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Review of *Whooping Crane: Images from the Wild*. By Klaus Nigge.

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Whooping Crane: Images from the Wild. By Klaus Nigge. College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 2010. vii + 217 pp. Map, photographs. \$45.00 cloth.

When asked to review this book I hadn't yet heard of it or its author, a wildlife photographer well known in his native Germany and the author of four photographic books published there, so I was eager to read it. The book is visually impressive, measuring 11" x 12", making it a true coffee-table production. Inside is a well-written 25-page "primer" on whooping cranes by Krista Schlyer dealing with cranes in myth and legend, crane vocalizations and displays, and breeding biology. She also provides a brief survey of the whooping crane's population history, its near brush with extinction, and the mostly failed efforts since the 1970s to establish additional wild populations. A dozen suggested readings and some relevant websites are also provided.

The heart of the book consists of more than 150 spectacular single- and double-page color photographs obtained at the cranes' wintering grounds in and near Aransas National Wildlife Refuge in Texas and at their breeding grounds in Canada's Wood Buffalo National Park. Nigge is the first professional still photographer ever to be allowed to photograph a pair of Wood Buffalo's whooping cranes during the hatching period. This endeavor meant spending six days and nights alone in a cramped photo blind and enduring all the attendant hardships for a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to document the experience visually.

The operative word here is visually. Throughout the entire portfolio of amazing photographs, there is not a single caption. In nearly all cases there are white borders around the photos, which would have allowed space for

captions that provided at least the fundamental elements of who, what, where, and when . For example, the wonderful series showing juvenile cranes through their first winter are not dated, making it impossible to track the progression of postjuvenile molt in these birds. Several other species shown interacting or associating with the whooping cranes (sandhill crane, black-bellied whistling duck, American avocet, white-tailed deer, gray squirrel, peccary, blue crab) are not identified. Such omissions mean that this gorgeous volume missed the opportunity of providing substantial educational value, in addition to offering an unwritten testimony to the beauty of a magnificent endangered species and its fragile environment. **Paul A. Johnsgard**, *School of Biological Sciences, University of Nebraska–Lincoln*.