

The ICF

Bugle

Inspiring a Global Community

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Zambia!

By Rich Beilfuss, ICF President & CEO

Ilove wetlands – lush, green, spongy, life-brimming wetlands. So much of our commitment to saving the world's cranes is about saving the wetlands that sustain cranes, and so much more. From Poyang Lake in China to the Mekong Delta of Southeast Asia to the gulf coast marshes of Texas, ICF is working to save some amazing wetlands. But there is no place on earth like Zambia for wetlands – vast, bountiful floodplains of the Zambezi and other rivers that stretch from horizon to horizon. And in those wetlands rests the future of endangered Wattled Cranes and Grey Crowned Cranes, the livelihoods of thousands of people, and a wealth of wildlife we hold dear.

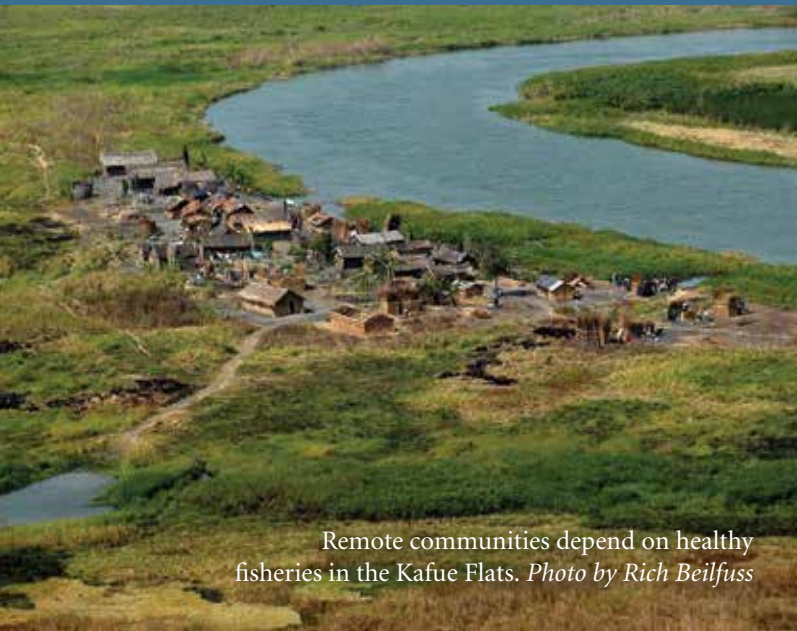
This past May, I had the pleasure of traveling to Zambia to launch our newest conservation initiative, the **Zambia Crane and Wetlands Conservation Program**, under the leadership of Zambian Griffin Shanungu. I was joined by South African Kerryn Morrison, who directs our ICF/Endangered Wildlife Trust partnership for African Cranes, Wetlands, and Communities across the African continent. *Continued on page 2*



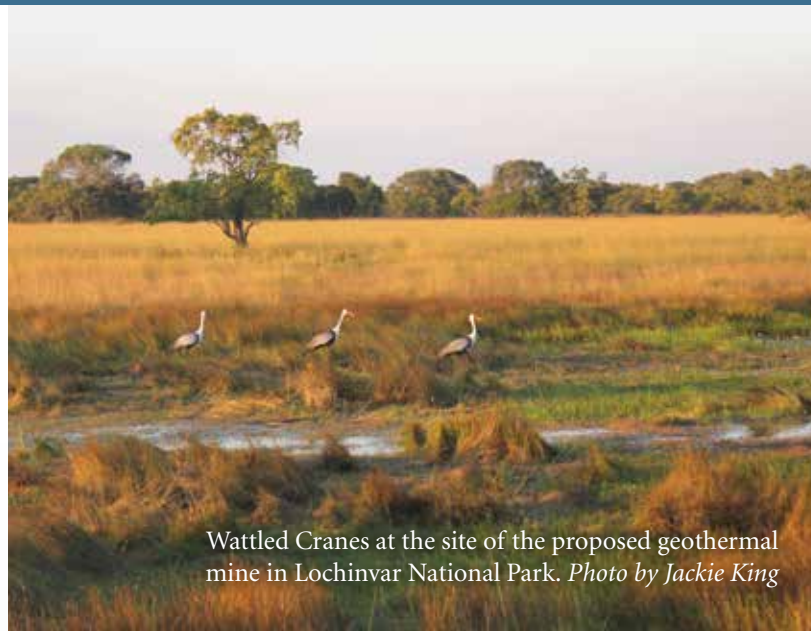
Liuwa Plain National Park in western Zambia is one of the most important wetlands in Africa for Grey Crowned and Wattled Cranes, which thrive on floodplains grazed by huge herds of zebra and wildebeest. Photo by Griffin Shanungu



