

Notes

LENGTH OF STAY RECORD FOR A WHOOPING CRANE IN NEBRASKA — The Platte River is an important migration stopover area for whooping cranes (*Grus americana*) in Nebraska (U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, 1981, The Platte River Ecology Study, Northern Prairie Wildlife Research Center, Jamestown, ND). The Whooping Crane Recovery Plan (U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, 1986, Washington, DC) lists 106 confirmed whooping crane observations in Nebraska during 1942 through April 1986. Among the confirmed sightings, the record for the longest stay is a single bird which roosted in a shallow wetland near Bertrand, Phelps County, for 30 days during 20 May to 18 June 1950.

The bulk of spring migration among whooping cranes in Nebraska occurs during 29 March to 9 May. A review of the list of confirmed sightings reveals that most whooping cranes occurring on and near the Platte River are found in Buffalo and Kearney counties (USFWS, 1986, loc. cit.). Most spring migrant whooping cranes spend 1-7 days in Nebraska.

On 17 March 1987, an individually color-marked immature whooping crane, which had migrated from Saskatchewan with sandhill cranes (*Grus canadensis*) the previous fall and wintered with that species in western Oklahoma, was observed near Lowell, Kearney County, NE. Subsequent observations revealed that this individual remained in the same area near Lowell until it was last observed on 19 April 1987, a total of at least 34 days.

The whooping crane spent much of the diurnal period foraging with sandhill cranes within 3 km of the Platte River. Various reaches of the Platte River within the National Audubon Society's Rowe Sanctuary were used most frequently as night roosts. Agonistic interactions suggested that the whooping crane may have been dominant over sandhill cranes.

After departing Nebraska, this whooping crane was not reported again until Canadian Wildlife Service biologists located it in late May 1987 near where it hatched the year previous in Wood Buffalo National Park in the Northwest Territories. Returning to the natal area after initial nomadism has been reported previously among whooping cranes in the Aransas-Wood Buffalo flock, and in the experimental flock at Grays Lake National Wildlife Refuge, Idaho (R. C. Drewein, pers. commun.).

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