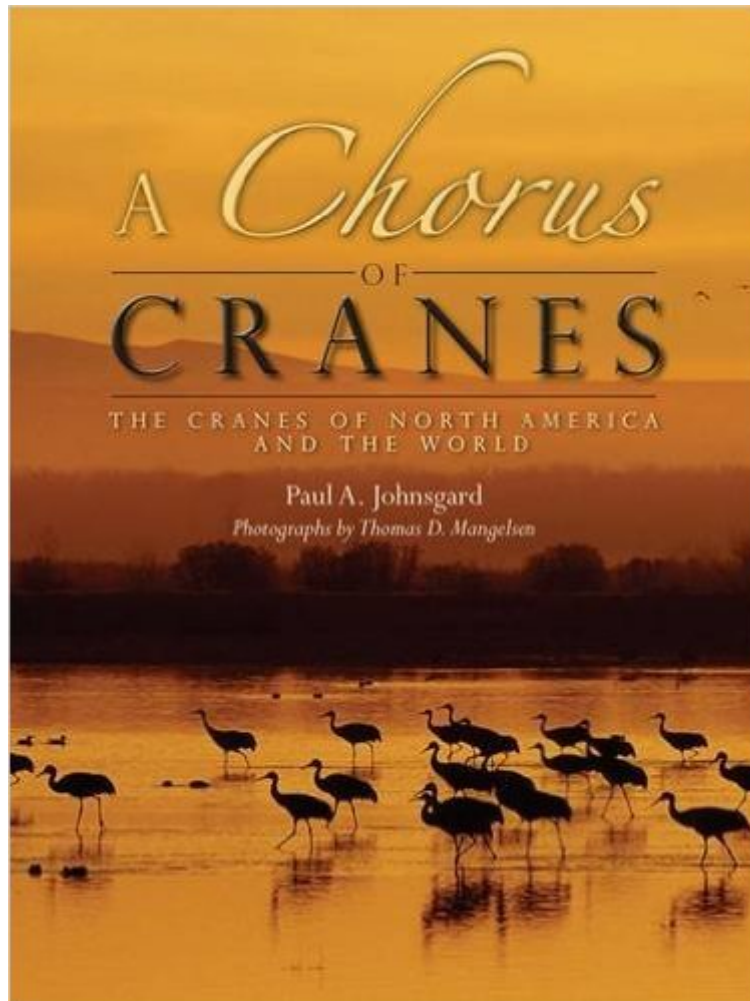


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# A Chorus Of Cranes: The Cranes Of North America And The World



## Synopsis

“Since long before medieval times cranes have been considered messengers of the gods, calling annually from on high to remind humans below of the passing years and of their own mortality. Now it is up to humans to take responsibility for controlling our own fate—and also to cry out to protect not only cranes but all the other wonderful creatures that share our increasingly fragile and threatened planetary ecosystem with us.” —Paul A. Johnsgard, from the acknowledgments

Accompanied by the stunning photography of Thomas D. Mangelsen, *A Chorus of Cranes* details the natural history, biology, and conservation issues surrounding the abundant sandhill crane and the endangered whooping crane in North America. Author Paul A. Johnsgard, one of the leading authorities on cranes and crane biology, describes the fascinating social behaviors, beautiful natural habitats, and grueling seasonal migrations that have stirred the hearts of people as far back as medieval times and garnered the crane a place in folklore and mythology across continents. Johnsgard has substantially updated and significantly expanded his 1991 work *Crane Music*, incorporating new information on the biology and status of these two North American cranes and providing abbreviated summaries on the other thirteen crane species of the world. The stories of these birds and their contrasting fates provide an instructive and moving history of bird conservation in North America. *A Chorus of Cranes* is a gorgeous and invaluable resource for crane enthusiasts, birders, natural historians, and conservationists alike. The University Press of Colorado gratefully acknowledges the generous support of the Iain Nicholson Audubon Center at Rowe Sanctuary, Audubon Nebraska, Ron and Judy Parks, Wagon Tongue Creek Farm, and the Trull Foundation toward the publication of this book.

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## Customer Reviews

This is mostly North American cranes; the rest of the world is sort of tacked on at the end. The writing is good, and the photos are excellent. There are a good many drawings that are not as good; had I edited the book I'd have replaced those with more photos. The maps are helpful but could be improved. That noted, this is still an excellent book on cranes. It's written with passion, and also has a quite strong bias in one particular sense: a number of US states now have some sort of hunting season for sandhill cranes (and also inadvertently means the very rare whooping cranes will suffer some mortality from hunters). That is roundly condemned in the book. The sandhill cranes in the US are in good shape, with the greater sandhill crane not as numerous and therefore more vulnerable than the lesser sandhill cranes. The book discusses several populations as to status, habitat, migration (or not, the Florida population seems to be nonmigratory), threats and so on. One population is increasing, and interestingly breeds in Siberia and winters in Texas. The data is current, but regarding some of the rare species elsewhere in the world, extinction could occur quickly, so information could be outdated quickly. The book describes the efforts to preserve the whooping crane, well-told and on the whole rather sad; despite all the efforts the future is problematic. One calculation is that in 2011, the cost of rearing, training and teaching a single whooper to migrate was \$114,000. Alas, it looks like more states are opening hunting for cranes and these may endanger whooper migrations. The other world species are described much more briefly, and there are no photos. A few populations are stable but most species are in one or another category of threatened or endangered (there's a handy list of these at the end of the book.

Beautiful book with detailed text.

Thank you.

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