

The owl's nest was not tidy. There was no indication of any nesting material or lining, but the cavity was littered with bits of fur, bones and miscellaneous matter in various stages of decomposition, with an unpleasant odor.

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## NESTING OF THE SANDHILL CRANE, WARNER VALLEY, OREGON

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During my visit to this region in May and June of this year I was fortunate in locating the nest of a number of Sandhill Cranes. Nests of this species are by no means common, and require days of traveling through the marshes, and overflow meadows of the valley, to locate them.

The region covered in my investigation, covered an area of 36 miles long by from 5 to 10 miles wide, or about 180 square miles.

Ten pairs of Sandhill Cranes were nesting in this territory, which would mean about one pair of birds to every 18 square miles of territory.

Warner Valley has some half dozen lakes, surrounded by tules and flags, and wild meadow lands, all of which is covered with water, but here and there small islands were found, which were always above high water.

The places selected for the nest of this Crane were generally several miles out in the marshes, and the nests located were all on the top of large masses of dried tules and flags, and grass, which had undoubtedly been piled up in this manner the year previous in harvesting the hay crop.

These masses were generally 5 feet in diameter and at least 12 inches above high water mark, and in the center a slight depression is made upon which the two eggs or young are found. The nesting dates are from May 20 to June 10. Eggs found May 30 were about half incubated.

A nest of young found on June 6, containing two young, which were about ten days old, were very spry, but did not seem much alarmed at being handled. They posed readily for the camera and several fine views were secured.

The young at this time were covered mostly with down and were a beautiful silky brown in color, and were just beginning to show the formation of feathers.

At all times, when near the nests, the parent birds keep at a safe distance of several hundred yards and were very hard to approach under any circumstances.

The female kept up a constant call to her young while anyone was near the nest, and this peculiar call of the Sandhill Crane can be heard for miles.

No nest containing more than two eggs or young were found. Residents of the valley told me of the peculiar habit of the birds that when the young reached a certain stage they become



Eggs of the Sandhill Crane

very quarrelsome, to such an extent that their fights result in the death of one or the other of the young and at this time the parent birds separate the young, the male taking charge of one and the female the other, and that thereafter they are not found

together again. I am not able to verify this statement, as all nests found had eggs or young birds only a few days old.

The measurements of the eggs, taken from a typical set, are as follows: 3.75x2.25 and 3.875x2.00.

They are beautiful Oological specimens and the coloring is difficult to describe.

Upon a ground color of buffy cream are blotches, spots and specks of soft shades of brown and lavender, quite heavy and confluent at the larger end.



Two Young, Ten Days Old, Sandhill Cranes