

THE BROLGA BUGLE

Editor: Ron Sauey; Asst. Editors: John Seaberg, Katharine Green

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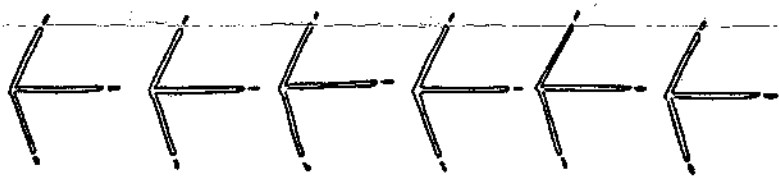
International Crane Foundation Quarterly Newsletter

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Map of Iran showing former wintering grounds of the Siberian Crane along the southeast shore of the Caspian Sea. Lake Parshian is in the vicinity of Shiraz in south-central Iran. Common Cranes winter near this lake feeding on harvested wheat fields. Lake Parshian was chosen as the site for the Siberian Crane Reintroduction Plan because it offers suitable habitat and proper food plants for these birds.

MAKING TRACKS - news of the foundation



ICF Unfurls Its Banner in Iran

Where Common Cranes Prove Elusive Quarry

How does one go about catching, marking, and releasing two hundred extremely wary Common Cranes when subsisting on a diet of yoghurt and dark bread and aided by a team of helpers who speak only Persian? ICF's George Archibald is currently pondering this challenging question from his tent in the bleak but beautiful hill country of Southcentral Iran. He's there at the request of Iran's Department of Environment to coordinate a bold new plan for the reintroduction of the Siberian Crane.

As we reported in last fall's issue of the *Bugle*, ICF's Siberian Crane Reintroduction Plan calls for the placement of Siberian Crane eggs (*Grus leucogeranus*) in the nests of Common Cranes (*Grus grus*). The Common Cranes, duped by the similarity of the Siberian Crane's eggs and young to their own, will hatch and raise this foster species and unwittingly produce a new population of the rare and beautiful Siberian Crane.

Simplicity itself. Or perhaps we should say the *idea* is simplicity itself. Implementing the plan will take a great deal of teamwork between ICF, Iran, and the Soviet Union.

George Archibald is in Iran tackling Phase 1 of the Reintroduction Plan. Right now, no one knows the location of the breeding grounds for the Common Cranes which winter in Iran. George will catch the cranes, attach a bright green numbered banner to their wings, and release the birds again. These banners will make the birds conspicuous from a great distance

Phase 2 of the Plan will be to locate the marked birds on the breeding grounds. Common Cranes have a widespread distribution, breeding from northwestern Europe clear through to eastern Siberia. The Common Cranes which winter in Iran probably nest somewhere in western Siberia. We have consequently alerted our crane comrades in the Soviet Union to look for our wing-marked birds.

If all goes according to schedule, ICF will be ready for Phase 3 of the plan in the spring of 1977. At that time, a team of Russian and ICF researchers will collect eggs from Siberian Crane nests in eastern Siberia and fly them across the continent to the nests of the Iranian Common Cranes. After that, Phase 4, the hatching, rearing, and fledging of Siberian Crane chicks, is strictly for the birds.

Our latest correspondence from George indicates that after weeks of trying unsuccessfully to catch the shy and intelligent Common Crane, he has finally lured over five hundred of these birds to a feeding station near Lake Parshian (see map). We are all anxiously awaiting news of George's next move, which we hope will be quicker than that of his elusive quarry.

(Editor's note: As we go to press, we have news that George has captured 91 Common Cranes. We congratulate George and wish him success in the remainder of his mission).

A New Mate for Lulu

Lulu, ICF's only female Japanese Crane, will soon be receiving a new mate. Tokyo's Ueno Zoo (pronounced WAY-no) is loaning the Crane Foundation a male Japanese Crane to replace Phil, Lulu's last mate who unfortunately died last fall after an operation to remove an injured wing.

Lulu may be a Japanese Crane, *Grus japonensis*, but her nationality is American; she was hatched and raised at the Honolulu Zoo in 1954. Lulu and her new Japanese mate, "Ueno," will therefore constitute a truly "international affair."

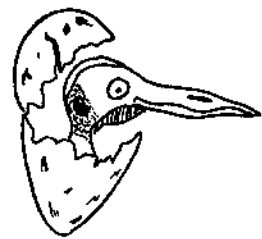
Although Lulu and Ueno may have vastly different origins and backgrounds, we aren't expecting any communications problems. Lulu and Ueno will understand each other perfectly at their very first meeting. Unlike people who learn to speak languages which differ from place to place, cranes have a genetically-coded "language" consisting of many different postures and movements of the head, neck and wings. Visitors to ICF's headquarters often marvel at the amazing antics of our hand-raised cranes which often try to communicate with humans using their own peculiar language.

