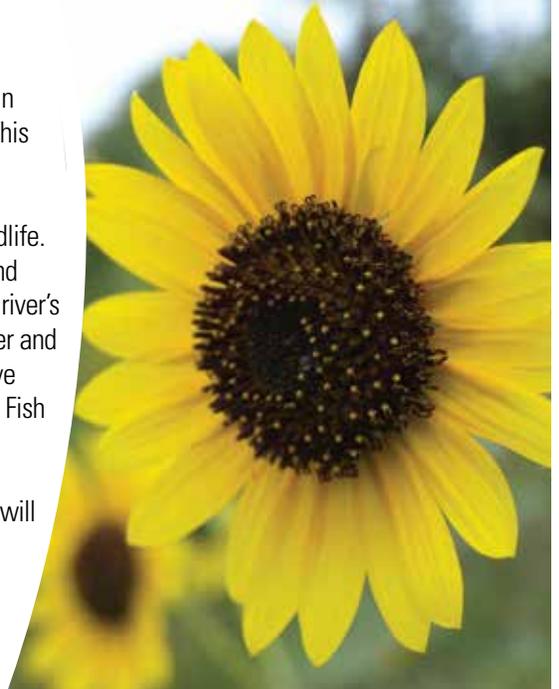
As cranes make their way back to the Platte River this fall some of them will stop, for a night, and enjoy these improvements to the river. Most will voice their approval from the clouds on their way by. I can't help but wonder if they ask each other, “Where are the people?” We'll all see each other in a few short months.

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LETTER FROM THE DIRECTOR



Greetings,
The seasons are changing as fall begins. The sounds of cranes, geese, and other migratory birds can be heard as they pass along to their wintering grounds in the south. This southern migration marks the passing of another successful year of conservation on the Platte River. As you read this newsletter, please consider a gift today. It is your contributions and volunteer work that provide a bright future for the Platte River and the Sandhill Cranes.

Through your support Audubon has worked hard to protect, restore, and expand the habitat for cranes, Least Terns, Piping Plovers, and other birds and wildlife. Conservation of the Platte River ecosystem is foremost to our mission. Our work extends throughout the basin from Colorado and Wyoming all the way to Rowe Sanctuary and beyond as we provide leadership for the Platte River Recovery Implementation Program to sustainably manage the Platte River for the benefit of wildlife and people.

You are also helping to educate the next generation of conservation leaders through programs and camps designed to engage children and families with nature. Nothing can replace the experiences children receive at Rowe. These programs are building a conservation ethic in our young people and families that will protect our natural areas into the future.

Rowe Sanctuary is also connecting with local communities on challenging issues like water conservation, changing climate, and loss of habitat. The "Wetlands for Schools" project highlighted in this newsletter is a great example of how Audubon connects people to nature at home as well as at the Sanctuary.

Fall always brings feelings of accomplishment and success as plants fruit and produce seed for the future. You give hope to the future with your support of our natural world. In the season of thanksgiving, please consider making a gift to support conservation at Rowe Sanctuary. Thank you for all you make possible.

Bill Jaddicken

Director, Rowe Sanctuary

A RIVER RUNS THROUGH IT 2017



Photos by Rowe Staff

On Saturday September 30 supporters of Audubon's Rowe Sanctuary 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.

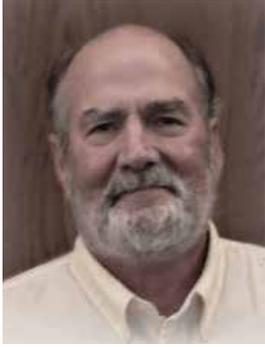
The celebration began with a social hour which featured to unveiling of the winning photographs from the 2017 Cranes of Rowe Sanctuary photo contest. Then guests enjoyed a gourmet dinner prepared by Chef Chris "Rico" Huryta of Kearney's own

Alley Rose Restaurant. A live auction completed the amazing evening by the river.

Event sponsors included: Alley Rose Restaurant; Ashley Furniture Home Store; Bill's Liquor; Jon and Kathy Bokenkamp; Ben and Christie Hirschfeld; Jennifer and Steve Homan; Jacobsen, Orr, Lindstrom and Holbrook PC, LLO; Kearney Floral; and Ray Schields.

Our deepest thanks to committee members: Leslie Abegglen, Kate Benzel, Ed Berglund, Jacy Dunham, Carol Lindstrom, Jenni Martin, and Carol Wahl.

