



Nature's Giant Aviators Navigate Indiana's Flyways

Species Profile: Sandhill Crane (*Grus canadensis*)

By Travis Stoelting, former IWF wildlife biologist



Sandhill Cranes pass through Indiana during their spring migration in February and March, stopping at wetlands like Goose Pond and Jasper-Pulaski State Fish & Wildlife Area.

The changing of seasons is a transition we often associate with the weather, certain holidays, or even because our calendars say so. Something you can always rely on are the cues from nature. Every year, as Indiana begins to thaw from a dreary winter, we look to the skies and hear the promise of spring coming from the familiar call of northbound Sandhill Cranes.

Sandhill Cranes are one of two species of cranes that regularly migrate through Indiana. Certainly one of the most spectacular natural events to be observed through generations; conservation legend Aldo Leopold referred to their annual return as “the ticking of the geologic clock”. Most of the eastern population comes up from the southern states as soon as ice retreats from the north, typically reaching our state in peak numbers from February to March. Eventually they will make their way to Canada and the Upper Great Lakes region. Reaching heights of 4 feet, sandhills are relatively large birds with a slender profile. When in flight they are easily recognized by their long necks and legs outstretched from a nearly 7-foot wingspan; although in very cold weather they occasionally tuck their legs close to their body.

Like many other species, Sandhill Cranes require habitat that is a mix of different land uses. The most notable concentrations of cranes in Indiana can be found in areas that have sizeable shallow wetlands nestled in a landscape dominated by open farmland. During migration, cranes will typically roost in flocks standing in marshes or otherwise shallow water. At first light these birds head out to nearby agricultural lands and wet fields to spend the majority of their day feeding on waste grain, insects, and plants before returning to roost, often in the very same wetland. In the spring, courtship behavior can be seen throughout gathered flocks. This eloquent “dance” involves pairs picking up vegetation and flipping it to the air as they bounce up and down in an alternating fashion.

Sandhills once lived in tremendous numbers in the Grand Kankakee Marsh of northern Indiana. But like other wildlife of the region, experienced great declines with the extensive draining of wetlands across our state. Fortunately, due to protection of the

species and restoration of habitat, the eastern population has rebounded quite considerably and continues to do so at a very rapid pace. In 2010, professionals from the Atlantic and Mississippi Flyway Councils approved a management plan for the Eastern Population of Greater Sandhill Cranes that allowed many Midwestern states the option to begin limited hunting seasons for these abundant birds. In 2011, Kentucky was the first to hold a hunting season for this population of cranes in modern times – beginning a new chapter in Sandhill Crane conservation and indicating a true conservation success story.



Volunteers Needed!

Help kids and families build birdfeeders at this year's Earth Day Indiana Festival at White River State Park (April 25th)

Indiana Wildlife Federation

708 E. Michigan St.
Indianapolis, IN 46202
www.indianawildlife.org
E: info@indianawildlife.org
P: 317-875-9453

Common Sense Conservation since 1938

Hoosier Conservation

February 20th, 2015



Butterfly weed

IWF Spring Native Plant Sale

With spring around the corner, be ready to have an amazing back or front yard full of lovely native flowers, shrubs, and trees.

IWF is continuing its partnership with Cardno Native Plant Nursery to provide a variety of plant kits, bare-root trees and shrubs and seed packets that will add beauty and interest to your yard, while providing for local wildlife.

Plant Kits come in several selections such as the Bird and Butterfly, shade, rain garden, and prairie. Each of these kits includes 50 plants ready for planting. Your order will be delivered straight to your door starting around Mother's Day into June.

Your purchase supports IWF and Indiana's native wildlife! Visit our website to see the great selection. You can either order online or print out your order form and mail it in.

Order your natives today!



