



# Friends of the Louisiana Whooping Cranes

Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries  
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## Louisiana Residents Welcome the 2014 Cohort of Whooping Cranes

On December 4, 2014 the residents of Louisiana received the fifth cohort of juvenile whooping cranes at White Lake Wetlands Conservation Area (WLWCA) in Gueydan. The group of 14 young cranes consists of 6 males and 8 females. The addition of the new cohort brings the total number of birds in Louisiana to 40.

Our newest 14 residents took to the sky for the first time when they were released from the top netted acclimation pen on Monday December 29, 2014. Since their release, the birds have remained in the marsh in and around the pen enclosure.

However, they haven't been the only ones....adult birds from previous cohorts returned to the area surrounding the pen shortly after the arrival of the new birds. At one point, the combination of visual sightings and transmitter frequencies confirmed that a total of 18 adult birds had made their way not only back to White Lake but to the refuge area where the juvenile birds had recently been released.

It continues to amaze LDWF staff as to the timing of the adult's "reunion" at the pen site. Make no mistake though, it isn't the happiest of reunions as the various adults are becoming more territorial and aggressive in preparation for breeding season and their tolerance of other birds in close proximity is much less than it was even a month or two ago. Despite the challenges their presence has created for the newly released juveniles we have been able to observe a lot of interesting behavior and the juveniles certainly have a lot of role models to learn from as well.

Dec 29, 2014: Release day for the 2014 juvenile cohort and a reunion day for Louisiana adult whooping cranes at White Lake



# Since You Last Read...an Update on the 2011, 2012, and 2013 Louisiana Whooping Cranes

As mentioned on the previous page, the majority of our adult birds from cohort years 2011-2013 have recently made their way back to White Lake. The interactions between the adults and juveniles at the pen fluctuate on a daily basis but again provide all involved parties with important social and survival skills.

Unfortunately, recently received necropsy results have confirmed another one of our Louisiana cranes was shot. On the weekend of November 2, 2014 LDWF officials received a call from a Vermilion parish landowner reporting that one of the cranes appeared to be in distress. The bird, L4-13 (a female) was captured and taken to the LSU vet school the following morning where radiographs revealed a badly broken tibiotarsus (upper leg). The extent of damage was beyond repair and it was decided that euthanasia was the most humane solution. The birds' carcass was sent for a necropsy where it was confirmed the broken leg had been caused by gunshot.



This unfortunate event raises the number of Louisiana whooping cranes that have been shot to six individuals. Please help do your part in spreading the word about our cranes and the significance they bring to our great state. Also if you know of any local business or landowners that would like to visually post their support of the cranes while providing a number to call should suspicious activity be observed please contact 337-536-9400 extension 4 or 5 to request your copy of the sign pictured to the left.

## Louisiana Whooping Crane Survival as of January 2015:

A total of 64 birds have been released in Louisiana since the project began in 2010. Out of those 64 birds, a total of 40 individuals are currently alive for a survivorship of 63%. Beginning with the 2011 cohort, birds received for the Louisiana project were younger in age compared to those received in the 2010 cohort. LDWF strongly believes that has helped increase the survival percentage of the individual cohorts. Reported below are the survival rates for the 2011-2013 cohorts:

<b>Cohort Year:</b>	<b>2011</b>	<b>2012</b>	<b>2013</b>	<b>2014</b>	<b>4 Year Average:</b>
<b>Current Survival:</b>	<b>10/16= 63%</b>	<b>9/14= 64%</b>	<b>7/10=70%</b>	<b>14/14=100%</b>	<b>40/64= 63%</b>

# October-December 2014 Friends of the Cranes

A special thanks to our monetary donors, without whom this project would not be possible. The following individuals have made monetary donations to support the reintroduction of whooping cranes to southwest Louisiana:

**Sara Simmonds, Tonia Davey, James and Natalie Ray, Mary Legoria, Pam Fry, Bob Love, Paul Dickson, International Crane Foundation in honor of Sara Simmonds, Joan LeBlanc, Belinda Sartor, Stutts-Veeh Foundation in memory of Polly Winter, Bart Yakupzack in memory of Tom Hess, and the Louisiana Association of Broadcasters**



Approximately 1/3 of the Louisiana whooping crane project budget is comprised of private donations; all donations are sincerely appreciated. If you or someone you know would like to make a donation in support of the cranes, please contact Kell McInnis at 225-765-5100, [kmcinnis@wlf.la.gov](mailto:kmcinnis@wlf.la.gov), or visit the Foundation's website directly at <http://lawff.org/>. Donations can also be mailed directly to the Foundation at P.O. Box 80378 Baton Rouge, LA 70898-0378.

## Upcoming “Give A Whoop” Teacher Workshops

Another great way to help spread the word about the Louisiana whooping cranes is through the youth of Louisiana. Formal and non-formal educators of Louisiana have two free upcoming workshop opportunities to do just that.

The next scheduled workshop is Saturday February 7, 2015 at Holy Cross School in New Orleans followed by another workshop opportunity on March 14, 2015 at the LSU Ag Center in Lake Charles.

Attendees will learn about the whooping crane reintroduction program and the crane's amazing journey back from the brink of extinction. This workshop explains the complexities and challenges of the reintroduction program, demonstrates classroom lesson activities, and allows participants the opportunity to learn about these magnificent creatures! Thanks again as always to Chevron for sponsoring all “Give A Whoop” workshops.

Participants receive:

- Breakfast and lunch
- Binder filled with GLE aligned lessons
- Life-sized whooping crane poster
- Replica whooping crane egg

**If you or someone you know is interested in attending one of the upcoming “Give a Whoop” educator workshops please contact:**

**Carrie Salyers at (337) 262-2080 or  
[csalyers@wlf.la.gov](mailto:csalyers@wlf.la.gov)**

# Be Listening for a Whooping Crane Public Awareness Announcement on the Radio

LDWF has joined with the Louisiana Association of Broadcasters to promote whooping crane awareness in January and February 2015. Utilizing LAB's Public Education Program (PEP) over a five-week period, member radio stations can use LDWF's 30-second radio announcement to fill unsold commercial spots throughout their broadcast day, as often as they choose. This agreement has the potential to take the "cranes are back" message statewide.

Thanks to Chevron for providing the grant funds that made the LAB arrangement possible and to LAB stations for supporting our whooping crane public awareness efforts. When you hear the crane's whoop and the announcer says "Whooping Cranes are back in Louisiana...." -- that's the PEP program at work.

## Whooping Crane Festival February 19-22, 2015

The Coastal Bend is the only spot in the United States where the endangered Whooping Crane can be viewed at close range, and the Port Aransas Chamber of Commerce celebrates this astonishing natural wonder with an annual festival honoring these grand birds. In addition to the Whooping Crane, an awesome array of wintering migratory birds flock into the wetlands and onto the Texas shorelines of Mustang Island in and around Port Aransas. Birding tours by land and sea are highlights during the festival. Make your plans to attend the Whooping Crane Festival from February 19 – 22, 2015.

Activities include presentations from world-renowned speakers (including our own Dr. Sammy King), photography workshops, and a variety of field trips. For more information visit: <http://www.whoopingcranefestival.org/>



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