Read about the work of ICF's newest team member
Griffin Shanungu
 on the next page.



Remote communities depend on healthy fisheries in the Kafue Flats. *Photo by Rich Beilfuss*



Wattled Cranes at the site of the proposed geothermal mine in Lochinvar National Park. *Photo by Jackie King*

The Latest ICF Annual Report is Now Available

Featuring highlights and financial information for Fiscal Year April 2013 – March 2014

Over the last year, ICF advanced its priority conservation programs for cranes and wetlands in 15 countries worldwide, as well as here in North America, and hosted nine international colleagues and 20 interns at our ICF Headquarters' Center for Conservation Leadership in Baraboo. In 2013, we also celebrated our 40th anniversary in style! From Ibex Puppetry's thrilling *Celebration of Flight* to Jane Goodall and George Archibald's inspiring words for the conservation

leaders of tomorrow, our 40th Anniversary Gala in September was an inspirational weekend. At heart, it was a celebration of the ICF vision – our cherished aspiration that a shared passion for cranes and the wild places where they live joins us together – and together we make a real difference for cranes, for the earth, and for ourselves. We invite you to download a copy of the report at: www.saving-cranes.org/annual-report.html



Continued from page 1

Together, we mapped the future for this important program and expanded our partnership with active local and international organizations that share our commitment to this landscape. Our program builds on the intensive, nation-wide surveys we conducted for cranes and other large waterbirds in all of the major wetland systems of Zambia back in the 2000s.

In Zambia we are focused on three really big floodplains – the Kafue Flats, Liuwa Plain, and Bangweulu Swamp– that support the breeding, feeding, and roosting requirements for two-thirds of world's 8,000 Wattled Cranes and huge concentrations of Grey Crowned Cranes that are in rapid decline elsewhere in Africa. The Kafue Flats is renowned for its spectacular birdlife (more than 400 species) and endemic antelope, the Kafue lechwe, found nowhere else in the world. The Liuwa Plain is grazed by enormous herds of wildebeest across a mosaic of wetlands and grasslands that offers a glimpse of what our northern prairie pothole region must have once looked like when blanketed by herds of American bison. The Bangweulu Swamp is a stunning kaleidoscope of papyrus, reeds, and rushes, stronghold of the strange and elusive Shoebill sought by birders worldwide.

Each of these wetlands presents unique conservation changes that will demand much of our time, resources, and creativity in the coming years. In the Kafue Flats, for example, much of our focus is on land and water management. In partnership with the World Wildlife Fund, dam operators, and government water authorities, we are working to improve water conditions by restoring more natural flooding patterns that have been severely reduced by the operation of large dams. We need to control the spread of the invasive shrub mimosa, which has proliferated because of degraded water conditions, with an innovative

program of chemical, biological, and physical control that engages local community members in benefiting from this effort. We need to find alternatives to proposed geothermal and gypsum mines that are much better located outside the boundaries of this protected area. And we need to promote ecotourism and other ventures to generate income and support for this magnificent wetland. Our success in these efforts will determine whether the flats remain one of the

world's strongholds for Wattled Cranes.

