

# THE MONTCLAIR BIRD CLUB

## YOUR WEEKLY BIRD 44

July 7, 2024

by Sandy Sorkin

### Sandhill Crane

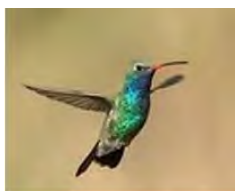


Most of the sandhill cranes I have encountered were in Florida, and aside from the red and white on the head, they are uniformly shades of gray. I've seen them in numbers in Nebraska, but didn't pay a great deal of attention to their color, which I believe was also gray. But when I saw them in Alaska in May, I was surprised to see that the cranes weren't gray, but rather a muddy brown. I've since learned that the operative word is "muddy."



Nesting sandhill cranes use the mud they find in wet soil to cover their feathers. As they preen, they add the mud to their feathers, giving them a much different look. The mud is iron-rich, and after rubbing it on their feathers, the bird is a deep reddish-brown. They nest in marshes, where the brown camouflages them on their nests.

If you would like to see your photographs highlighted here, send one or two pictures with a short paragraph to Sandy Sorkin & Rick Wright at [MontclairBirdClub100@gmail.com](mailto:MontclairBirdClub100@gmail.com).



Southwest Wings

