

**The fate of translocated Sandhill Cranes after 10 years.**—Nesbitt and Williams (1973, Proc. Ann. Conf. Southeastern Assoc. Game and Fish Comm. 27: 332-335) reported on the dispersal of translocated Florida sandhill cranes (*Grus canadensis pratensis*) wild-trapped in Manatee County from September 1971 to April 1973 and released at Fisheating Creek, Glades County and Paynes Prairie, Alachua County, 96 and 243 km away, respectively. The major purpose of the study was to evaluate dispersal and homing tendencies of translocated cranes and the feasibility of restocking suitable but unoccupied habitats. Each group of translocated birds was distinctly color-banded. Recaptured cranes were later individually color-banded. Sightings of the birds marked as a group have not been summarized since 1973 (Nesbitt and Williams 1973). The status of translocated cranes was not monitored at Fisheating Creek after 1973, but crane studies on Paynes Prairie resulted in subsequent sightings and retrapping of several translocated birds. Here we report on the status of 4 of the 15 birds released on Paynes Prairie.

At least two of the 15 cranes have died. In July 1981, one bird translocated from Manatee County on 5 April 1972, and retrapped on Paynes Prairie on 3 May 1972, was found dead on a ranch east of Dunnellon, Marion County, Florida, a straight-line distance of 68 km southwest of Gainesville. Though we cannot be sure, this bird or another of the translocated cranes was probably still subadult when it moved from the prairie to this ranch as a color-banded translocated crane was seen there in 1975 (N. Holler and N. Eicholz pers. comm.). All translocated birds were at least one year old when captured (Nesbitt and Williams 1973); this crane therefore lived for a minimum of 10 years. The second bird, also caught in Manatee County and relocated on 5 April 1972, died during trapping on Paynes Prairie 15 May 1973.

Two of the original 15 birds, recaptured and individually color-marked on Paynes Prairie, have been seen repeatedly. Our sightings and retrapping locations were always on or near Paynes Prairie. One crane (band number 598-64272) was seen or retrapped on three occasions (30 January 1981, 6 February 1981, and 19 June 1981). On the last date the bird was at least 10 years old.

The other crane, a male, (band number 558-40902) was aggressively defending a territory when first seen on 3 March 1979. It successfully raised a chick during the 1981 nesting season. During the spring of 1982, excessive rainfall interrupted nesting of cranes on Paynes Prairie, but this bird was paired and on its territory during 1982. On 7 July 1982, it was trapped and outfitted with a radio transmitter. During 1983, this bird attempted unsuccessfully to nest twice. Both times the nest was abandoned after heavy rains. This bird, originally trapped in Manatee County on 13 April 1972, was then at least 12 years old.

The sedentary nature of adult Florida sandhill cranes (Florida Game and Fresh Water Fish Comm. unpubl. data) is reflected by the site tenacity of the two adults discussed above. The sedentary behavior of the Dunnellon bird after 1975, when it had probably reached adulthood, further substantiates this observation. Subadult cranes are much more itinerant than adult birds (Nesbitt, Wenner, and Hintermister, IV, in prep.); they do not defend territories and may wander a great deal before settling into a breeding area. We can make no assumptions concerning the fate of the 11 birds unaccounted for although they may be surviving somewhere other than Paynes Prairie.

Three of the translocated cranes are known to have survived to adulthood, and one was successfully incorporated into the local Florida sandhill crane population as a breeding member. These survival statistics are close to what has been observed in the natural populations on the prairie (GFC unpubl. data).

Some dispersal off the prairie occurred, similar to dispersal observed among resident subadults. Subadult cranes form loose "nonbreeder flocks." These flocks or units from these flocks may move from their natal areas. We have regularly noticed movement of from 10 to 30 km, so the occurrence of the translocated crane in Dunnellon does not fall far outside the norm.

Translocation of nonmigratory sandhill cranes into occupied habitats seems to have potential as a management technique to augment reduced local populations. Translocation into suitable unoccupied habitats may also be possible. In light of the nomadic tendencies of subadult cranes, it would be advisable to translocate older subadult or adult birds into unoccupied habitat. More research is needed before restocking unoccupied habitats can be unequivocally recommended, but the technique holds promise as a method for reestablishing reduced populations of nonmigratory sandhill cranes and perhaps other nonmigratory species of cranes as well.—**Anne Shapiro Wenner** and **Stephen A. Nesbitt**, Wildlife Research Laboratory, Florida Game and Fresh Water Fish Commission, 4005 South Main Street, Gainesville, Florida 32601.

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**Night migration of Sandhill Cranes.**—Reporting on migration of radio-instrumented Greater Sandhill Crane (*Grus canadensis tabida*), Toepler and Crete (1979, Proc. 1978 crane workshop, Pp. 159-173, Ft. Collins, Colorado, Colorado State Univ.) implied migrating cranes did not fly after dark. Following a day of particularly heavy crane movement, we observed or received reports of at least 3 flocks of cranes passing over Alachua County in north-central Florida during the night of 24-25 November.

At 2230, a flock of cranes was heard passing over Hintermister's house, 25 k northeast of Gainesville. Later at 0300, 25 November, two separate flocks were heard overhead 30 k south of Gainesville. That night the moon was six days from full and the sky was clear, providing a bright night sky. This situation and the nearness of their ultimate destination, or both, may have encouraged the birds to continue migrating after dark. Whatever the reason, it seems that under some conditions cranes do migrate at night.—**Stephen A. Nesbitt**, Florida Game and Fresh Water Fish Commission and **John H. Hintermister**, V, Route 3, Box 38H, Gainesville, Florida 32606.

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