Liuwa Plain National Park of far western Zambia is in a much healthier ecological state than the flats, with unimpeded water flows and little threat of large-scale development, but there as elsewhere in Zambia, local communities make heavy use of the wetlands. ICF is focused on research and monitoring needed to support management efforts

by the African Parks Foundation and Zambian Wildlife Authority. We are working to understand how the timing of fishing activity in the park's wetlands will affect the nesting success of cranes and other species, and the impact of livestock grazing, wildlife grazing, and water conditions on the quality of breeding and feeding grounds.

In all of our efforts in Zambia, we are focused on building the capacity of local wildlife managers, students, and others to ensure the long-term sustainability of these rich wetlands and their threatened cranes. Griffin, who exudes enthusiasm for Zambia's wetlands and wildlife, is a wonderful mentor and role model for future conservationists. We hope you will join us on a future ICF trip to experience these amazing wetlands for yourself, or contact us to learn more about how you can help preserve a future for cranes and wetlands in Zambia.

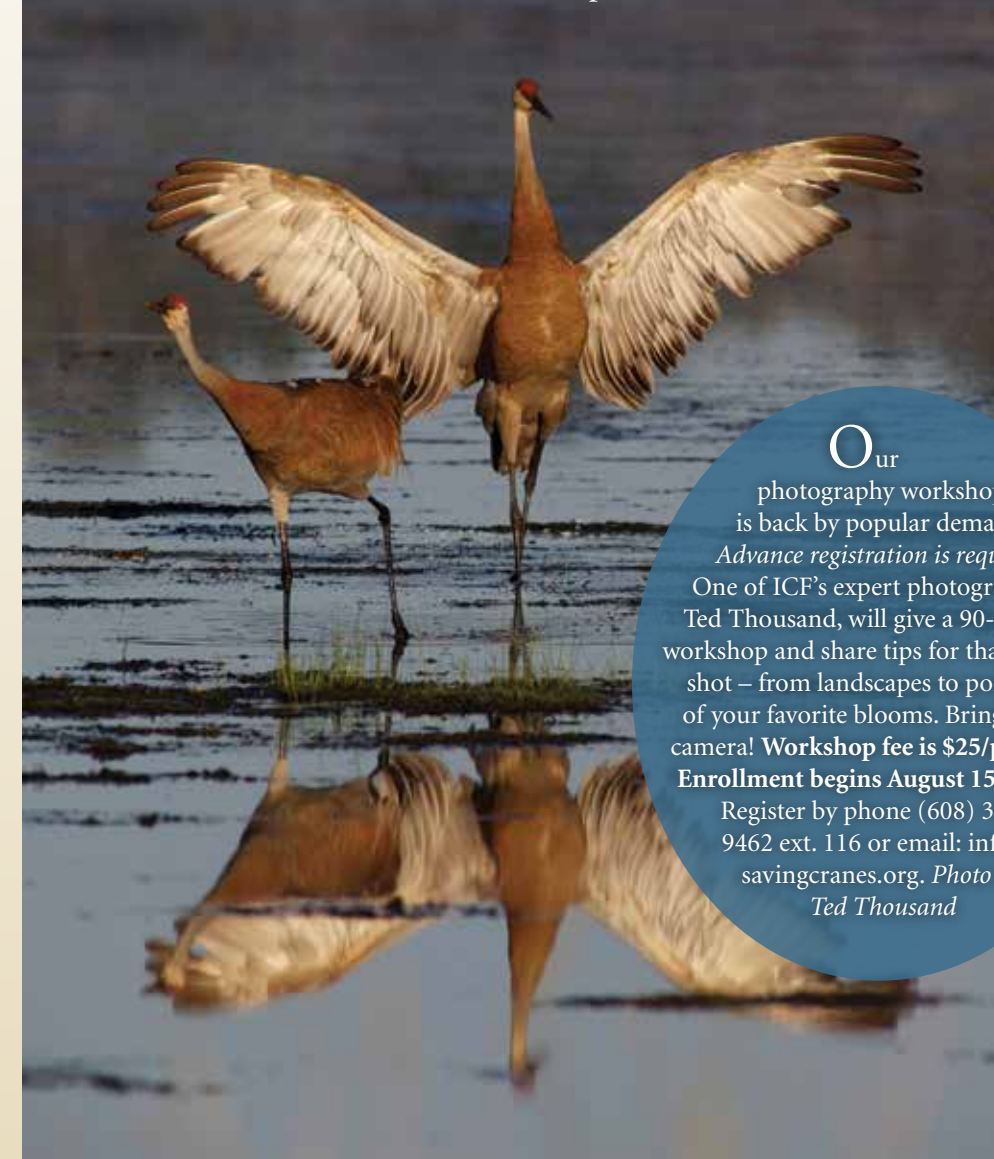


Map by Dorn Moore

Annual Member Appreciation Day

at ICF headquarters in Baraboo on Saturday, September 27, 2014

9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.



Our photography workshop is back by popular demand! Advance registration is required. One of ICF's expert photographers, Ted Thousand, will give a 90-minute workshop and share tips for that perfect shot – from landscapes to portraits of your favorite blooms. Bring your camera! **Workshop fee is \$25/person. Enrollment begins August 15, 2014.** Register by phone (608) 356-9462 ext. 116 or email: info@savingcranes.org. *Photo by Ted Thousand*

New this year – Cranes, Coffee, and Continental Breakfast!

The ICF gates will open at 9 a.m. and breakfast will be served promptly at 9:30 a.m. at our scenic Whooping Crane exhibit. Enjoy many fun activities throughout the day:

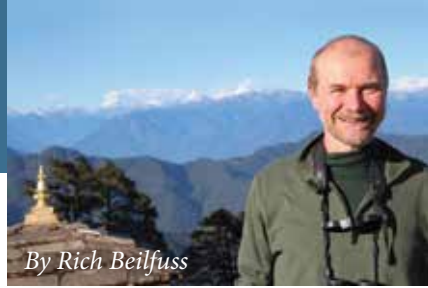
- Behind-the-scenes tours of our veterinary labs and the Crowned Crane building.
