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## Whooping Crane Sightings in Nebraska, August 1994-January 1995

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WHOOPING CRANE SIGHTINGS, AUGUST 1994 - JANUARY 1995  
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The first arrival at Aransas National Wildlife Refuge in southern Texas was on October 5, 1994, and the last arrivals (a family group) were on January 12, 1995, the latest date that an adult pair had ever arrived at Aransas. A total of 132 (125 adult/subadult and 7 young) Whooping Cranes are wintering at Aransas, including 3 birds that spent the summer at Aransas. A solitary chick sighted with Sandhill Cranes in Oklahoma on January 2, 1995 is the 133rd crane in the flock. Since, under optimum conditions, 148 cranes were expected to reach Aransas during the fall migration, the location and cause of summer and migrational losses are not known.

The first dates for confirmed observations of migrating Whooping Cranes were August 16 in Canada and September 7 in the United States. The last sighting date was January 5 in Oklahoma. Sightings were reported from Alberta, Canada (1); Saskatchewan, Canada (18); Montana (1); North Dakota (5); South Dakota (2); Nebraska (5); Kansas (13); Oklahoma (4); and Texas (1).

The migration progressed slowly, perhaps due to the mild weather during September and October. There were two or more Whooping Cranes present at Cheyenne Bottoms State Wildlife Area, Kansas, between October 13 and November 29, with a peak of 18 birds on November 1. A group of five Whooping Cranes was present at Cheyenne Bottoms between October 25 and November 29 (36 days), which is a record migration stopover time for the United States.

Dates and locations of confirmed and probable Nebraska sightings are presented in the table on p. 150. The first number under "No. of Cranes" refers to adults and the second number to young birds. The legal descriptions of locations by township and range have been omitted, but may be obtained from the Editor or from Wally Jobman at the address shown under the title. There was only one unconfirmed sighting in Nebraska, a report of 6-8 birds flying in Rock County  $3\frac{1}{2}$  miles west of Bassett on October 31, 1994.

<u>Date of Sighting</u>	<u>No. of Cranes</u>	<u>Location</u>
<u>Confirmed Sightings:</u>		
10/31 - 11/2/94	2 + 1	Custer Co., 6 mi. west, 3½ mi. north of Merna.
11/02 - 14/94	2 + 1	Custer Co., 8 mi. west, ¼ mi. south of Broken Bow.
11/02 - 21/94	7 + 1	Phelps Co., Funk Lagoon WPA, 2 mi. north of Funk.
11/07 - 21/94	3	Phelps Co., Funk Lagoon WPA, 2 mi. north of Funk.
11/18/94	4 + 1	Boone Co., 4 mi. west, 1½ mi. south of Petersburg.
<u>Probable Sightings:</u>		
10/23/94	4	Cherry Co., 17 mi. south, 3 mi. west of Valentine, flying.
10/24/94	2	Loup Co., North Loup River, 8 mi. west of Burwell.
10/30/94	3	Howard Co., 3 mi. north, 3 mi. east of St. Paul, flying.
11/03/94	2	Howard Co., 3 mi. southwest of Dannebrog, flying.
11/07/94	1	Holt Co., 4½ mi. south, 8½ mi. east of Chambers junction (Highways 281/95), flying.