



Great Midwest Crane Fest FAQ

Saturday, Nov. 14 and Sunday, Nov. 15, 2026

The International Crane Foundation and Aldo Leopold Foundation will be open to festival attendees from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. each day of the festival.

For more festival information, please visit greatmidwestcranefest.org.

How much do General Admission tickets cost?

Ticket Type	Early-Bird Ticket Price Available through Sept. 13	Regular Ticket Price Sept. 14–Nov. 15
Weekend Pass (Saturday & Sunday), ages 18+	\$50	\$60
Saturday, ages 18+	\$30	\$40
Sunday, ages 18+	\$30	\$40
Youth, ages 6–17*	\$8	\$8
Children, ages 5 and under	FREE	FREE

*Youth registration is valid for both days of the festival, Saturday, Nov. 14 and Sunday, Nov. 15.

Are tickets refundable?

No. All tickets are non-refundable, including general admission tickets and tickets purchased for add-on events. Thank you for supporting this community event and crane conservation!

Are there any events with additional registration fees?

Yes. The following events require an additional registration fee:

- Sunrise and Sunset Crane Field Lectures: \$55 per person
- Crane Congregation Viewing Tours: \$75–\$106 per person
- Relief Printmaking Workshop at the International Crane Foundation: \$25 per person

Visit greatmidwestcranefest.org to register for these events.

Please note: You must purchase a general admission ticket for the day you plan to attend an add-on event. If you are bringing children to an add-on event, each child must also have a ticket, regardless of age.

Can I purchase tickets for add-on events without buying a general admission ticket?

No. You must purchase a general admission ticket for the day you plan to attend an add-on event.

What activities are included with a general admission ticket?

A single-day ticket gives you access to all included festival events taking place on the day of your ticket.

A Saturday and Sunday ticket gives you access to included events on both days of the festival.

Please note that some events may have limited seating capacity, and seating may be available on a first-come, first-served basis.

International Crane Foundation Events Included with a General Admission Ticket:

- Lectures
- Guided Prairie Walks
- Guided Crane Discovery Center Tours
- Keeper Chats
- Access to the Crane Discovery Center
- Access to the George Archibald Welcome Center and Gift Shop
- Access to the Migration Center exhibits
- Access to on-site nature trails*
- Food trucks

*The nature trails are not paved. Scooters, wheelchairs, bicycles, and strollers are not permitted on trails at the International Crane Foundation.

Aldo Leopold Foundation Events Included with a General Admission Ticket:

- Lectures and demonstrations
- Guided and self-guided Shack Tours
- Guided nature hikes
- Guided Green Building Tours
- Access to the Aldo Leopold Center exhibits
- Access to the Gift Shop
- Food trucks

What can I expect at the Great Midwest Crane Fest?

Festival events will take place at both the International Crane Foundation and the Aldo Leopold Foundation. A free shuttle will transport attendees between the two sites throughout the festival. During the festival, you will have opportunities to learn about the incredible Sandhill Crane conservation success story and explore how the land connects us to our past and future.

Festival activities will include:

- Guided and self-guided crane viewing tours
- Workshop
- Lectures
- Exhibition Tours at both host sites
- Art exhibitions
- Food trucks
- And more!

Do I need to be a member of either organization to attend the festival?

No. You do not need to be a member of the International Crane Foundation or the Aldo Leopold Foundation to attend the festival.

Will you mail me a printed ticket?

No printed tickets will be mailed. If you register online, your automated email confirmation will serve as your proof of registration. Please check your email for messages from order@humanitix.com.

If you register by phone, we will email you a confirmation letter. This confirmation will serve as your proof of registration. If you register by phone on or after Nov. 1, 2026, you will not receive a mailed ticket. You will simply need to check in by name when you arrive.

If you have questions about your registration, please call 608-356-9462, ext. 807, or email cranefest@savingcranes.org.

When should I arrive, and how do I check in?

Both the Aldo Leopold Foundation and International Crane Foundation will be open from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. on Saturday, Nov. 14, and Sunday, Nov. 15. You can choose which events to attend throughout the day.

When you arrive at either site, please stop at a check-in station first to receive your event program and map:

- International Crane Foundation: Check in at the George Archibald Welcome Center.
- Aldo Leopold Foundation: Check in near the Aldo Leopold Legacy Center.

Can you recommend nearby hotels or lodging?

For lodging options, please visit savingcranes.org/visit/places-to-stay/ or downtownbaraboo.com/stay.

Is there free transportation between the International Crane Foundation and the Aldo Leopold Foundation?

Yes. A free shuttle will run between the International Crane Foundation and the Aldo Leopold Foundation throughout both days of the festival. The shuttle schedule will be posted on greatmidwestcranefest.org once it is finalized. You are also welcome to drive your own vehicle between each site.

Where should I park?

Free parking is available at both the International Crane Foundation and the Aldo Leopold Foundation. You may park at either location. Signs will be posted to help direct traffic.