- Crane City (ICF's breeding facility) is open to our members only once a year, so don't miss your chance to visit and learn about our innovative approaches to captive management! These tours are available on a first-come, first-served basis the day of the event. **Don't forget your membership card.**
- Enjoy guided walks on our nature trails set among 100 acres of restored prairie, savanna, wetland, and forest ecosystems.

Bag lunches will be available for purchase on-site. Proceeds support Muraviovka Park (see page 6 for more about the Park).

Excluding the photography workshop, advance registration is not required for this event, but you must bring proof of membership. Not a member? Join the flock by visiting www.savingcranes.org/membership.html or call (608) 356-9462 ext. 103 or ext. 151.

Please direct event questions to Merith Adams at (608) 356-9462 ext. 149 or email membership@savingcranes.org. Visit our website as September 27th approaches to see the full calendar of activities and times. We look forward to seeing you!

Notes from the President



By Rich Beilfuss

In June we basked in another glorious *Evening with the Cranes* – how delightful to stroll our site with friends and supporters, and feast in local flavors, regional wines, and prairies in peak bloom. As with our big Anniversary Gala last year in Milwaukee, we are learning how to throw a good party in honor of all of you who make our work possible.

Much of the buzz at ICF these days is about how to grow our impact. We have an exciting and compelling mission and are positioning ourselves to fully realize our vision for the next decade – and beyond! This spring we commissioned a study to help us determine a path of growth that can best serve our mission, and how best to focus our time and funding to invest in that path. We “benchmarked” ourselves to several peer conservation groups, such as the American Bird Conservancy, Birdlife International, and Wildlife Conservation Society, and captured essential lessons learned from the various paths followed by each of the benchmark organizations. The ability to examine and compare their approaches, successes, and program impact turned out to be very valuable in helping us identify our own best pathway to the future.