Goldfinch with purple coneflower

IWF Volunteer Opportunities

Outreach & Events:

- April 17th – IWF Habitat Clean Up
Our urban habitat garden is in need of a spring makeover! We need 3-4 volunteers to help us pull weeds and relocate crowded native plants on Friday, April 17th from 1-3pm. We will provide supplies although extra work gloves, trowels, and weeders would be helpful if you have them.
- April 25th – Earth Day Indiana
Join us at White River State Park on Saturday, April 25th from 10:30am-1pm or 12:30-1pm. We will be helping kids create 100 birdfeeders and need volunteers to organize supplies and assist with the building activity. Hammers and nails not your thing? We also need volunteers to man our event booth and interact with the public. As always, donations of materials like wood, screens, nails, hardware, and chain are greatly appreciated!

Education:

- IWF often gets requests to do presentations for groups. These can range from wildlife presentations to Cub Scout groups or universities. If you love to talk to and educate people, this may be the volunteer opportunity for you!

Office Based Programs & Communication:

- Newsletter – IWF's quarterly newsletter Hoosier Conservation is published each February, May, August, and November. We are looking for a volunteer who has skills in writing, researching stories, editing and formatting, and interacting with others to keep our members up-to-date with the latest IWF activities and conservation issues.
- Mailings and Other Administrative Tasks – Our office often has mailings or other admin tasks that a volunteer could assist with.
- Website/Social Media – If you are social media/web savvy, familiar with IWF issues and have ideas for communicating in these areas, we'd love your help!
- Photography – We are always looking for quality photographs of wildlife and habitat to use for our website, marketing, social media, and outreach materials.

Check out our website for more volunteer opportunities!

Hoosier Conservation

February 20th, 2015

Kids Corner



Plant a Party Favor

What you Need:

- Small terra-cotta pots
- Flowers
- Non-toxic permanent paint (acrylic)
- Paint brushes
- Potting soil
- Small hand spades
- Small stones or pebbles

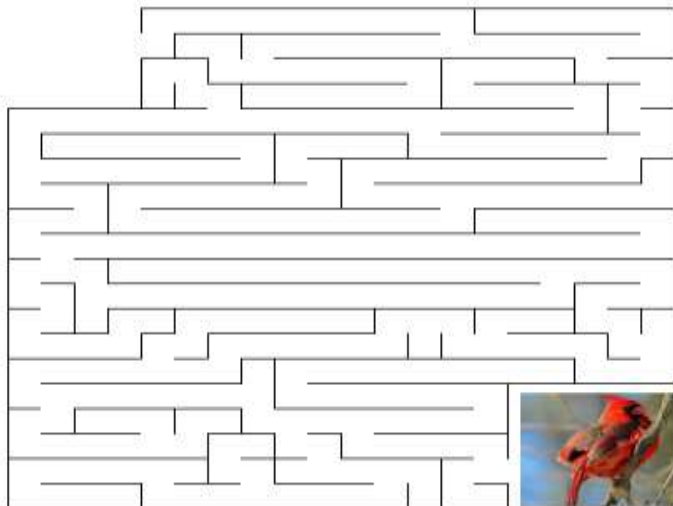
What You Do:

1. Before the party, do a base coat of paint
It might take a few coats because the paint soaks into the ceramic pot.
2. Have the kids decorate their flower pots
3. Put a few pebbles at the bottom of each pot to allow for drainage
4. Place a flower in each pot
5. Put dirt around the edges of the flower
Then send everyone home with reminders to put the flowers in sun and water them.

Reprinted with permission from National Wildlife Federation. For more family fun & kids games check out www.nwf.org!

Clever Cardinal Maze

With spring on its way, it's time to go out and look for the wild creatures that are all around you. Try to make your way through the maze and find the Cardinal!



Generated using www.discoveryeducation.com



The New Kids' Contest Is Here!

We are excited to announce that during this year's Wildlife Week (Mar 9-15) we will be re-launching our popular Kids Contest with an entirely new look. The site has been redesigned by our web developers at [Axus Creative](http://AxusCreative.com) and features eye-catching graphics plus mobile compatibility. That means it can now be viewed on any kind of device which is great news as schools move toward using mobile technology in their classrooms. The content has also been updated thanks to the efforts of students from Purdue's Student Chapter of Environmental Education and now aligns with ISTEP academic standards. The quiz will continue to feature challenging questions for grades 1-8 and will offer a chance to win exciting prizes like an adventure pack and night vision goggles.



