



# THE ICF BUGLE

Volume 11, Number 3

July, 1985

World Center for the Study and Preservation of Cranes

## The African Cranes

by George Archibald, ICF Director

It had been fifteen hours since we left New York and finally I had my first glimpse of Africa. The Kalahari Desert of Botswana stretched like an ocean into the horizons as the 747 pushed on to Johannesburg. After 13 years of work in Eurasia and Australia, I had finally come to Africa, home to six species of cranes.

Sponsored by the Province of Transvaal and several bird clubs in South Africa, my mission was to attend the Sixth Pan African Ornithological Congress (PAOC), and briefly to look at cranes and their habitats in Botswana and South Africa. My host was one of Africa's foremost ornithologists and a crane-man besides, Mr. Warwick Tarboton.

One hundred and thirty-nine ornithologists from 17 African and 6 non-African nations assembled between March 29 and April 4 to hear 55 research reports at the comfortable La Manga Club just outside Francistown in eastern Botswana. The meeting ended with sessions on conservation chaired by Mr. Ian Prestt of the International Council for Bird Preservation. Many forest birds on the African mainland and endemic species on nearby islands are endangered because of habitat alterations. The fundamental problem is the exploding human population.

We had been aware of the threats facing the major wetlands used by Wattled Cranes in southcentral Africa as a consequence of the pioneering studies by ICF volunteer-researcher Paul Konrad in 1978-79 (see "An African Wetland Safari" in *The Brolga Bugle*, Vol. 5, No. 2). In subsequent years the New York Zoological Society and the Edward John Nobel Foundation had established a successful captive breeding program for



Gray Crowned Cranes are the most abundant cranes in Africa. They range from Kenya south all the way to the Cape. Photo by Warwick Tarboton.

Wattled Cranes at their Wildlife Survival Center on St. Catherine's Island, Georgia. But critical field surveys were lacking from most of the countries where cranes occur.

### Crane Numbers Dwindle

The PAOC provided an opportunity for the Working Group on African Cranes (WGAC) to meet. WGAC had formed at

the International Crane Workshop in India in 1983. Since then, Dr. Emil Urban, a professor of zoology at Augusta College, Georgia, and an expert on African birds as a consequence of 10 years spent in Ethiopia, has investigated the status of cranes by corresponding with ornithologists throughout Africa. Emil presented his findings at the PAOC.

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# Archibald Wins WWF's Highest Award

From WWF News Release

Dr. George Archibald, whose conservation efforts to save cranes have surmounted international political obstacles, has been awarded World Wildlife Fund's highest honor, its Gold Medal.

In presenting the award, WWF International President HRH The Duke of Edinburgh praised Dr. Archibald, 38, co-founder and Director of the International Crane Foundation (ICF): "In recognition of his unique contribution to the survival of the world's cranes and the conservation of their wetland habitats, through the International Crane Foundation and his contacts with scientists in many countries.

The ceremony took place on May 19 in Divonne, France, as part of the annual meeting of WWF's International Council.

Dr. Archibald arrived for the WWF Gold Medal Award ceremony directly from the Oka Nature Reserve, 200 miles south of Moscow in the Soviet Union, where he had given Soviet scientists Siberian Crane eggs which had been produced and fertilized at the ICF in Wisconsin, U.S.A. Two eggs were substituted into nests of Common Cranes and were due to hatch in late May.

In an attempt to counter the loss of wetlands worldwide, WWF is launching in September a campaign to raise funds for a US \$3 million wetlands conservation programme prepared by the International Union for Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources (IUCN).

# Foreign Interns Come to Wisconsin

by Jim Harris,  
Education Coordinator

On April 24, I found myself sitting in a nearly empty restaurant, one of the few restaurants open at 11 p.m., with three visitors from China. I had no idea what time it was for them. They had just flown into Wisconsin straight from Beijing. Although our translator would not arrive for several days, my companions had successfully indicated they still needed supper.

All of us were sleepy, smiling back and forth, and passing the Chinese-English dictionary from one hand to another. My guests looked curiously about for first impressions of America; the restaurant looked pretty dingy to me. The menu didn't have any pictures, and that worried me. But I pointed to "hamburger" in the dictionary and they smiled and nodded. We ordered three hamburgers. I wasn't hungry and settled for orange juice.