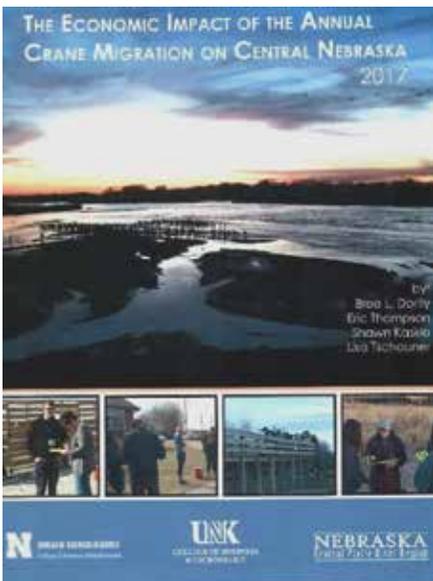
STEWARDSHIP BOARD



Rowe Sanctuary is a unique place in a unique setting with a unique – and important – mission. As a geographer by training and an educator by trade, I try to understand the relationships between people and landscapes with all their diversity. Rowe is a landscape with many faces – Sandhill Cranes (yes, of course) but so much more; a unique river, riparian biomes, diverse prairie grasses, plants and flowers, and birds, birds, birds. But Rowe Sanctuary would not be what it is or strive to reach its vast potential unless we take care of it. It is a landscape filled with the lessons that educate us on the amazing beauty and complexity of this small, unique swath of Earth. This is why I choose to be part of the Stewardship Board.

Stan Dart
Stewardship Board Vice Chair

ECONOMIC IMPACT STUDY



The Sandhill Crane migration is an important part of the emerging opportunity for ecotourism in Nebraska. Each spring more than 600,000 Sandhill Cranes stop along Nebraska's Platte River valley because of conservation work by organizations like Rowe Sanctuary who are devoted to the preservation of this river for wildlife and people. The cranes attract tourists to the area who spend money in hotels, restaurants, and other businesses, and this new spending supports output, employment, and wages in the regional economy.

A recent survey estimated 46,500 crane visitors visited central Nebraska during the 2017 migration. Of these, about 93% or approximately 43,300 are non-central Nebraska crane visitors. Audubon's Rowe Sanctuary and the Crane Trust Nature & Visitor Center had a total economic impact of \$3.72 million and 46 full-time equivalent jobs on the central Nebraska economy. Non-central Nebraska crane visitors had a total economic impact of \$10.58 million and 136 jobs. Together, the overall economic impact of the annual crane migration on central Nebraska in 2017 was \$14.30 million, supporting 182 year-round equivalent jobs. Moreover, given that economic activity is taxed by local government, the study estimates this economic impact generates \$379,000 per year in local property, sales, and lodging tax revenue.

Thank you for being such an important part of the central Nebraska economy.

CONTACT US

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Gibbon, NE 68840-4019

If you would like to receive *Crane River Chronicles* electronically, email 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 meetings, retreats, or parties. (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

EPA WETLAND



Construction Begins on Kearney Outdoor Learning Area

Construction has begun on the Kearney Outdoor Learning Area educational wetland south of Kearney High School. This project, a partnership between Audubon's Rowe Sanctuary and Kearney Public Schools, aims to give the community of Kearney and its students a place to learn about native central Nebraska ecosystems.

The Environmental Protection Agency and the Nebraska Environmental Trust provided funding for the project, which focuses on providing cutting edge environmental education and restoring the 16 acres of the project area. Cook Construction will thin trees along Turkey Creek at the site and create new wetlands utilizing water from the school's heating and cooling systems. These new wetlands will filter and clean this water before it goes into Turkey

Creek and will serve as an educational space for students to learn about natural systems.

Bill Taddicken, Center Director at Audubon's Rowe Sanctuary, is excited about the Kearney Outdoor Learning Area's potential. "This will be the first project of this type and scale to engage students from the ground up and give them the tools and ownership to create their own accomplishments in conservation." Construction of the wetlands is the first phase of this project. It will be followed by the building of an outdoor classroom and the seeding of the entire project area with a high diversity of native plant species.



Photos by Rowe Staff

VOLUNTEERS

Make a difference at Audubon's Rowe Sanctuary

Volunteers are essential to the operation of Iain Nicolson Audubon Center at Rowe Sanctuary and serve as a vital link into our local central Nebraska communities. Volunteers maintain and preserve our 2,400 acres of critical Sandhill Crane habitat, complete projects in the office, and inspire a conservation ethic through our education programs. As a volunteer, you will help to ensure that one of North America's last great migrations, and most endangered habitats, will continue to stir the hearts of people around the globe.

How can you make a difference at Rowe Sanctuary?

Like to work with budding conservationists? Rowe's education programs are always looking for enthusiastic people to inspire the next generation of environmental stewards. Just bring your passion for nature to create in all generations a sense of stewardship and care for our natural environment.

Want to get your hands dirty? Rowe's grasslands and river woodlands require many different types of management to make them as healthy as possible. If you can work a shovel or a pair of lopping shears, we can give you the opportunity to make an immediate and visible impact to the Sanctuary and its inhabitants.

Prefer not be outside? Rowe can always use your assistance with a variety of office tasks, center staffing, and outreach event planning.



