

Announcing the 10th annual Yampa Valley Crane Festival in Steamboat Springs, Hayden and Craig, Colorado, Sept. 2-5, 2021

Four days of events celebrating the region's magnificent Greater Sandhill Cranes!

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Yampa Valley Crane Festival web site for detailed schedule, history, Greater Sandhill Crane facts and more festival information: www.coloradocranes.org

(*Steamboat Springs, CO*) – The 10th annual Yampa Valley Crane Festival takes place Sept 2 through Sept. 5 in Steamboat Springs, Hayden and Craig, Colorado. The festival celebrates the majestic Greater Sandhill Cranes as they migrate through the Yampa Valley with guided crane viewings, expert speakers, films, bird and nature walks, workshops, live raptors, a live raptor photo shoot, children's activities and more.

The festival's keynote speaker is Dr. Rich Beilfuss, president and CEO of the International Crane Foundation. Rich's talk, entitled *Cranes: Ambassadors for Conservation* will focus on emerging challenges that cranes around the world face including the impact of climate change on the wetlands and water that cranes and people need to thrive. He will share lessons learned from the struggle to bring back Whooping Cranes from the brink of extinction and the remarkable success story of the Sandhill Crane.

Arvind Panjabi, avian conservation scientist for Bird Conservancy of the Rockies and co-author of the September 2019 report published in *Science* magazine entitled *Decline of the North American avifauna* will present *Canaries in the Mine: 3 Billion Birds lost. Can we get them back?*

Acclaimed Canadian author, Steve Burrows, will take a look at the impact birders and non-birders have had on his development from environmental journalist to writing *Birder Murder Mysteries* and the role that birds and birding continue to play in both his personal life and his career as a novelist.

Paul Tebbel, crane expert and former director of Audubon's Rowe Sanctuary in Nebraska will present a talk entitled *Why We Love Cranes* and will lead the guided crane viewing.

Ted Floyd, editor of *Birding* magazine, assisted by his son, Andrew and daughter, Hannah will lead bird walks including a "Hummingbird and Hummingbird Moth Walk" in the Yampa River Botanic Park. Ted and his children will also present an entertaining and interactive program at the community picnic that will take place in a new location this year, the Yampavian Ranch, located just down river from TNC's Carpenter Ranch.

The festival will present a special screening of the film *The Nature Makers*, a moving portrait of passionate people and their extraordinary efforts to save threatened species and their habitat in the American heartland.

Sure to be a crowd pleaser, Nature's Educators will have an educational booth where festival attendees can visit with live raptors and other Colorado native reptiles and amphibians. Nature's Educators, assisted by wildlife photographer Chris Becea of Morning Light Photography, will also offer a special live raptor photo shoot- a session geared for photographers at all levels. And finally, a special presentation by Nature's Educators of all these Colorado native species will conclude the festival.

Additional festival highlights include guided crane viewings, guided bird walks in some of the Yampa Valley's most magnificent settings, scenic pontoon boat excursions at Steamboat Lake, a sketch-a-bird session led by local artist, Leslie Lovejoy, and a Crane Yard Art display and auction featuring 25 artist-decorated cranes along with a free concert by the Broad Band.

"The upcoming Yampa Valley Crane Festival, sponsored by the Colorado Crane Conservation Coalition is a family-friendly, four-day event that will appeal to everyone from the professional birder to the casual wildlife watcher. It seeks to educate the public about cranes and to emphasize conservation of the special habitat that supports the cranes and the many other species of birds and wildlife in Northwest Colorado," says Ted Floyd, editor of *Birding* magazine.

Greater Sandhill Cranes are an iconic species of the Yampa Valley and Northwest Colorado. For years a group of enthusiastic birders and nature lovers gathered each fall at a small ranch near Hayden, Colorado to watch the cranes. The sights and sounds of these spectacular birds on their fall staging ground in the Yampa Valley led some to dream about an event in which locals and tourists would gather together to learn about this population of cranes and to celebrate their presence in Northwest Colorado. In 2012, Colorado Crane Conservation Coalition, Inc. turned the dream into a reality with the inaugural Yampa Valley Crane Festival.

Colorado Crane Conservation Coalition (CCCC) is dedicated to the conservation and protection of Greater Sandhill Cranes in Colorado. The Yampa Valley Crane Festival is presented by CCCC, with help from lead sponsor Leiden Conservation Foundation: gold sponsors Mountain Valley Bank, TS Jost Ranch, Alpine Bank; silver sponsors Pine Moon Fine Art and Crane Trust; and bronze sponsors , Off the Beaten Path, Elk River Pet and Ranch, Carl's Tavern, Paws and Claws, Truffle Pig, Wild Birds Unlimited, Colorado Cattlemen's Agricultural Land Trust, and The Nature Conservancy. Festival Partners include the Bud Werner Memorial Library, Bird Conservancy of the Rockies, City of Steamboat Springs, Colorado Parks and Wildlife, International Crane Foundation, PhotoGraphicsArt., USDA Forest Service, Yampatika, and many other local businesses and organizations.

Residence Inn is the official lodging partner for the 2021 Yampa Valley Crane Festival and will be donating a percentage of proceeds to the Colorado Crane Conservation Coalition. Lodging reservations for the festival can be made at <https://www.marriott.com/event-reservations/reservationlink.mi?id=1619562098203&key=GRP&app=resvlink> or by calling 970-879-1298.

Yampa Valley Crane Festival's daily schedule of events is posted at www.coloradocranes.org.

High resolution photos of Sandhill Cranes are available upon request.