When the hamburgers arrived, it became clear they didn't know how to eat them. I didn't think it good manners to demonstrate by biting into one of their meals, so I pantomimed eating a hamburger — without success. At last I noticed two men with sandwiches at a far table. I pointed, and my companions learned quickly. But I hoped that ICF could provide better instruction over the next six weeks.

## ICF develops curriculum

This spring ICF initiated an expanded internship program for wildlife professionals

and educators from abroad. While ICF has hosted foreign visitors in the past, familiarizing them with crane care and conservation programs, our new site and buildings greatly facilitate training workers from the countries where cranes are in trouble. ICF cannot directly implement programs in the dozens of countries where cranes and wetlands urgently require protection. Our hope is to instigate and support efforts by conservationists within the various countries. Now, through our foreign intern program, key researchers and educators can travel to Wisconsin and study the methods, materials, and programs ICF has developed over the last 12 years.

This spring we hosted six visiting professionals in what we considered a pilot effort. We were pleased with the results and plan to continue the program each spring and fall. Internships will normally last three to six weeks and include practical work in aviculture, education, and habitat restoration. Field trips will be tailored to each individual's interests. Toward the end of their visit, interns will assemble and adapt written and audio-visual materials for use at home.

## Staff learns from visitors

ICF staff have enthusiastically befriended the guests. The teaching has definitely been a two-way process. As staff explained their work, they had a chance to hear firsthand how crane conservation is developing abroad. All of our visitors were involved in significant crane projects in their home countries.

Mr. Prayuth Intarapanich, of the Royal Forestry Department of Thailand, heads an interpretive center in a rain forest just five kilometers from Bangpra, the reintroduction site for the Eastern Sarus Crane into Thailand (see *ICF Bugle*, Volume 11, Number 1). He will be developing education programs relating to cranes and wetlands, centered on the six young Eastern Sarus Cranes ICF sent to Bangpra in November of 1984. He will also incorporate wetlands into the education programs he delivers to thirty schools near Bangpra.

Mr. Krishan Kumar came to ICF from Bharatpur, India, where he is an Honorary Warden at the Keoladeo National Park, last winter home in India for the Siberian Crane. Until recently, livestock grazing and firewood gathering threatened wetland habitats for the cranes. Public awareness of cranes and wetlands could be crucial in future years if this flock is to survive. Mr. Kumar has helped organize a crane count at the park, using the public as volunteer observers, and hopes to expand it through Bharatpur district.

The three Chinese visitors from Heilongjiang Province are all involved in crane conservation in northeastern China. Mr. Cao Yupu, of the Ministry of Forestry, adminis-



George Archibald (center) receives the Gold Medal from HRH The Duke of Edinburgh, WWF International President. Charles de Haes, Director-General of WWF International, stands beside them.

ters wildlife management programs, while Mrs. Cheng Caiyun conducts research for the Harbin Zoo. Mr. Xu Tielin of Zhalong Nature Reserve has worked for years with captive cranes. He will be working with the seven crane pairs that ICF has arranged to have sent to Zhalong for education and breeding programs.

ICF hosted another Chinese scientist, Mr. Li Dehao of the Northwest Plateau Institute of Zoology in Qinghai Province, in western China near Tibet. Mr. Li has worked with Black-necked Cranes more than anyone else in China, on both summering and wintering grounds. He has suggested possibilities for cooperation between ICF and scientists working on Black-necked Cranes in western China.

Our visitors not only taught ICF staff about crane conservation in Asia, but answered our countless questions about their cultures and wildlife. One highlight came when the Chinese prepared an extraordinary dinner. The day before, I took them to an Asian food store in Madison for groceries. Mr. Li, native to Sichuan Province where foods are served spicy, selected hot sauces and bags of red peppers. But Mr. Cao and Mrs. Cheng put most back on the shelves: their home, Heilongjiang Province, favors mild food. When the feast was ready, the staff could choose from a full range of hot and mild dishes. Some of us tried chopsticks. It was much harder than eating hamburgers.

Also special were the two field trips, when groups of ICF members had the chance to join our visitors in observing wetlands and wildlife management. The second trip, to Horicon Marsh, included travel by canoe, especially interesting as there are no canoes in Asia and our visitors learned to paddle. For our picnic supper, we lodged our canoes among cattails some distance from the great heron rookery. The Chinese passed round "tea eggs," hard boiled eggs that had been bathed in tea and spices. Hidden birds creaked and wailed. At that moment, we could imagine ourselves surrounded by the wet expanses of Zhalong.