Hoosier Conservation

February 20th, 2015

IWF' 2015 Spring Conservation Conference and Annual Meeting

IWF will host its 2015 Spring Conservation Conference and Annual Meeting on **Saturday, March 21st** at its office in downtown Indianapolis. The cost to attend is \$20 per person and includes a delicious barbeque buffet.

The Business Meeting will be held from 9-10am, and covers the business of officer elections, bylaws review and voting, and annual reporting. Please keep in mind that you must be a member in good standing to vote.

The Conservation Conference begins at 10:30am. Guest speakers will present on critical wildlife and habitat issues in Indiana:

- **Wild Pigs in Indiana and Current Plans to Eradicate:** Mark Reiter, Director of Fish and Wildlife, IDNR and Travis Buckel, Wildlife Biologist, APHIS
- **Goose Pond - A Hoosier Wetland Wonder:** Travis Stoelting, Property Manager, Goose Pond Fish and Wildlife Area
- **Saving Monarchs – Tomorrow's Leaders Making a Difference:** Suzie Ronk and Emma Brinson, Linton Stockton Middle School students
- **Wildlife and Water - Legislative Update:** Barb Simpson, Executive Director, IWF

The conference concludes with the Conservation Awards Luncheon at 12:30pm to recognize outstanding efforts by Hoosier conservationists.

Please register online at:

<http://www.indianawildlife.org/annual-meeting/>

New App Tackles Invasive Challenge

Did you know that your phone could be the key to stopping invasive species? It may not look like a scientific tool at first glance, but with the introduction of a new app from the University of Georgia's Bugwood Network and Ohio State University Extension, your phone can actually be a mean, invader-defeating machine.

The Great Lakes Early Detection Network (GLEDN) app, available for iOS and Android devices, is free and easy-to-use, making it perfect for individuals who want to help stop invasive species in their track but do not have scientific training. It allows any user who suspects a plant or animal is invasive to upload a photo, the location, and other basic information to EDDMaps, a mapping database. The data is then made available to scientists who confirm if the species is invasive and pass the information onto state or other land managers who can take action.

Continued on Page 6



St. Joseph River Valley Fly Fishers were awarded the 2014 Conservation Affiliate/Club of the Year. Join us on March 21st to find out who will be awarded for 2015!

Upcoming Field Trips/Event Dates

Field Trips

- July 19th – Eagle Marsh – Fort Wayne, IN
- TBD – HEE Project Tour, Morgan-Monroe State Forest
- August 6th – Mounds State Park – Anderson, IN

Events

- February 26th - Mar 1st – Deer, Turkey, Waterfowl Expo
- March 6th, 7th – Marsh Madness, Goose Pond FWA
- March 9th – Wildlife Week and Kids Contest Launch
- March 7th, 14th, 21st – What's In Your WILD Backyard? Habitat Workshop
- March 21st – IWF Annual Meeting
- March 24th – Conservation Day at the Statehouse
- April 18th – Free Fishing Day
- April 25th – Earth Day Indiana – White River State Park



Don't forget to take advantage of the DNR's Free Fishing Days! On select dates, you can enjoy fishing without the worry of a license. Parks statewide offer events like workshops on fly tying and casting, cookouts, and more! Visit the DNR for details.

Hoosier Conservation

February 20th, 2015

Thank you to our 2014 Donors!

