

Sandhill Crane



Migrating from
Florida to
Necedah Wildlife Refuge,
Wisconsin



Sandhill Crane

Status: Increasing populations travel long distances, using routes learned from their parents.

Distribution: Sandhill Cranes live in wet meadows and grasslands, and they feed in grain fields and pastures.

Field Marks: North American Sandhill Cranes are big birds, with long legs and necks, long pointed beaks, and wingspans which can be over six feet. Adults are gray with red crowns. Juveniles are gray, washed with brown.

Voice: Sandhill Cranes issue a variety of vocalizations, usually loudly. Most common are loud rattles and rolling trumpet-like calls covering multiple pitches at once.

Behavioral Clues: The courtship rituals of cranes are elaborate: paired birds spread their wings and leap repeatedly into the air while calling. Pairs return to the same nesting territories year after year and sometimes

Nest: Nests are built in emergent vegetation in shallow water or close to water. Both parents build the nest, a mound of plant material pulled up from around the site and anchored to surrounding vegetation. Both parents incubate the two eggs.

