



# NEWS RELEASE

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**Southwest Region (Arizona • New Mexico • Oklahoma • Texas) <http://southwest.fws.gov>**

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## Tracking Whooping Cranes

A study conducted by a partnership of researchers from multiple organizations is using [lightweight GPS devices to track individual whooping cranes](#) of the Aransas – Wood Buffalo population, the only naturally wild flock of whooping cranes in existence.

Efforts have focused on putting tracking devices on adult whooping cranes captured on Aransas National Wildlife Refuge, where the birds winter on the Texas coast, and on chicks at Wood Buffalo National Park, the birds' nesting grounds in Canada. To date, 68 birds have had tracking devices attached.

The GPS units are attached to a bird's upper leg and record four to five locations every 24 hours, information that is uploaded to a satellite every two and half days. These data reveal migration routes, habitat use, nesting locations, and much more. Biologists in the United States and Canada will use the results of this work to identify management and conservation priorities in both countries.

The research partnership is made up of governmental and non-profit partners working on the recovery of the whooping crane. Representatives include the U.S. Geological Survey, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Canadian Wildlife Service, Platte River Recovery Implementation Program, Crane Trust, Parks Canada, Gulf Coast Bird Observatory, and International Crane Foundation.

Whooping cranes are an endangered species with more than 300 birds in the Aransas-Wood Buffalo population. All of the whooping cranes alive today, both wild and captive, are descendants of the last 15 cranes found wintering at the Aransas National Wildlife Refuge in 1941.

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**Video courtesy of Texas Parks and Wildlife Department.**

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YtVt842trpo>