

An aerial census of the Aransas NWR and surrounding areas made 27 April, 2001 estimated the number of whooping cranes currently present at Aransas at 1 adult. It is estimated that 173 cranes have started the migration. The current size of the Aransas / Wood Buffalo population is estimated at 174. The peak population during the 2000-2001 winter was 180. An estimated six whooping cranes died at Aransas this winter.

Recap of cranes observed: (1)

Refuge	Lamar	San Jose	Matagorda	Welder
Total				
0	0	1 + 0	0	0

1 + 0 = 1

Remarks: Skies were overcast throughout the census making it possible that cranes were overlooked. However, all areas where cranes were located on the previous April 17 census were searched thoroughly in a flight lasting 3.4 hours.

One whooping crane was located next to Allyn's Bight on the south end of the crane range on San Jose Island. This is the same location where a subadult whooping crane spent the summer in 2000. It is presumably the same bird, having wintered much of the time as a single on the south end of San Jose. All other whooping cranes are believed to have migrated. It is possible that the one remaining whooping crane may still decide to migrate.