

NEWS RELEASE

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Sandhill Cranes return to the North Platte River Valley

(North Platte, Nebraska, February 17, 2023) – Starting now and running through mid-April, approximately one million Sandhill Cranes will spend about six weeks in the Platte River Valley on their way north to Canada and Siberia. 400,000 of these Sandhill Cranes will spend that time in the North Platte and Lincoln County area. While these incredible creatures visit, they feed in the cornfields and wet meadows by day in preparation for their long journey ahead, and roost in the shallow flowing waters of the Platte River at night. This migration event draws people from all over the globe, and it can be experienced right here in North Platte.

Dusty Trails offers Sandhill Crane Tours daily from March 14th through April 3rd. There are morning and evening blind tours available that offer breathtaking views of the Sandhill Cranes ascending from and descending to the wide and shallow riverbeds of the North Platte River. There are also bus tours during the day which take you out into the cornfields to watch the birds perform their unique dances and mating rituals. This tour is set at their most active courting time and allows plenty of time for photography. The tours are also very reasonably priced, at \$40 per person, making this a great affordable activity for the whole family!

There are also self-guided options for viewing the Sandhill Cranes including three viewing blinds in the area that are open to the public, as well as a recommended driving route to see the Sandhill Cranes in the corn fields during the day. For more information on this including blind details and a map, brochures can be picked up from the Visit North Platte office or you can go to https://assets.simpleviewinc.com/simpleview/image/upload/v1/clients/northplattene/Untitled_1_51c150e3-ed34-4acf-b8e2-4fcdf9375.jpg.

According to an Economic Impact study done for Central Nebraska in 2017, approximately 46,500 crane visitors came to Central Nebraska during the migration that year. The average visitor's length of stay was 2.7 days with an average spending per visitor, per day totaling up to \$93.37. Together, the overall economic impact of the Sandhill Crane Migration on Central Nebraska was \$14.30 million in 2017, supporting 182 year-round equivalent jobs. Moreover, given economic activity is taxed by local

government, it is estimated that this economic impact generates \$379,000 per year in local property, sales, and lodging tax revenue.

For more information, to purchase your tickets, or to watch a video of these incredible birds in North Platte, head to [VisitNorthPlatte.com/things-to-do/attractions/sandhill-cranes/](https://www.visitnorthplatte.com/things-to-do/attractions/sandhill-cranes/).

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