

2006 Sandhill Crane Festival Schedule

All events are free of charge unless otherwise noted. All events meet at the Creamer's Refuge Farmhouse unless otherwise noted and marked**.

Friday, August 25

7:30 - 9:00 PM

** *"Just Desserts" Reception &*

Fundraiser Meet Michael Forsberg at a reception at the Alaska Bird Observatory, 418 Wedgewood Drive. Tickets are \$25/person (\$20 for members of Friends.)

9:00 - 10:00 PM

Hay ride from ABO to Creamer's barn.

Music by Susan Grace

"Cows to Cranes to Conservation:

The Creamer's Story" A slide show on the barn as the sun sets.



Featured Guest:

Michael Forsberg, a celebrated nature photographer, is widely recognized for his work on Sandhill Cranes. Mike has traveled the Platte River in his native Nebraska, the Alaskan tundra, the arid High Plains, Cuban nature preserves, and suburban backyards photographing Sandhills. His book *On Ancient Wings: The Sandhill Cranes of North America*, chronicles this journey with stunning photographs and text.



Mike with his wife Patty and daughters Elsa and Emme

In addition to his photographic accolades, Mike was awarded a Conservation Education Award from The Wildlife Society. This award reflects Mike's commitment to sharing the beauty of wild creatures and landscapes with people.

GIVE WILD BIRDS A CHANCE

Use common sense while you watch birds. Avoid activity that causes stress, as evidenced by birds moving away or taking flight. Leash dogs during this important season.

Saturday, August 26

9:00 AM

Bird Banding featuring live songbirds up close, weather permitting. Donations support the Alaska Bird Observatory.

10:00 AM

Nature Walk with a naturalist.

11:00 AM - 1:00 PM

Brunch with the Cranes Food and live music. Minimum donation \$5/person.

Book and Poster Signing with Michael Forsberg. Books and posters will be available.

Crane Watch Drop by the viewing platforms at Creamer's Field.

12:00 PM

Crane Calling Contest for kids and adults
Coloring Page Awards

1:00 PM

Kids Crane Walk Join a naturalist on a leisurely walk for kids of all ages.

2:00 PM - 4:00PM

Crane Crafts for kids of all ages.

2:00 PM

Crane Photography Program Join Michael Forsberg for tips on capturing cranes on film. Bring your own camera.

3:00 PM

** *Birds of Prey* Learn about birds of prey with live birds *at the Alaska Bird Observatory.*

4:00 PM-6:00 PM

Crane Watch Drop by the viewing platforms at Creamer's Field.

7:00 PM

** *"On Ancient Wings" A presentation by Michael Foresberg at UAF's Schaible Auditorium.* Suggested donation: \$5/person

Sunday, August 27

10:00 AM

** *Cruise for Cranes* Join Michael Forsberg for a walk amongst the cranes *at ABO.*

11:00 AM - 1:00 PM

Crane Watch Drop by the viewing platforms at Creamer's Field.

1:00 PM

Crane Sketching Workshop Join Mark Ross in capturing Sandhill Cranes on paper. Bring your own pencils and sketch pads.

1:00 PM

Kids Crane Walk Join a naturalist on a leisurely walk for kids of all ages.

3:00 PM

Birds of Prey Learn about birds of prey with live birds at the Creamer's Farmhouse.

4:00 PM - 6:00 PM

Crane Watch Drop by the viewing platforms at Creamer's Field.

Fiesta Latina! Celebrate the cranes' journey south.

5:00 PM - 8:00 PM

Tex-Mex Dinner Enjoy good food including samples donated by local Mexican restaurants. Minimum donation: \$10/person. Proceeds benefit Camp Habitat.

5:00 PM - 9:00 PM

Latin music & dance Live music & a DJ

7:00 PM

Quilt raffle drawing for Karin Franzen's quilt *Taking Refuge* featuring Sandhill Cranes at Creamer's Refuge. Tickets on sale daily at ABO and the Creamer's farmhouse until 7 PM on August 27.