Eagle Patrons (\$1000+)

- Engledow Group
- John & Wendy Kindig
- Steve & Elizabeth Mueller
- Wild Bird Unlimited (James Carpenter)

Blue Heron (\$500-\$999)

- Chuck & Kathy Brinkman
- Ashley & Scott Lewis
- Steve Van Zant

Supporting (\$100-\$499)

- | | |
|----------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| • Marilyn & James Anderson | • Kathryn Hutchens, MD |
| • Aquatic Control | • Cara Ittner |
| • John Lilovich, Aquilonia Farms | • Harriet Ivey |
| • Dan & Nila Armstrong | • Max Jacobus |
| • Janet Armstrong | • Glenn Lange |
| • Mr. & Mrs. Jeffrey D. Arnold | • Deborah Lankford |
| • Dale & Rhonda Back | • Helen Lee |
| • Mel Baez | • Donald Lindemann |
| • Charles & Cheryl Bauer | • Robert Matejka |
| • Calvin Bellamy | • Boris E. Meditch |
| • Pamela Bennett | • Philip & Sharen Meyers |
| • Clifford Berger | • Eric Milby |
| • Bethel Presbyterian Church | • Judith Nelsen |
| • Leo S. Boyd | • Makrouhi A. Oxian |
| • Cardno JF New | • John & Heather Pankhurst |
| • Steve Cecil | • Steven C. Pettinga |
| • Ray Chattin | • Callie A. Potts |
| • Geoffrey Conrad | • Paul & Peggy Reising |
| • Patricia & Michael Cracraft | • Randall & Susan Richter |
| • Michael Dault | • Nancy & George Ringer |
| • Daniel R. Engel | • Carroll Ritter |
| • Jim & Elaine Engledow | • Joseph Robb |
| • Jack & Nancy Engledow | • George Rubin |
| • Marcia Futter | • David & Jane Savage |
| • Max & Jacqueline Gibson | • Leslie Shad |
| Foundation | • James Sides |
| • Karl Glander | • William Staruszkiewicz |
| • John Goss | • Tom Stayton |
| • Judy & Ron Hagan | • Michael J. Surak |
| • Hand Family Foundation, Inc. | • Brad & Deborah Thurston |
| • Jane Hardisty | • Christopher Torp |
| • Jacqueline B. Hayden | • Carole Walton |
| • Kelly Haza | • Mark Westemeier |
| • Gregory Herold | • Wild Birds Unlimited-Carmel |
| • Nancy Herrin | • John Yeager |
| • David & Judy Hoffman | • Marjorie Zeigler |
| • Laura Homan | • Jean Zerkel |
| • Aileen Wilson Howard | |

Holt Scholarship Applications

Being Accepted until June 15th 2015

The IWF Endowment awards a \$1,000 scholarship in memory of Charles Holt, a lifelong member and champion of fish and wildlife resources.

Applicants must be Indiana residents accepted for study or already enrolled for the (Fall) 2015 semester as a full-time undergraduate in an accredited college or university at or above a sophomore level. Applicants must be taking coursework to major or minor in a field related to resource conservation or environmental education.

Find our application here:

<http://www.indianawildlife.org/Holt-Scholarship/>



IWF's New Doxtater Interns

Michael Troutt is a Hoosier-born veteran. He served eight years in the United States Navy as a military police officer and was stationed in Iceland, Japan, and San Diego. Currently, Michael is in his last year at Franklin College where he is majoring in Psychology and minoring in Computer Science. Michael has been an active member of the Franklin College Earth Club and is involved in many green initiatives on campus including RecycleMania. Michael earned the 2013 Doug Grant Student Service Award, the highest award given to a student at Franklin who goes over and beyond with community service.

Katie Waskom is a senior at Butler University studying Science, Technology, and Society with a focus on Environmental Studies. Katie previously worked as a sustainability intern and researched studies and data for Butler's new recycling pilot program implemented in the fall of 2014. This recycling pilot program is anticipated to save the university money, drastically reduce the amount of waste and increase the amount of recycled material on campus. Last fall, Katie studied in one of Europe's "greenest" cities, Freiburg, Germany. She traveled, experienced different cultures, ate lots of pretzel and bratwurst, and learned about environmental issues in Europe. The best part of Katie's trip was living in a "green" neighborhood and learning about living sustainably in everyday life.

Hoosier Conservation

February 20th, 2015



The Indiana Statehouse is a busy place this winter/spring!

