Annual Midwest Crane Count eBird Instructions

A. Start by navigating to the eBird website at http://ebird.org. Click on “Sign In or Register as a New User” in the upper left of the web page to sign in or create a new account. If you are a new user, choose an account user name and password and complete the registration form.

Attention County Coordinators: If you enter data for any of your counters, please create a new Crane Count specific eBird account rather than using a personal eBird account and include reference to the count in your new username (e.g. “saukcranect”). This follows eBird etiquette, which requests that users typically only enter their personal data (in this case, by making a separate Crane Count account, you are simply indicating that this is not your personal data). If you are only entering your personal count data, you may enter this in your personal eBird account.

B. After creating or signing in to your account, you are automatically directed to the web page for “Submit Observations.” This is where you will enter your Crane Count data in an easy three-step process.

C. “Step 1: Where did you bird?”

The first step is to identify the location of your Crane Count site. You can use the latitude/longitude for your main observation point in your Crane Count site OR find the same location on the Google map in eBird. Since most counters may not have a coordinate for their main observation point, our directions will walk you through locating your site on the map.

To begin, click on “Find it on a Map” and fill in the county, state and country for your Crane Count site. Click on “Continue” to view the map, which will automatically zoom to the general county and state that you entered.

The next step is to zoom in as far as possible to your site location. You can do this by entering a place name (e.g. Baraboo, WI), address, or coordinates (e.g. 43.54917,-89.753151) in the “Zoom to” search box OR you can use the zoom tool on the upper left corner of the map (click on the “+” sign to zoom in and the “-” sign to zoom out). If your location is already marked with an orange tear-dropped shaped marker, simply click on the marker to select this location.
For new locations, click on the map and a green tear-dropped shaped marker will appear, designating your new location. After you have located your site, enter a name for your location. **You may choose any name, but please include the site number and “Crane Count” in your location name to aid in our data summarizing.**

D. “Step 2: Date and Effort”

The second step is to **record the date and type of your observation.** For the 2015 Annual Midwest Crane Count, enter Apr 18, 2015 for your observation date. For your observation type, select “Other” and choose “area” to represent your Crane Count site.

After you enter the observation type, enter the start time (5:30 AM), duration (2 hrs), area (use your best estimate – one square mile = 640 acres), and party size (the number of people in your group). Select “Continue” to proceed to step 3.

E. “Step 3: What did you see or hear?”

This is where the fun begins, as now you can **enter your bird observations!** One of the exciting changes with using eBird is that you can enter your crane observations, as well as any other birds that you saw during the Count. Feel free to enter all of the species that you recorded, but our directions will focus on your crane observations.

The first step is to record the number of cranes that you observed or heard at your site (if you surveyed more than one site, you will need to enter each site separately into eBird after each completed checklist). To locate Sandhill Cranes in the species list, scroll down to “Crane, Sandhill” OR you can begin typing “Sandhill Crane” in the “Jump to Species” search box in the upper right corner. If you were lucky enough to spot a Whooping Crane, make sure you check the “Show Rarities” check box under the search box to display this species in the list.

Enter the total number of cranes that you observed or heard in the text box in front of “Crane, Sandhill.” Next, click on “Add Details” button next to the species name to enter additional information on your observations:

a. If you have any “Breeding Behaviors” marked on your data sheet, click on the “Breeding” drop-down list and select ONE from the four following options. Only one behavior can be entered per site, so please select the one that you observed/heard closest to the top of the list:
• NE Confirmed -- Nest with Eggs
• ON Confirmed -- Occupied Nest
• NB Confirmed -- Nest Building
• C Probable -- Courtship, Display or Copulation (this includes unison calls)

b. Please enter any details in the “Details” text box, such as number of nests observed and number of cranes unison calling.

c. After you have entered the crane species that you observed, you may enter any additional birds that you observed. These data will join millions of other records that scientists are using to study wetland health!

d. The final step is to click on “Submit” to enter your data. **IMPORTANT - If you don’t select “Submit” your data will not be entered into the eBird database.** Please select “Yes” to the question, “Are you reporting all of the birds you saw/heard to the best of your ability?” if you entered all of the bird species that you observed or heard at your site. Select “No” if you are only reporting some of the bird species or just the cranes that you observed.

F. “Checklist”

Once you submit your data, you will see a summary of your observations. Please double check your information to make sure that it is correct.

To share your checklist with ICF or your County Coordinator, click on “Share W/ Others in Your Party” on the right column and enter their eBird username following “Share this checklist with other participant’s eBird accounts.” ICF’s username is “icf_eBird”. Please do this for each site that you counted, as this will allow us to compile your observations for the final count summary.

If you counted more than one crane count site(s) in the same county, you may click on “Same area and date” in the right column, to begin entering your observations for these sites.