Photo by Deb Johnson

The world of conservation is fraught with challenges, and we must overcome many roadblocks on our path to saving cranes and the wetlands, watersheds, and flyways they depend on. We are deeply frustrated by the latest roadblock we face – the decision by the Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals to reverse a lower court decision that mandated fresh-water inflows to Whooping Crane habitat on the Texas coast.

The original case, which many of our members have followed since 2010, was brought by The Aransas Project (TAP), a non-profit coalition of municipalities, businesses, and conservation organizations (including ICF) concerned about the future of the Texas coast. We contended that the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ) allowed too much water to be removed from the Guadalupe and San Antonio Rivers, and consequently the downstream bay salinity increased beyond what drought would cause. These actions resulted in reduced fresh drinking water and food supply for the cranes and

ultimately resulted in 23 deaths, which was 8.5% of the Texas Whooping Crane flock. U.S. District Court Judge Janis Jack ruled that TCEQ violated the Endangered Species Act through their water management practices, including not exercising available emergency powers to protect the cranes. The District Court ordered TCEQ to stop granting new water use permits for the rivers until they could provide reasonable assurances that new permits would not result in harm to the

Whooping Crane. TCEQ was directed to seek an Incidental Take Permit from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, which requires development of a Habitat Conservation Plan, outlining conservation

measures designed to minimize and mitigate harm to the endangered species.

In their decision to reverse that ruling, the Court of Appeals accepted that up to 23 Whooping Crane died in 2008-2009, and that the deaths were related to lack of essential food, water, and habitat requirements. However, the Court ruled that the deaths could not have been foreseen, and therefore TCEQ cannot be held liable because their authorization of water use did not consider that it would directly result in harm. In doing so, the Circuit Court ignored the alarms that scientists and concerned citizens have sounded for decades about the profound consequences of unsustainable water management, especially in drought-prone river basins like those of Texas.

This decision only reinvigorates our efforts to promote innovative and environmentally sound water management practices aimed at ensuring healthy river basins for all. As ICF's Texas Program Manager, Liz Smith, reflects, “We must find viable solutions that apportion the limited available water throughout the coastal basins without sacrificing quality of life for its residents, or reducing the estuary ecosystems to lifeless bodies of water.” Thank you for supporting our ongoing efforts to rethink the way our precious waters are managed, to ensure a future for North America's iconic species, the Whooping Crane – and all who value our bays and estuaries.

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The ICF Bugle is the quarterly newsletter for members of the International Crane Foundation. ICF was founded in 1973 by Ronald Sauey, Ph.D. (1948 - 1987) and George Archibald, Ph.D.

Editor: Betsy Didrickson

Bugle comments or questions? Please write Betsy at Bugle@savingcranes.org or P.O. Box 447, Baraboo, WI 53913

Memberships are vital to ICF. Please join or give a gift membership to a friend at the following annual rates:

Student or Senior Citizen.....	\$25
Individual.....	\$35
Family.....	\$50
Associate.....	\$100
Sustaining.....	\$250
Sponsor.....	\$500
Patron.....	\$1,000
Benefactor.....	\$2,000
Cranemaker.....	\$10,000

The Partner of Choice



Colleagues from the Wildlife Science and Conservation Center of Mongolia set up camp to further the research on declining White-naped Cranes. Photo by Nyamba Batbayar



Whooping Crane's status on the Endangered Species List. Myra-Jean's mother took it one step further by asking her company to match her \$50 earnings. We are humbled by Myra-Jean's donation and inspired by her conservation spirit at such a young age. Myra-Jean, you are our partner of choice!

We also met Olya from Minnesota this summer when she visited the ICF Headquarters in Baraboo. Olya developed this crane costume (pictured here outside the Visitor Center) to celebrate the solstice as part of a local event. Olya is an expert stilt-walker and uses her talent and crane costume to raise awareness about cranes. Our staff was in awe of this amazing little girl. Olya, you are our partner of choice!