Ready to join us?

Give us a call

at 308-468-5282 to get started. Ask for Cody or Anne to begin your experience as one of Rowe's amazing volunteers.

We look forward to getting to know you and using your skills and talents to continue Rowe Sanctuary's mission: 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.

EDUCATION



Rowe Sanctuary had some successful summer camps with one week of Flying Higher camp and two weeks of Platte River Safari camp. Flying Higher had eleven campers ages sixth through eighth grades, and Safari camp hosted 135 second to fifth graders and over 20 adults who helped with the camps. Camps ran throughout the day on Monday and Tuesday, with an overnight on Wednesday and a half day on Thursday.

This year's Flying Higher camp was focused on community science

projects. Campers gathered data on different animals and then submitted data online to aid scientific research. Projects included building a nest platform for robins, searching for butterflies and other pollinators, listening for frog calls, and testing water quality.

This year for Safari, campers spent mornings out on field sites dip netting for critters found in water, learning how to use GPS equipment, digging through old logs looking for insects, searching for signs of mammal activity, and learning about hydroelectric power. Afternoons were busy learning about frogs and spiders, using microscopes to learn about aquatic invertebrates, and creating postcards. As always, kids got wet playing in the river, seining for fish, digging channels in a sand bar, and completing a wet obstacle course.

Families of campers came out Wednesday evening and enjoyed a couple of songs sung by the campers. The campers then became leaders for their family members and showed them places in the sanctuary they had visited during camp as well as some aquatic critters they had caught.

Safari camp would not have been possible without our great sponsors. Thank you to Central Platte NRD, Cornerstone Bank, Gary Thompson Agency, Gibbon Exchange Bank, Headwaters Corporation, Minden Exchange Bank, Minden Public Schools, Nebraska Central Telephone Company, Shelton Dental Clinic, Joan Smith, Kimberly Snavelly, State Farm of Minden, Tri-Basin NRD, and Kearney Walmart for your generous donations in support of Platte River Safari camp!



Photos by Rowe Staff



Rowe Adventures

The 2017 Rowe Adventures programs have been a success, with many families returning for multiple programs. The most recent adventure allowed budding scientists to focus on learning about wetland habitats. Activities included using dip nets to catch and compare what insects/animals live in a wetland vs. the river, using magnifiers to view their discoveries up close, and drawing a postcard of their scientific observations. Families got a chance to have fun getting wet and muddy while exploring and connecting with nature. Many families also signed up for a Rowe Adventures pass. Participating in five Rowe Adventures programs before January 2018, qualifies them to receive a free crane viewing trip for four people on the 2018 Crane Season Family Night.

CREATE YOUR LEGACY

Legacy Gifts

One of the best ways to sustain the Platte River is to make a legacy gift to the National Audubon Society that specifies your support for the Iain Nicolson Audubon Center at Rowe Sanctuary. Please consider this simple way to deepen your commitment to the Platte River and the birds who depend upon this amazing resource. It is easy to change your legacy gift if your circumstances change. The following information and wording will insure that your intentions now will help the Platte River in the future.

Types of Bequests

There are several ways to write your future legacy:

- Wills/Living Trusts. You can bequest a portion of your estate through a will or revocable trust.
- Retirement Plans. You can designate all or portions of these funds as a gift.
- Life Insurance Policies. Simply name Iain Nicolson Audubon Center at Rowe Sanctuary as a beneficiary to create a conservation legacy beyond the original insurance purpose.
- Certificates of Deposit. Your financial institution can assist you in the easy process of naming Iain Nicolson Audubon Center at Rowe Sanctuary as a beneficiary for any certificate of deposit, bank or brokerage account.

Suggested Bequest Language

"I/We bequeath _____% of my residuary estate (or a specific sum of \$_____) to the National Audubon Society, Inc., a not-for-profit environmental conservation organization with its headquarters at 225 Varick St., 7th Fl, New York, NY 10014 for the permanent endowment of Iain Nicolson Audubon Center at Rowe Sanctuary (also known as "Rowe Sanctuary"). Federal Tax ID #13-1624102"

Grinnell Legacy Society

Those who make bequests to Iain Nicolson Audubon Center at Rowe Sanctuary join thousands of others in the Grinnell Society. The Society is made up of individuals who have committed to conserving birds and the places birds and people need far into the future.

To obtain additional information about legacy gifts, please contact Shari Kolding at skolding@audubon.org or (512) 236-9076. If you have already included Rowe Sanctuary in your will, please let us know that as well, so that we can welcome you into the Grinnell Legacy Society.

GIFT SHOP

It may be only October, but Christmas will be here before you know it! This year why not do something different. Check out our new 2018 calendar featuring award-winning photographs from this past crane season. Order several and share them with friends and family. Then send beautiful cards that feature Sandhill Cranes – what better way to show your love of cranes! You can also decorate your home and tree with Sandhill Crane ornaments. Visit our web store - store.rowsanctuary.org to do your shopping from the comfort of your home.



