

# MY EXPERIENCE IN THE ABA YBY CONTEST

-GRACIE MCMAHON



# MODULES

- Possible modules- Field Notebook, Conservation and Community Leadership, Illustration, Writing, and Photography
- I participated in them all
- FN and CC are major modules, others are minor
- Must complete either both major or one major and two minor to be eligible for being named Young Birder of the Year

# SLACK



- Is a way to communicate with your fellow participants and also the leaders
- Very secure group (Not Instagram or Twitter)
- I had and am still having a very positive experience over Slack
- I have made some lifelong friends, and actually mailed a letter to one of them and they wrote me back
- You learn a lot on Slack
- Very encouraging environment

# ADULT GUIDANCE

- I have met many very helpful and friendly adults on Slack including Liz and Jeff Gordon (Pres of ABA) and Ted Floyd
- They help you whenever you have a question and are very willing to explain more to you
- I have learned so much from them

# FIELD NOTEBOOK

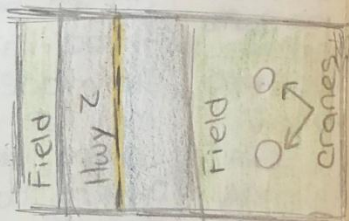
- Record your experience in your notebook, on eBird, on another social media, and write a quick overview of the day
- Really makes you think about your experiences
- → Pictures next



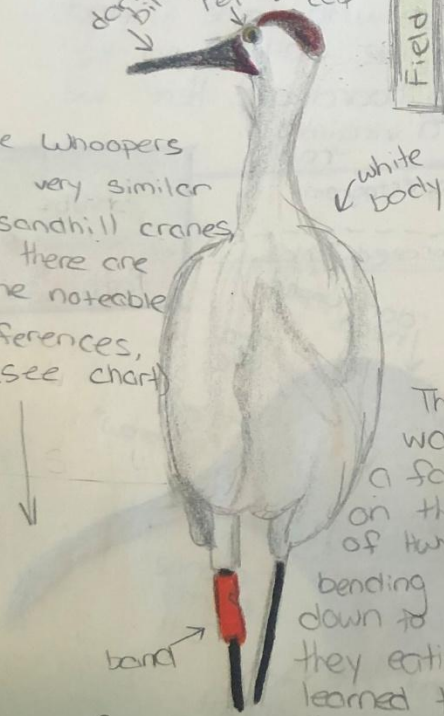


After driving on the circle loop, we drove on Hwy 2 to a different part of the refuge. On the right side of Hwy 2 as we were driving were 2 Whooping Cranes. We stopped the car, crossed the road, and took MANY pictures.

dark bill  
yellow eye  
dark red cap



The Whoopers are very similar to sandhill cranes but there are some notable differences, (see chart)



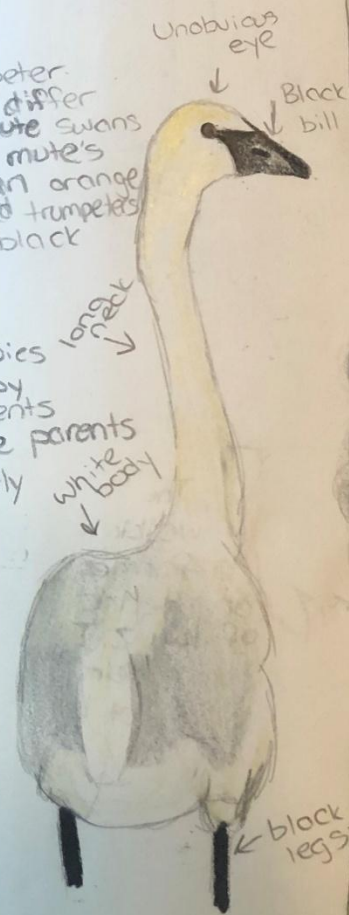
The cranes are walking along in a farmer's field on the right side of Hwy 2. They are bending their heads down to eat. What are they eating? Today I learned that Whooping Cranes are endangered in WI. Why did we see so many?!

	S	w
color	gray	white
size	medium	large
status	threatened	endangered

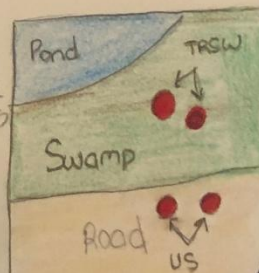
On our way out of the refuge, we drove down Dike Road to see if there were any cool birds, and low and behold, there were two adult trumpeter swans and two babies/juveniles!

Trumpeter swans differ from mute swans because mute's have an orange bill, and trumpeters have a black bill.

The babies stayed by the parents and the parents constantly watched us.



This is the second time we have seen TRSWs today; the first time there were 20+ (end of Ledge Rd)



# CONSERVATION

- I made 52 rocks with birds painted on them and my banding station's website on the back, and hid them in the forest preserves, stores, and restaurants
- Then, every volunteer at the station made several videos for the birds on the rocks
- Each rock was numbered the same as the corresponding video
- You could go to the website and watch your rock's video to learn about your bird!
- All the rocks were found!







# ILLUSTRATION

- 6-10 illustrations of birds
- Hard copies mailed to the ABA
- → Some of my illustrations













# WRITING

- 6-10 pages of writing samples
- Fiction, non-fiction, poetry, short story...



# PHOTOGRAPHY

- 6-10 photos of birds
- I use a Nikon D3500 with a 100-400 lens
- → Some of my photos















# THAT'S ALL! PLEASE CONSIDER JOINING THE ABA YOUNG BIRDER OF THE YEAR MENTORING PROGRAM!

- We have 2 Slack groups (one for the contest and one for fun)
- If you want to join the fun group, stick around after we end and I'll write your email down!
- You can either get the Slack app or participate on the website
- We also do Zoom meetings every weekend! They are a super fun way to catch up every week