Join Myra-Jean and Olya as partners in crane conservation and help us develop and implement nature-based solutions to the challenges that lie ahead. Our dedicated staff and partners will ensure that every dollar invested in ICF yields the most for cranes, other wildlife and ecosystems – benefiting our water, land, and livelihoods.

Please make a gift today with the enclosed envelope. If your employer has a matching gift program, you will double your impact on ICF's programs, and by setting up an automatic monthly gift, your on-going support will further ICF's innovative science and outreach. **Thank you for being our partner of choice.**

ICF is one of the world's most successful conservation organizations at gaining international cooperation for the protection of wildlife and the landscapes they inhabit. By focusing on the universal appeal and charisma of cranes, we are inspiring and mobilizing a global community of dedicated and resourceful people for a direct and lasting impact on the environment. We are known in the conservation world for our “get it done” reputation. For this reason, ICF has often been the partner of choice for larger and more well-known organizations. For example, our new Zambia Crane and Wetlands Conservation Program described on page 2 is a close partnership with the World Wildlife Fund and Birdwatch Zambia (Birdlife International), as well as the government Zambian Wildlife Authority. And we are partnered with the U.S. Forest Service and the Wildlife Science and Conservation Center of Mongolia on our project tracking White-naped Cranes from Mongolia to China highlighted in the last issue of *The Bugle*. We are committed to always being the partner of choice for agencies, businesses, communities, foundations, universities, and all who commit to saving cranes.

While we are honored to be trusted by prominent organizations throughout the world, we also know that our work is made possible largely through the generosity of private individuals – and for this reason – **we choose you as our partner of choice!**

ICF is involved with many inspirational conservation activities on five continents, but it is here at home that we recently found inspiration from a four-year-old in California, who set up a lemonade stand and told her mother she wanted to help the Whooping Cranes. Myra-Jean (pictured at left at her lemonade stand) loves birds and is aware of the



Twenty Years of Helping Cranes and People

AT MURAVIOVKA PARK IN THE AMUR REGION OF RUSSIA

By George Archibald, ICF Co-founder and Member of the Board of Muraviovka Park

The mighty Amur River that defines the border between Russia and China and penetrates deep into the grasslands of Mongolia is the longest undammed river in the world. It also approximates the boundary between two of our planet's major biological regions – the Palearctic (taiga and tundra of Russia) and the Oriental. Consequently, in the zone of overlap there is a remarkable mixing of species. The floodplains of the Amur provide the most northern breeding areas for two threatened crane species of the Oriental region, the Red-crowned and White-naped Cranes. Little was known about these species in Russia when Sergei Smirenski from Moscow State University began his research in 1974. Within this vast expanse, he determined that a wetland complex about 30 miles south of the border city, Blagoveshchensk, was one of the most significant breeding areas for both species of cranes as well as the threatened Oriental Stork.

From his camp, Sergei studied the cranes and storks in the 1970s. He spotted about a dozen pairs of each type of crane and in a tree the huge stick nest of a pair of storks. Sergei and his wife Elena, together with ornithologist Sergei Winter, established a Crane Working Group of the USSR in 1979. We became friends in the early 1980s. We sometimes met on a park bench at Moscow Zoo because it was illegal for me to visit his home or for Sergei to come to my hotel. When he described the Amur Region, I dreamed of one day experiencing those landscapes.

After the collapse of the USSR in 1991, the new Russia entered a period of readjustments, austerity, and an attrition of federal support for conservation. Concerned that the wetlands of Muraviovka might be destroyed by development, in 1992 Sergei proposed to the local authorities that 12,000 acres of wetland as well as adjoining farmland be leased to the nonprofit conservation organization, the Socio-Economic Union of Russia. On the farmland Sergei hoped to demonstrate sustainable agricultural practices.