While Lulu and Ueno may have no trouble communicating, we don't expect that their first "conversations" will be friendly. Cranes are normally very aggressive birds. A great deal of their language is devoted to threat—a sort of "wrestlers' vocabulary." Cranes are particularly aggressive toward strange birds and will often threaten and even attack a new bird. A Japanese Crane with an

eight-foot wingspan and a 10 inch beak can do an appalling amount of damage to another crane.

Consequently we will keep Lulu and Ueno separated initially. They will be able to see and call to each other, but netting will prevent them from fighting. After the two cranes become accustomed to each other and appear to be less aggressive, we will put the birds together for short periods of time and under constant supervision. If after several months of these trial meetings, the birds appear relaxed and friendly toward each other, they will be allowed to stay together. This process does not always work. Some cranes never lose their aggressiveness towards another bird and have to be separated at all times.

We are hoping, however, that Lulu and Ueno will hit it off well, and that as a result, the incubator room at ICF will eventually be filled with the incessant peepings of Japanese Crane chicks. We extend our gratitude to the Ueno Zoo for the loan of the male Japanese Crane.



MILE-STONES

61 Wild Whoopers— This Century's All Time High

This winter 61 wild Whooping Cranes are gracing the wetlands of North America, the highest number of these cranes in this century. While still only a handful in comparison to their numbers 200 years ago, these sixty-one Whooping Cranes represent more than a four-fold increase over the all time low of 14 birds in 1941.

There are several reasons for this encouraging report. First, all of the 49 Whooping Cranes that wintered last year at the Aransas National Wildlife Refuge near Corpus Christi, Texas returned again this year. This includes, by the way, a freak Whooper named "Turk" who sports an unusual fleshy growth that hangs from his throat. From a distance this tumor looks remarkably like the normal wattle on the throat of the Wattle Crane, a large African species.

The second reason for the large number of wild Whooping Cranes is that eight young cranes arrived at Aransas this year. This is a great improvement over last year when only one young bird reached Texas. This year's eight juvenile Whoopers were first spotted by the Canadian Wildlife Service at Alberta's Wood Buffalo National Park, the Whooping Crane's only known breeding grounds. Apparently all eight young cranes were successful in traversing the 2500 mile migration route to southern Texas with their parents—no mean feat for these young, inexperienced fliers. In past years, the same before and after counts in Alberta and Texas have revealed that young birds are often lost in migration, perhaps from fatigue.

Finally, the reintroduction project at Grays Lake, Idaho has added several Whoopers to the wild population. Last spring, Dr. Rod Drewien of the University of Idaho placed 14 Whooping Crane eggs in the nests of wild Sandhill Cranes at the Grays Lake National Wildlife Refuge in southeastern Idaho. The Sandhills hatched nine of these eggs and raised six Whooping Crane chicks to fledging. Four of these chicks are now under daily observation by Dr. Drewien in or near the Bosque del Apache Refuge in New Mexico. The other two chicks are missing, but they still may be alive and wintering with their Sandhill parents at other places in the southwest.

The following is a report from Dr. Drewien on the current status of the Whooping Crane reintroduction project:

"At 10:30 a.m. on 8 October, 1975, a mottled white and rust-colored juvenile Whooping Crane accompanying 22 Greater Sandhills flew out over the 9-mile Grays Lake Marsh. The cranes called continuously as they spiralled upward, gaining sufficient altitude to top the freshly snow-covered 9,000 foot ridgetops of Idaho's Caribou Mountains. The flock then oriented southeastward and vanished toward Wyoming.

"I alerted Refuge Manager C. F. 'Pete' Bryant at Colorado's Monte Vista National Wildlife Refuge of the departure of the Whooper. Some 500 miles southeast and 30½ hours later, Whooping Crane juvenile wearing U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service leg band number 829-02503 was found with its Sandhill Crane foster-parents feeding in a barley field near Monte Vista Refuge. Four other Whoopers were also observed migrating from Grays Lake marsh between 14 and 22 October.

"Observations in the San Luis Valley of Colorado indicated that four and perhaps five of the Whoopers stopped at the Monte Vista Refuge during October and November. The foster-parent families remained several weeks longer and for-

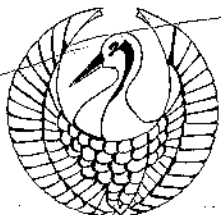
aged daily in the numerous barley fields on and around the refuge.