We at ICF felt sorry to see our visitors leave, but eagerly await news of their efforts at home. And we are expecting educators from China and India to visit Baraboo for September.

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## ICF Fun Run

**Saturday, September 21, 1985**  
**11 Km. Run — 10:00 a.m.**

For more details, call 1-800-362-8414. Or write ICF Fun Run, Box 236, Wisconsin Dells, Wisconsin 53965.

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Our visitors from China and Thailand joined with ICF members in exploring Horicon Marsh by canoe. Photo by Claire Mirande.

## Fall Field Trips

Due to the popularity of ICF's two spring field trips, we are offering two more trips for the fall. ICF members and their guests are welcome.

**Sat., Sept. 21 — Necedah National Wildlife Refuge and Sandhill Wildlife Area in central Wisconsin**

**Sat.-Sun., Oct. 26-27 — Jasper-Pulaski Wildlife Area in northwestern Indiana**

The first field trip is part of an internship program for educators visiting ICF from Jiangxi Province of China. We'll be discussing cranes and other wildlife, their wetland habitats, and wildlife management. We're hoping to see some of the color-marked Sandhill Cranes released as part of a reintroduction study at ICF (see *ICF Bugle*, Vol. 11, No. 2). We'll also witness the gathering of hundreds of Sandhill Cranes on one of their roosting sites at sunset.

This trip will give you a firsthand opportunity to explore some of Wisconsin's most important wetlands for cranes and to learn about ICF's education and research efforts at home and abroad. We're asking for a donation of \$18 per person — the income will help support ICF's China programs.

The second field trip will take you to one of the few remaining wetlands in north-

western Indiana, where Sandhill Cranes from nesting areas throughout the midwest congregate en route to wintering grounds in Florida. The tour has been timed to coincide as nearly as possible with the peak of migration — between 8,000 and 12,000 cranes will be present at this extremely important refuge.

The tour will feature this extraordinary assemblage of once threatened cranes, with discussions on crane behavior, population dynamics, and human impacts. Refuge personnel will explain the history and management of this unique wildlife area. This trip is co-sponsored with the Chicago Academy of Sciences. The fee of \$22 will go toward expenses of organizing and leading the trip.

Participants will be responsible for their own food, travel, and lodging expenses. We'll send you information ahead of time regarding meeting site at the refuges, how to get there, what to bring, and other details. For the second trip, camping is available at the refuge and we'll provide the names of two motels nearby where you can reserve rooms. We'll also send out lists of participants to encourage car pooling.

Jim Harris, ICF's Education Coordinator, will be leading both trips. To reserve a place, send your full payment to ICF. Include name, address, and phone number, and specify the trip you wish to make.

We hope you can join us. Autumn is a beautiful time for crane watching!

## African Cranes

continued from page 1

The best-known African cranes are the two species of Crowned Cranes, inhabiting the savannahs and carrying a strange burst of yellow feathers atop their heads. Emil determined that the drought in recent years has reduced the Black Crowned Cranes to a few thousand across much of their range in western Africa. The species is faring better in Sudan, so that the total population lies between 60,000 and 90,000 birds.

Their ubiquitous cousin, the Gray Crowned Crane, still numbers over 100,000 birds across its broad distribution from Kenya all the way to the Cape.

Great flocks of Demoiselle and Common Cranes migrate from Asia to northeast Africa each winter — 10,000 to 20,000 Demoiselles and 30,000 to 50,000 Common Cranes. The latter species does not nest in Africa, and the last breeding Demoiselles were thought to have vanished. But Dr. Michael Thevenot reported to Emil that a tiny remnant population — of 28 to 30 Demoiselles — do survive as breeding residents on the plateau of the Atlas Mountains in Morocco!

The Blue or Stanley Crane, a close relative of the Demoiselle, is remarkable for the long feathers of its inner wing that arch gracefully toward the ground. The species is endemic to South Africa, and perhaps numbers 15,000 birds. It has declined in

some areas where the cranes eat poisons set out because the cranes inflict crop damage.

