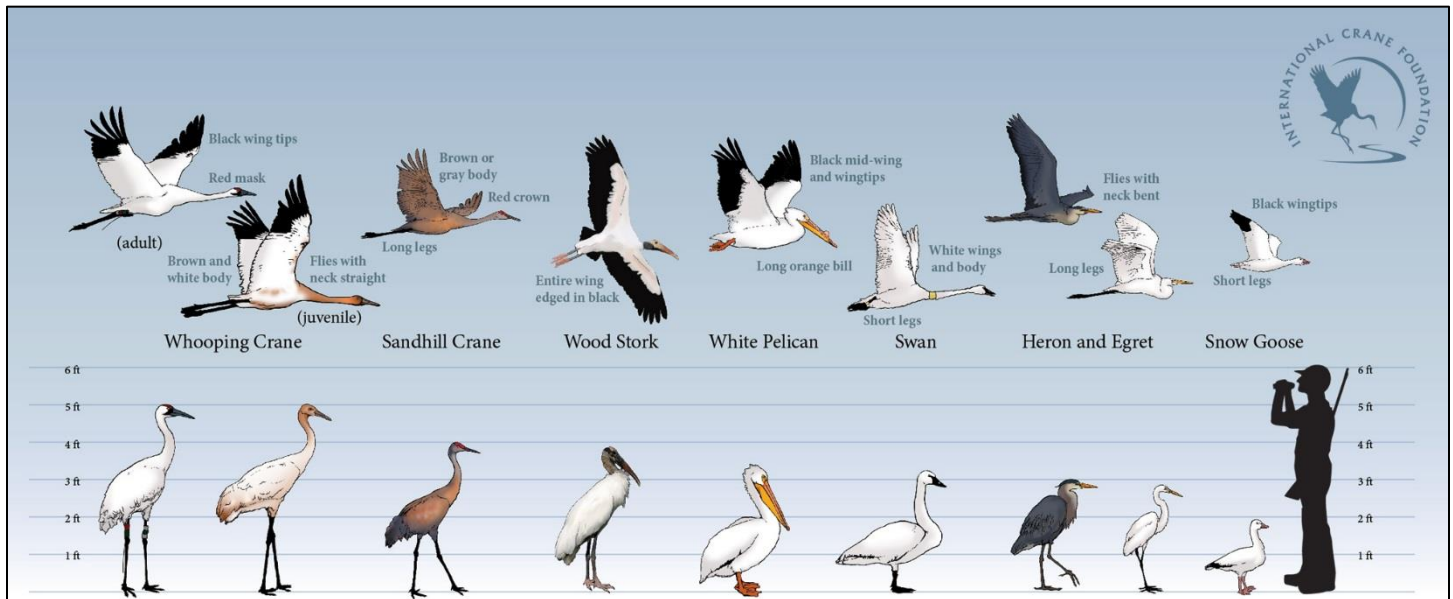


## Fall Sandhill Crane Survey

**1. Review identification characteristics of Sandhill cranes and become confident in distinguishing cranes from great blue herons and similar species, especially the whooping crane. See below for comparisons.**

**Note:** If you see leg bands on sandhill or whooping cranes during your observations, write down the band color and alpha-numeric marking combinations separately for each leg. Report this information directly to [ReportBand.gov](http://ReportBand.gov).



*(Large Waterbird I.D. Guide, Courtesy of the International Crane Foundation)*

**2. Plan to conduct your survey between October 30 - November 5. Choose either morning or evening to count cranes at their roost or while they are foraging in fields.** Cranes generally leave their roosts approximately 30 minutes after sunrise and return 30 minutes before sunset, therefore, you should plan to arrive shortly before these times. Cranes can often be found feeding in adjacent agriculture fields just after leaving the roost or prior returning to the roost. Sunrise/sunset tables for your specific location can be found on the internet. **Please write down all requested information on the data form during your survey and transfer that information into the data portal on this website.**

**3. New to the survey or looking for a new survey location?** Scout locations for staging sandhill cranes prior to the survey window indicated above. If you are looking for new location, you can refer to the survey map on the website to identify areas that were previously observed and expand a search outside these locations in wetland rich areas. You can also check birdwatcher forums, eBird, or inquire with farmers about cranes that may be present in your area. **Secure permission from landowners** if private property must be crossed during your survey.

**4. Use good bird watching etiquette.** Cranes can often be seen at a considerable distance and counts should be conducted with minimal disturbance to birds. Cranes should be monitored with binoculars or spotting scopes. Do not approach birds.

**5. Please submit ALL observations. Remember, “zero birds” is still important information!!** If the survey location you selected has zero birds, we ask that you still provide all the pertinent survey information and simply indicate '0' for number of cranes observed. This information allows scientists to determine the annual distribution of sandhill cranes and provides insight about the level of effort of each annual Fall survey.

**6. If you have any questions, please contact Rachael Pierce ([Rachael.Pierce@fws.gov](mailto:Rachael.Pierce@fws.gov)). Thank you!**