"At noon on 24 October, a Whooping Crane chick spiralled into the Colorado sky and departed southward with its foster-parents. About 24 hours later, they were sighted on the Bosque del Apache National Wildlife Refuge in the middle Rio Grande Valley of New Mexico. The unique family promptly established residence near a refuge cornfield which they have utilized daily through December. Refuge personnel quickly dubbed this Whooper "Corny" because of its fondness for foraging on corn. Thousands of visitors have viewed "Corny" since its arrival on the refuge in late October.

"Three additional Whoopers and their foster-parents have likewise established winter homes in the Rio Grande Valley, the last one arriving on 1 December. Two Whoopers are on the Bosque del

Apache Refuge and two others are presently north of the refuge on the river valley. The four Whoopers have remained with their foster-parents and appear to be in excellent health. They forage daily for food in corn and alfalfa fields.

"The status of two other Whoopers is presently undetermined. A fifth Whooper was sighted at the Bosque del Apache Refuge on 31 October, but it has not been seen since. Efforts are continuing to locate the missing Whoopers and one hopes they will be found before winter ends. Nevertheless, we are very elated and optimistic about the progress of the foster-parent experiment. It has been 120 years since Whoopers were last recorded in New Mexico's Rio Grande Valley. Continued success of the experiment would insure that Whooping Cranes will become permanent winter visitors to New Mexico in future years."



The Crane in Art

a Thumbnail Sketch by
Ron Sauey

Deep within the sunless Tajo Segura cave in southern Spain, a solitary crane bends its long neck downward and stares intently at its large nest. This patient bird has been guarding its real estate for over six thousand years. The crane is part of the vast collection of mammals, birds, and other animals that Stone Age Man painted on the walls of caves throughout southern Europe. Archaeologists believe that this particular cave painting was executed about 4000 B.C. which makes it considerably more recent than the 10,000 to nearly 30,000 year old cave paintings in other parts of Europe.

The Tajo Segura crane is of special interest to archaeologists and ornithologists not simply because of its age, but because it is among the first identifiable birds painted by our remote ancestors. It is also significant because it represents the dawning of the long and wonderful history of the crane as an art form.

The most popular and generally-accepted explanation for the magnificent cave paintings of Font-de-Gaure, Lascaux, and other sites of western Europe is that the drawings were a form of sympathetic magic. By depicting prey animals with darts or spears in their sides, or with bellies distended in pregnancy, hungry artists forecasted good hunting and an abundant supply of food. The world of the Stone Age peoples was, after all, a good deal harsher and less predictable than anything Modern Man knows today. We can well imagine the anonymous Tajo Segura artist salivating as he carefully drew the nesting crane on the damp cave wall and dremt of a crane egg omelette or a brace of tender crane chicks roasting over a fire.

Within a thousand years of the Tajo Segura crane painting, the advent of civilization and agriculture freed man to a great extent from the vagaries of cold winters and scarce game. This advance in human culture also permitted a certain amount of specialization in man's activities. Art became even more prevalent in human societies; only now, the art was done by an artist who painted to earn his bread and butter. Consequently, the depiction of cranes and other forms of wildlife became increasingly realistic and accomplished. The Tomb of Ti from the fifth Dynasty of Egypt—about 2500 B.C.—shows accurate portrayals of two crane species, the Demoiselle and the Common Crane. These two birds must have been common sight to the ancient Egyptians during the winter months when huge flocks appeared from the north to escape the harsh climates of northern Europe and Asia. Common and Demoiselle cranes still winter in northern Africa, but their numbers are now greatly reduced.

To follow the crane as an art form from the fifth Dynasty of Egypt through the four thousand intervening years of Minoan, Greek, Phoenician, Roman, and Persian cultures is beyond the scope of this article. It is sufficient to say that with few exceptions, such as hunting scenes, the art of these great western civilizations was not notable for the

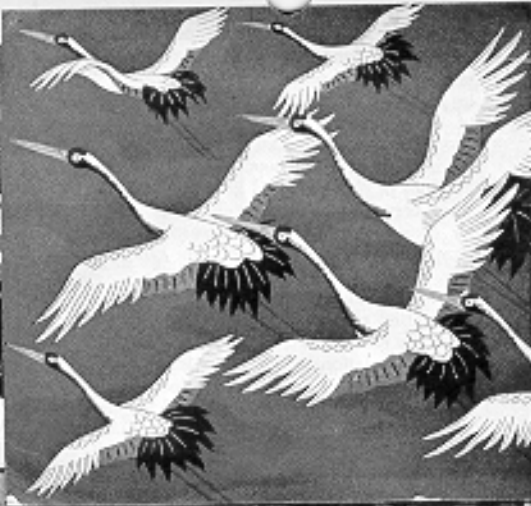
depiction of wildlife. Even the Renaissance of Europe did little to change this situation. In the glorification of man, wildlife played only a peripheral, supporting role. Common Cranes, for example, appear in Raphael's "The Miraculous Drought of Fishes," but they are poorly drawn, and merely decoration at the feet of apostles. Not until the emergence of men such as Gould, Audubon, Selby, and other prominent wildlife artists of the 19th century, was wildlife depicted accurately and lovingly in the West.