CALENDAR OF EVENTS



ROWE ADVENTURES

No registration required. Rowe Adventure Programs are free to attend, free will donations are encouraged.

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 28, 2017 - Owl Prowl

Come over to the dark side of Audubon's Rowe Sanctuary and meet the amazing critters that make their living at night. This Owl Prowl offers an exciting multi-generational opportunity to learn more about the fascinating lives of owls and other animals that thrive at night. A nighttime hike to explore these animals will also occur, so be sure to dress for the weather.

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 18, 2017 - Falling into Winter

The leaves on the trees are not the only things changing. Nature has many ways to survive the upcoming cold winter months. Come learn about different strategies animals and plants use to survive the cold and explore the trails for these changes. Be sure to dress according to the weather.

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 16, 2017 - Snug as a Bug

Many types of animals spend the winter in dead leaves and logs. By using scientist tools and techniques, explore these small habitats to discover a variety of these spineless critters. Make sure to dress for the weather, as a short hike will occur.

SATURDAY, JANUARY 13, 2018 - Winter Walkabout

Come explore our trails along the Platte River to find, even in the cold months of winter, animals and insects find ways to adapt.

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 10, 2018 - Nature Valentines

Come celebrate Valentine's Day and make edible "valentines for nature" to hang outside, as well as more conventional nature-inspired valentines for your family and friends. A short nature walk will also occur, so make sure to dress in layers.

CRANE SEASON 2018

JANUARY 2, 2018 – Reservation System Opens

General Crane Tours - March 2 - April 8

Rowe Sanctuary's viewing blinds are strategically placed along the Platte River to provide excellent views of the Sandhill Cranes while they are on their river roost. This tour lasts approximately two hours and is led by trained guides. Walking distances to the viewing blinds range from 1/4 to 1/2 mile over relatively level terrain, with a portion of the walk occurring during very low light conditions (well before sunrise & well after sunset). Our viewing blinds offer shelter from wind, rain, and snow, but are not heated and will be as cold as or colder than it is outside.

Overnight Photography Blinds - March 16 - April 7

For avid photographers or nature enthusiasts, Rowe Sanctuary has overnight photography blinds set up near major crane roost sites on the river.

Photographers Crane Tour - March 16 - April 8

This tour is designed for photographers and allows the use of tripods and continuous shooting mode which are not allowed on the General Crane Tours. Participants must be able to carry their own gear up to 700 yards.

Indoor Crane Viewing Experience (evenings only) - March 2 - April 8

Watch Sandhill Cranes return to their river roost from the comfort of the Iain Nicolson Audubon Center. This experience is most appropriate for those who wish to avoid cold weather or cannot walk to our viewing blinds. Our visitor center is wheelchair accessible.

AUDUBON'S NEBRASKA CRANE FESTIVAL

MARCH 22-25, 2018

Audubon's Nebraska Crane Festival brings together hundreds of crane lovers from around the country to Kearney, Nebraska, to interact with a wide range of environmental speakers, take part in incredible birding trips, and best of all, experience the world's largest gathering of Sandhill Cranes! Visit NebraskaCraneFestival.org for on-line registration and updates on exciting concurrent sessions, field trips, and more. To receive periodic e-mail updates on festival news and activities, please write nebraska@audubon.org. If you can't make the festival but still want to see the Sandhill Cranes, call Audubon's Rowe Sanctuary, (308) 468-5282, to learn about more crane viewing options.

Crane River
CHRONICLES

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

NON-PROFIT
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PERMIT NO. 22
GIBBON, NE 68840

CONNECTING PEOPLE WITH NATURE

*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
Sonceyrae Kondrotis - Office 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

Bill Taddicken - Interim Director
Cindy Houlden - Donor Relations Coordinator
Kevin Poague - Important Bird Areas Project Coordinator

Stewardship Advisory Board

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Stan Dart - Vice Chair	Jennifer Martin
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Kate Benzel	Heidi Nerverve
Jacy Dunham	Jonathan Nikkila
Dudley Frikopp	Greg Williams
Ben Hirschfeld	

THANK YOU TO:

*Andrew and Johnna Pierson
for the Backpack Sprayer*

Rowe Wish List

EDUCATION PROGRAMS

- (40) 5X 60mm Magnifying Glass Loupes - \$5 each
- (40) Private Eye Loupe-on-a-Lanyard - \$5 each
- (10) Telescoping Inspection Mirrors - \$9 each
- (2) 40" Flat-screen TVs for display use - \$300 each
- 12 Student Insect Nets - \$12.75 each

HABITAT PROGRAMS

- 3-point Post Hole Digger - \$800
- (3) 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.