In 1991 Sergei visited ICF and proposed that Jim Harris and I help raise money for a 50-year land lease of the lands at Muraviovka. Realizing that White-naped Cranes in the Amur lowlands winter in Izumi, Japan, I shared this need with our colleague and friend, Noritaka Ichida, the Director of the Wild Bird Society of Japan. He placed a small advertisement in a leading Japanese newspaper. An employee of a textile

company, Pop International, was fascinated by the possibility of helping the cranes in Russia. Her colleagues and the owners of the company, Mr. and Mrs. Takeshi Tanaka, also endorsed the idea and provided \$50,000 to be given to the Tambovka District Administration in exchange for

land-use rights on ~12,000 hectares of wetlands and crop fields for 50 years.

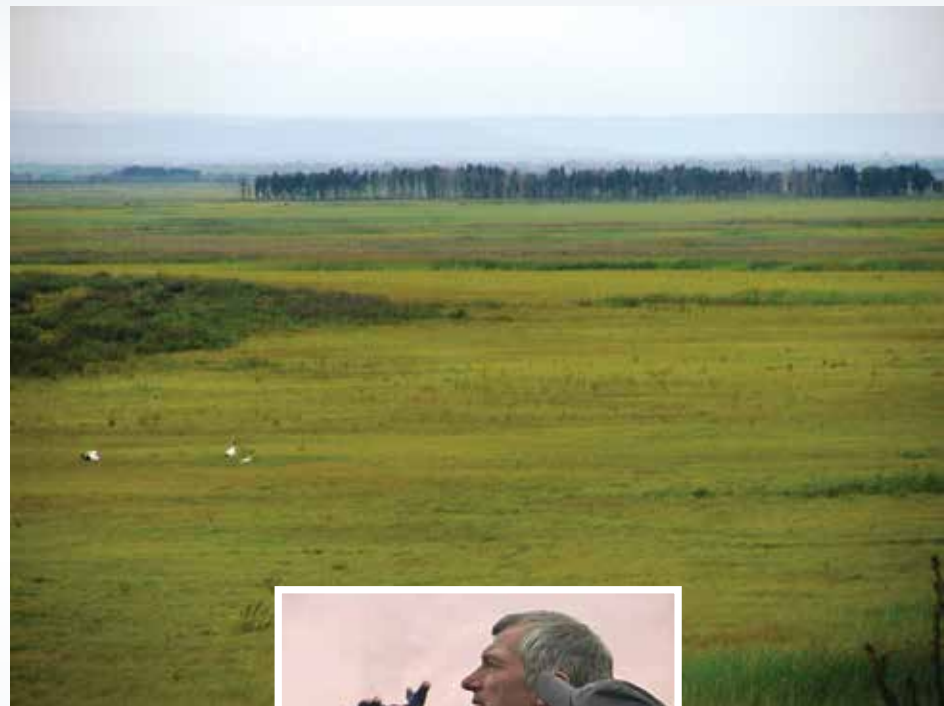
Muraviovka Park was founded in 1994. That summer tent camps accommodated groups of birders, followed by summer camps for children. With major support from the John D. and Katherine T. MacArthur Foundation, a large headquarters building was constructed. The following year Pop International helped build the education center. A professional farmer was hired, farm equipment purchased, and crops planted. Muraviovka Park is best known locally for its remarkable outreach

programs for children. Researchers and educators from China, South Korea, Japan, Germany and the U.S. have assisted the Park with these efforts over the years. Housed in cabins beside the wetland, groups of up to 60 children spend time at the Park to learn about natural history and conservation through instruction provided by volunteer teachers from both Russia and the U.S.

Sergei's dream became a reality.

Operational support for the Park has been provided through the sale of harvested crops and grants secured through ICF and from active Friends of Muraviovka Park groups in Russia, South Korea and the U.S. The Park is especially indebted to American Eliza Klose, who chaired the Board of Trustees for 10 years. In recent years, Russian membership and responsibilities on the Board has increased. We are hopeful that soon, the Park will primarily be supported through sources in Russia.