This is not the case for the Far East. It is here that one must turn to see the crane emerge as a major artistic tradition—a tradition that is still much in evidence today (see the page of Japanese greeting cards in this issue). While it would be a major task to explain why the East should develop different viewpoints toward wildlife, it is not at all difficult to understand why the crane should become a special symbol to the oriental peoples. Tall, stately, strikingly beautiful in form and action, these birds are apt subjects for the subtle, understated art of the orient.

It is uncertain when cranes become ascendant in oriental art. Certainly by the Heian Dynasty of Japan (794-1192 A.D.) cranes had become common in the art of these islands. And since the Japanese took a great deal of their cultural initiatives from the Chinese, it is probable that the Chinese were celebrating cranes even earlier.

Cranes apparently served only an ornamental value in the earlier representations in oriental art. But during the Fujiwara Era of the 11th century, cranes began to assume their now traditional role as symbols of long life and harbingers of good fortune. By the Kamakura period (1192-1333) cranes appear everywhere, in all mediums and in every imaginable position, posture, and setting. One particularly common rendition of the crane depicts the bird standing or nesting in a pine tree. This penchant for mixing cranes and pine trees has often been interpreted as the artist confusing the crane, which only nests on the ground in marshes, with the stork, a similar-looking bird which often nests in pine trees. Although this is certainly a possible explanation, I think it is more likely that the oriental artists were simply using a form of artistic license. The pine, after all, is also a symbol of long life in the orient, and it

(Continued on page 4)



Holiday Cranes
A Collection Japanese
Greeting Cards



*Happy New Year
from ICA*



The Crane in Art . . .

(Continued from page 2)

seems natural that these two symbols should be combined for added effect. Furthermore, the cranes are often painted extremely accurately.



The Common Crane, *Grus grus*. This is the species which George Archibald is currently trapping in Iran. See story on page 1.

Surely, if oriental artists were confusing storks with cranes, we'd see some occasional hybrids: cranes with long red beaks, or strongly stork-like cranes. The absence of those fanciful creatures in Japanese art argues well for the artists' powers of observation.

Cranes still play an important role in the cultures of the eastern peoples. They appear on the kimonos of the bride and groom in traditional wedding ceremonies; they are folded out of paper by countless children who learn the art of Origami; they even appear on the tails of 747's as the symbol of JAL airlines. The International Crane Foundation continually stresses the long association of cranes and human culture when we urge the eastern nations to conserve their remnant crane populations. The crane in art has occupied and fascinated man for centuries. The crane in life must be allowed to thrill and inspire man for centuries to come.

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LOAN OF GIFTS OF BIRDS

Alberta Game Farm, San Diego Zoo, Southwick Animal Farm.

International Crane Foundation

World Center for the Study and Preservation of Cranes



Three famous ornithologists recently visited the International Crane Foundation. From left: Dr. Joseph Hickey, professor of Wildlife Ecology at the U. of Wisconsin; Owen J. Gramme, author of Birds of Wisconsin; Roger Tory Peterson, author, lecturer, and editor of the Peterson Field Guide Series. George Archibald, far right, holds "Tsuru," a young Japanese Crane. Photo by Linda Smith

The International Crane Foundation is a registered, publically-supported, non-profit organization which is dedicated to the study and conservation of cranes throughout the world. In its organizational charter, the International Crane Foundation sets forth its five principal goals:

1. Research—to determine the biological attributes and requirements of cranes both in the wild and in captivity.
2. Conservation—to protect cranes and their habitats throughout the world.
3. Captive Propagation—to establish a species bank of the rare cranes to guard against extinction.
4. Restocking—to reestablish cranes within former habitat wherever feasible
5. Education—to act as a disseminator of information on cranes to the people of the world.

The International Crane Foundation currently holds the world's most complete collection of captive cranes. These birds are used as breeding stock and as subjects for behavioral and physiological research. Tours of the Crane Foundation are welcomed but only on an appointment basis. Tours can be scheduled from May 15 until Nov. 15. Saturdays are the best days, but alternate days can be specially arranged on occasion. For more information, contact the International Crane Foundation in Baraboo, Wisconsin.

The International Crane Foundation is completely supported by public donations. Memberships in the Foundation are the usual way of contributing to the organization. Information on memberships, bequests, and alternate ways of donating funds to the Crane Foundation can be obtained by writing directly to the International Crane Foundation, City View Road, Baraboo, Wisconsin 53913 or telephone: 608-356-3553.