Sandhill Cranes have been using the Tanana Valley as nesting grounds and a migration corridor for thousands of years. Their bugle-like calls have rattled over this land since before the Ice Ages. Their migrations to and from nesting areas on the Yukon delta and beyond cover up to 4,000 miles annually. The number of Lesser Sandhill Cranes using the Tanana Valley migration corridor and central flyway is estimated at 150,000 to 200,000 birds.



Lesser Sandhill Cranes of interior Alaska are about 3 feet tall with a wingspan of 6 feet and weigh 6 - 8 lbs. Both sexes are gray, but they paint their feathers with mud and rotting vegetation creating rusty highlights. After the first year, the head is capped with a red, featherless crown. Long, trailing legs and the distinctive upbeat of their broad wings help identify birds in flight.

Sandhill Cranes arrive in the Tanana Valley in late April. They disperse to nesting areas as quickly as the advance of spring will allow. In early August, pre-migration gathering, called "staging," begins. By late August, large flocks of 50 to several hundred cranes wheel and call while flying high overhead in great circling columns, or "kettles," over the northern foothills of the Alaska Range. Agricultural fields provide open space and food and can attract thousands of cranes. Flocks can be seen and heard in good weather from August until October.

Other Ways to Celebrate

- **Wander the Creamer's Refuge trails**
- **Poetry Walk** Enjoy works by Fairbanks poets along the Creamer's farm road trail.
- ****Michael Forsberg Images** on display at the Alaska Bird Observatory.
- ****Bird Artwork** at New Horizons Gallery and The Artworks.
- ****Watch *Cranes of the Grey Wind*** at the Alaska Public Lands Information Center August 21-27 at 4 PM.
- **Kids Coloring Display** Get a coloring page at the fair, the farmhouse, or ABO. Turn it in by August 25 for display at the farmhouse during the festival. Prizes will be awarded.

View **Sandhill Cranes** and other migratory birds at:

- Creamer's Migratory Waterfowl Refuge, Fairbanks
- Around the Alaska Bird Observatory Center for Education & Research, Fairbanks
- University of Alaska Fairbanks Experimental Farm near the Georgeson Botanical Gardens
- The ponds at the end of South Cushman Street and at the Fairbanks International Airport
- Agricultural Fields in Nenana, Fairbanks, North Pole, Eielson Farm Project, Salcha, Delta Junction Barley Project (Spruce Road and Sawmill Creek Road), and points to the east
- Clearwater Lake in Delta Junction
- Tetlin National Wildlife Refuge in Tok
- Chena Lakes Recreation Area near North Pole

Pick up a copy of the "Birdwatching in Fairbanks, Alaska" brochure available at the ABO Center for Education & Research, Creamer's Farmhouse Visitor Center, Alaska Public Lands Information Center, and Fairbanks Log Cabin Visitor Center.

Contact Information

Friends of Creamer's Field (Friends)

P.O. Box 81065, Fairbanks, AK 99708
907-452-5162 or creamers@ptialaska.net

Alaska Bird Observatory (ABO)

418 Wedgewood Drive
Open M-Th 9-9, Fri 9-5, Sat 10-4
907-451-7159 or www.alaskabird.org

Alaska Dept. of Fish & Game (ADFG)

907-459-7301

Creamer's Farmhouse Visitor Center

Open daily 10 AM - 5 PM
907-459-7307

Arctic Audubon Society

Birding hotline 907-451-9213
www.arcticaudubon.org

Ninth Annual Tanana Valley

SANDHILL CRANE FESTIVAL

Fairbanks, Alaska



"Joy" Micheal Forsberg

AUGUST 25-27, 2006

Presented by Friends of Creamer's Field, in cooperation with the Alaska Bird Observatory (ABO), Alaska Department of Fish & Game, Arctic Audubon Society, and Camp Habitat.

Generous support provided by Wedgewood Resort, Alaska Tent & Tarp, Gulliver's Books, Wild Rose Camp, Drs. Miers & Teel, and the North Star Golf Club