Twenty years have passed rapidly. The wetlands remain intact – supporting breeding pairs of Red-crowned, White-naped Cranes, and Oriental Storks. The Board of Trustees is addressing the challenge of securing new leadership as Sergei (now 67) moves back to the field research he so loves. Jim Harris and I remain on the Board and are committed to achieving these vital transitions. As we celebrate two decades of achievement at Muraviovka Park, we extend our congratulations to Sergei and his remarkable helper and wife Elena, to Svetlana Yakovenko, the Park's Director, and to all the people from many nations who have helped strengthen this historic project.



Elena and Sergei Smirenski watching their beloved cranes. Photo by Frank Heien

Hooded Cranes Inspire Creative Maneuvers

By Bryant Tarr, ICF Curator of Birds



Wasabi awaits fresh goodies dug up by his foster mom, Belmont. Photo by Ted Thousand

There's a new Hooded Crane in town! "Wasabi" hatched on June 6, 2014, under "Belmont," a 16-year-old female who doesn't have a mate and is not actually his biological mother. Wasabi's biological mom is a bird called "Kashe." She's 28-years-old and lives in a Crane City pen down the street from Belmont--and she doesn't have a mate either. Wait...what? How is this possible? And why did it happen this way?



The captive population of Hooded Cranes (*Grus monacha*) in North America is managed through the American Zoo and Aquarium Association (AZA) Species Survival Plan (SSP) program. ICF regularly collaborates with managers of the nine crane species that are covered by SSPs, and we provide valuable assistance to these efforts to perpetuate genetically sustainable captive populations.

Currently, Hooded Cranes present captive population managers with two main challenges; there are fewer than 30 of these birds in AZA facilities, and many of them are not breeding. The second of these challenges is where a little creativity can go a long way, and ICF is helping to fill the void.

Quite often the lack of breeding behavior is a behavioral problem (e.g., two birds who don't get along), or sometimes we get two birds that get along and want to breed but are not a good genetic match, so we can't let them. Further complicating the matter, often the best genetic match for one bird is at another facility entirely! One obvious action SSP managers take is to recommend the transfer of animals between



Wasabi's sibling gets a post-hatch check-up at the Denver Zoo. Photo by Denver Zoo

zoological facilities to try and get the best genetic matches together. Over the years ICF has been home to no fewer than 40 Hooded Cranes, most of these have been sent to other facilities eventually with the aim of making good genetic matches. However, the behavioral and social aspects of these monogamous, long-lived animals frequently derails our best intentions. Long story short: you can put two cranes in a pen together, but you can't make them fall in love!

Currently ICF has 4 adult Hooded Cranes, 2 male and 2 female. None of them get along and all are housed separately. Belmont and Kashe were both raised in captivity and in close proximity to people. Because of their interactions with humans while growing up, each of them responds better to attention from their human keepers than they do to attention from male Hooded Cranes. In order to achieve fertile eggs from either of these birds, ICF aviculturists have had to play the role of a good crane mate in the spring by going into their pens several times a week and stimulating these females with a nice back massage. No joke! This frequent interaction replicates the physical stimulation and attention a female crane normally gets from her mate. Without this attention, they sometimes won't lay eggs at all, but if we do, they will produce eggs.

After an 8 year hiatus of no eggs, and after 2 years of intensified effort by ICF Aviculturists, Kashe is again laying eggs. We used artificial insemination to fertilize her eggs with a genetically valuable male "Fraiser" and we are allowing Belmont to raise Kashe's chick because Belmont has recent parent-rearing experience after raising her own chick, "Bunchberry" (produced in the same way with Belmont and a different male, "Niles") two years ago. This year we sent another of Kashe's fertile eggs to the Denver Zoo and they hatched Wasabi's sibling which is being raised by a pair of Hooded cranes there! Despite all the roadblocks, ICF is leading the way forward by using creative methods to get around the challenges created by such a small population. Bunchberry, Wasabi, and one sibling of each at the Denver Zoo represent renewed hope for a healthy future for Hooded Cranes in captivity.



International Crane Foundation

E11376 Shady Lane Rd.
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