IWF Presents at 2015 IPRA Conference

IWF was privileged to give a presentation on the “What’s In Your WILD Backyard?” backyard habitat program at the 2015 Indiana Parks and Recreation Association’s annual conference in Michigan City. The educational session included a short introduction to IWF followed by a sneak peek into the program’s content, which was presented by Karen LaMere, a naturalist and former park manager, from Carmel-Clay Parks. Despite an early morning time slot, approximately 30 park managers, naturalists, and other professionals attended. The reception to the program was very positive, and a handful of individuals indicated interest in bringing the program to their area. A short survey provided valuable feedback which is now being used to adapt the program for future use in various park systems throughout Indiana.

Continued from Page 4 – New App

The reports generated from the app are critical to slow the advance of invasive organisms, maintain existing biodiversity, and protect native species. Within the GLEDN app, there are detailed photos and multiple features to help users identify invaders and collect data. Citizen scientists can search by species category (aquatics, grasses, trees, fish, insects, etc.) or by name. A state-specific search feature is also being developed and will be released soon.

Using the app is simple and can be done during any outdoor activity like hiking, fishing, canoeing, and more. Even a short walk around the neighborhood can offer an opportunity to catch invaders. Training videos and other useful resources are available on the [Midwest Invasive Plant Network’s](#) website.

Get the app via Google Play or iTunes!

For Android: [GLEDN](#)

For iOS: [GLEDN](#)

Legislative Update

The 2015 Legislative Session is moving fast – bills are switching Houses by the end of February and all committee meetings, floor votes, and conference committee reports are due April 15th. If you think what’s going on at the Statehouse is hard to follow, you’re right. A total of 1237 bills were filed this session – 570 in the Senate and 667 in the House. Many of those bills will not get a hearing. They simply fade away, maybe to rise again next session, or maybe just drift into the ether. Some bills that don’t get a hearing are filed as “message” bills or “shots across the bow” as they are sometimes called. They do get public attention and cause voters to wonder what message the bill author is trying to send. One in particular that caught our attention – and that IWF opposes, [HB1611](#), Natural resources issues – Rep. Jud McMillin. This bill would take \$6 million from the DNR Law Enforcement Division and divert it to fund repairs to state parks and reservoirs in a particular legislative district. The bill also took away considerable authority from conservation officers who protect our wildlife and natural resources.

Other key bills IWF is following are:

[HB1001](#) State Biennial Budget – Rep. Tim Brown - Support funding for natural resources. The biennial budget bill is of ongoing concern to IWF and all conservationists, particularly the relative share of the budget that is allocated to natural resources and the environment. For example, the fiscal year 2013-2015 Biennium Budget for the State is \$58.2 billion. The combined budget for both IN Dept. of Natural Resources (IDNR) and the IN Dept. of Environmental Management (IDEM) is \$0.634 billion – just 1% of the total State budget. The State should operate within its means and make wise spending choices, but when our wildlife, our natural resources, and our environment have only a 1% investment, we must be watchful. As budgets are tightened, trimmed, and funds reverted, let’s be sure these small pieces that are so important are not disproportionately penalized.

[HB1351](#) Restrictions on rule making – Rep. David Wolkins - Oppose. This bill was amended; reducing its negative impact, but still adds needless bureaucracy to the administrative rule making process.

[HB1453](#) Hunting preserves – Rep. Sean Eberhart – Oppose. This year’s canned hunting bill passed the House 55-39. The bill may be amended in the Senate but IWF and the vast majority of hunters and conservationists oppose canned hunting of captive deer: 1) unethical hunting, not fair chase; 2) threatens wildlife health by accelerating the spread of chronic wasting disease (CWD) by allowing out of state imports of captive deer; and 3) Taxpayers are liable for captive deer herds condemned due to disease. Hunters and anglers license fees fund state monitoring and management of CWD.

[SB 120](#) Invasive species council – Sen. Sue Glick – Support. The bill renewed the council for another 8 years. Invasive species cost Indiana and the US millions and this council has done outstanding work to help address the many challenges.