PLEASE NOTE: The International Crane Foundation parking lot gates will close promptly at 5 p.m. on both days of the festival. **Please plan accordingly so your vehicle is not locked inside the parking lot.** If you are attending an evening crane viewing tour, you must drive your own vehicle to the tour location; please do not leave your vehicle at the International Crane Foundation.

Are children allowed to attend crane viewing tours?

Children are welcome to attend, but Sunrise and Sunset Crane Field Lectures and Crane Congregation Viewing Tours are recommended for children ages 12+. There is no minimum age requirement for these events, but participants will be asked to keep noise levels to a minimum to avoid disturbing the cranes and to ensure a quality experience for everyone. All attendees, regardless of age, must have their own ticket.

Am I able to leave in the middle of a crane viewing tour?

All participants must remain for the entire tour. Please consider whether your child will be comfortable spending more than two hours outdoors in potentially cold weather.

Can I bring a pet?

No. Pets are not allowed at either site or at any add-on events.

Service animals are permitted but must remain leashed and under control at all times. If you plan to bring a service animal, please contact us in advance at 608-356-9462, ext. 104.

Will there be food available for purchase at the Great Midwest Crane Fest?

Yes! Food trucks and drink carts will be available at both the International Crane Foundation and the Aldo Leopold Foundation on Saturday and Sunday.

International Crane Foundation Food Trucks:

- RMN Mini Donut Food Truck
- Any Street Grill Food Truck

Aldo Leopold Foundation Food Trucks:

- Las Milpas Food Truck

How much walking is involved with the festival?

The amount of walking will depend on which events you choose to attend. Events that may involve extended periods of walking or standing include:

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|---------------------------------------|---|
| • Guided Prairie Walks | • Guided Nature Hikes |
| • Guided Crane Discovery Center Tours | • Sunrise and Sunset Crane Field Lectures |
| • Shack Tours | • Crane Congregation Tours |

Lectures are seated events, and seating is available on a first-come, first-served basis. Standing room may be available if all seats are occupied.

Which events are ADA accessible?

If you have questions about ADA accessibility for specific events at the Aldo Leopold Foundation, please email eric@aldoleopold.org or call 608-355-0279, ext. 390.

If you have questions about ADA accessibility for specific events at the International Crane Foundation, please email cranefest@savingcranes.org or call 608-356-9462, ext. 104.

Will visitors see wild cranes at the International Crane Foundation?

Attendees will be able to see all 15 crane species on exhibit at the Crane Discovery Center with the purchase of a General Admission ticket. While you may see wild cranes flying overhead throughout the day, there are no wild crane viewing blinds or congregations of wild cranes at the International Crane Foundation.

When is peak migration season?

Peak Sandhill migration is typically mid to late November depending on weather and food availability.

How do we know about migration patterns?

In late summer, breeding pairs and their offspring start losing their territorial defensiveness and begin to spend time foraging with other nearby family groups and non-breeders before returning to their home territory each evening. Eventually, usually by late October, most Sandhill Cranes leave their summer habitat and converge on “traditional staging areas” which are typically within a single day’s flight from home.

Important Migration Reminder

Migration timing can vary and these predictions are based on years of historical observation!

Looking for other wild crane viewing areas?

Crex Meadows - <https://crexmeadows.org/>

Necedah Wildlife Refuge - <https://www.fws.gov/refuge/necedah>

White River Marsh - <https://dnr.wisconsin.gov/topic/Lands/WildlifeAreas/whiteriver>

Pine Island Wildlife Area - <https://dnr.wisconsin.gov/topic/Lands/WildlifeAreas/pineisland>

Horicon Marsh - <https://dnr.wisconsin.gov/topic/Lands/WildlifeAreas/horicon>

Sandhill Wildlife Area (Babcock) - <https://dnr.wisconsin.gov/topic/Lands/WildlifeAreas/sandhill>

Important reminders when viewing wild cranes!

When viewing cranes in park, refuges, wildlife areas, or in agricultural fields near the Aldo Leopold Foundation and the International Crane Foundation, do not trespass on private property, block any roads, or disturb cranes with your proximity or any loud noises.

Are the river blinds at the Aldo Leopold Foundation available to all festival attendees?

River blind access near the Aldo Leopold Foundation is only available through Crane Congregation tours, which must be purchased in advance as an add-on event in addition to a General Admission ticket.

Are there hiking and walking trails at the International Crane Foundation?

Yes, there are 2+ miles of unpaved nature trails (scooters, strollers, and wheelchairs are not allowed on these trails, as they are unpaved and uneven). There are additional paved walking areas in the Crane Discovery Center exhibit area.

Is there hiking at the Aldo Leopold Foundation?

There are several miles of trails around the Aldo Leopold Legacy Center. River property near the Aldo Leopold Foundation is private except for authorized tours during the Great Midwest Crane Fest.

When are the best fall colors?

Please check the fall color report website: www.travelwisconsin.com/fall-color-report