

**GREATER SANDHILL CRANE
(GRUS CANADENSIS TABIDA)**

Federal/California status: --/Threatened

DFG: Fully protected



Description

The greater sandhill crane is a long-legged, long-necked bird with a wingspread that reaches 6-7 feet (1.8-2.1 m). This subspecies is slightly larger than the lesser sandhill crane (*Grus canadensis canadensis*) and up to 50% longer-billed. Greater also has paler primaries, noticeable in flight. Adults have a gray coloration with dull red skin on the crown and lores, whitish coloration on the chin, cheek, and upper throat, and black primaries. Immatures lack the red patch and the gray coloration is irregularly mottled with brownish-red.

Habitat

This species forages on open grasslands, grain fields, and open wetlands. The diet consists of grasses and forbs as well as roots, seeds, grains, and earthworms that it probes out with its long bill. It will also consume mice, small birds, snakes, and frogs when available. The greater sandhill crane participates in elaborate courtship behaviors which sometimes include social dancing. These displays can involve as many as 50-80 individuals and consist of head bobbing, deep bows, leaps, and running with wings flapping.

Range/distribution

Greater sandhill cranes are winter residents to the San Joaquin Valley.

Photo: U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, National Image Library, URL: <http://images.fws.gov>, accessed September 11, 2002.

References

- Kaufman, K. 1996. *Lives of North American Birds*. Houghton Mifflin Company, New York, NY. 675pp.
- Sibley, D.A. 2000. *The Sibley Guide to Birds*. Alfred A. Knopf, Inc. New York, NY. 555pp.
- Terres, J.K. 1996. *The Audubon Society Encyclopedia of North American Birds*. Wings Books, Avenel, NJ. 1109pp.

The sandhill crane (*G. canadensis*) current perhaps the most abundant of the 15 species of cranes, with a global population of 670,000 to 830,000 in 2018, and it is still increasing (Wetlands International, 2018). The International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) listed the sandhill crane as a species of Least Concern (IUCN, 2017).
Historically, How to cite this article Gao L, Mi C, Guo Y. 2019. Expansion of sandhill cranes (*Grus canadensis*) in east Asia during the non-breeding period. PeerJ 7:e7545 <http://doi.org/10.7717/peerj.7545>. the wintering and breeding areas of sandhill cranes were limited to North America, with some flying over the Bering Strait to Asia and breeding in northeastern Russia (Walkinshaw, 1950; Johnsgard, 1983).
Region 2 sensitive species evaluation form. Species: (*Grus canadensis tabida*/Greater Sandhill Crane). Criteria. 1. Distribution within R2. Rank. B. Rationale.
Tacha et al. Species: (*Grus canadensis tabida*/Greater Sandhill Crane). Criteria Rank Rationale. 8. Life History and. Demographics. B. High. Sandhill Cranes generally lay two eggs per nest and do not produce more than one brood per nesting season. Greater Sandhill Crane (*Grus canadensis tabida*). This is a picture of the Greater Sandhill Crane. With his wings gliding him or her to ground for a safe landing. My name is Brenden and I am a 7th grade student at Corriea Middle school, San Diego, California. In this life science class I have to choose an endangered species. I chose the Greater Sandhill Crane. I chose this animal because I thought I could learn about a new animal. On this page you will find details and facts about this animal.