Africa's largest cranes are the majestic Wattled Cranes. Their strongholds are flood plains in Zambia and Botswana, with smaller populations in neighboring countries and a little-known group residing in high altitude wetlands of Ethiopia. In South Africa, the range of the Wattled Cranes has constricted in recent years, and the same trend is perhaps amplified to the north. Altogether, 12,000 to 14,000 Wattled Cranes survive, with many of their major wetlands threatened by water management programs.

### The Steenkampsberg

After the PAOC, Warwick Tarboton, his colleague David Allen, and I headed south to one of Africa's most interesting areas for cranes, the Steenkampsberg, at the eastern edge of the Highveld within the Province of Transvaal. At an altitude of 7,000 feet, rolling grasslands with frequent granite outcrops are interspersed by narrow marsh-carpeted valleys, called vleis. Through a quirk of geography and climate, three species of cranes — Wattled, Blue, and Gray Crowned — all nest here. At lower elevations, the steep gradient changes the marshes to streams, unsuitable for cranes.

In the 1970's, Warwick Tarboton became involved in the welfare of the Wattled Crane in the Transvaal. The last nesting report had been in 1902, with only occasional sightings of Wattled Cranes over the years. But in

1975, Warwick traveled to the highlands of Transvaal where harsh weather and a challenging landscape kept human numbers low. There he spotted a pair of Wattled Cranes with a chick. Warwick interviewed the local Afrikaaner farmers who knew all about the cranes. There were 29 pairs of Wattleds still nesting in the Transvaal!

But the vleis were being destroyed by burning, draining, flooding, and forest plantings. Conservation was urgently needed. The greatest concentration of Wattled Cranes occurred in two neighboring valleys called Verloren Valei (lost valley) and Wanhoop Valei (valley without hope). Originally two families had owned the region but over three generations it had been subdivided into eighteen tracts. Warwick recommended to the Transval Provincial Administration's Division of Nature Conservation that 7,000 hectares be purchased and protected. Fifteen of the eighteen families agreed to sell, and the Province of Transvaal bought the land for a staggering 2.5 million Rand. For the first time, Wattled Crane habitat was protected in the Transvaal.

Verloren Valei Nature Reserve is a paradise for cranes and crane researchers. At any month, but particularly in cold July, the Wattled Cranes nest on small ponds along the vleis. For much of the day they wander over the grass hillsides digging for tubers, catching rodents and insects, and pulling seeds from grass stalks. Pairs never leave their territories, unlike the Blue and Crowned Cranes that migrate to nearby lower altitudes in autumn (April-May). In spring (October-November) they return and establish their nesting territories. The Blue Cranes breed on the grassy hillsides, often near a small stream, while the Crowned Cranes nest on areas of highest vegetation in the vleis, often near the Wattled Cranes.

The three species live harmoniously in the same valleys but each uses the resources in a different manner. The Reserve represents an inspiring, and expensive, success at crane protection.

### Conservation Efforts Grow

With the exception of the Demoiselle Cranes in the Atlas Mountains, the resident species of cranes in Africa exist in the thousands. But if several key wetlands were lost in Botswana and Zambia, the majority of Wattled Cranes would disappear. And the decline of the Black Crowned Crane in west Africa gives cause for alarm.

The next few decades are critical for crane conservation in Africa. Today there are opportunities to save substantial wetland ecosystems and their cranes. But the pressures from the expanding human populations and their need for natural resources will ultimately determine the fate of cranes. Public education in Africa is vital.



The Wattled Cranes are more closely restricted to wetlands than the other cranes of Africa. Photo by Warwick Tarboton.



Wattled Cranes nested near this livestock pond in the Verloren Valei Nature Reserve. Photo by George Archibald.

Discussions at the PAOC have generated considerable interest in cranes. Many delegates have joined the Working Group on African Cranes — our numbers increased to 43 scientists and conservationists.

Numerous projects are developing. The South Africans continue their efforts to protect more vleis. Pretoria Zoo plans a major Wattled Crane propagation program with a focus on the reintroduction of cranes into areas where they have been extirpated. Emil Urban is preparing a proposal to the National Science Foundation to undertake a comprehensive study of Wattled Cranes in Zambia. The Wildlife Clubs of Kenya and Uganda are evaluating methods of our Wisconsin Crane Count for surveys of Gray Crowned Cranes, a combined research and education project.

Many other members of WGAC are now preparing to take a new look at Africa's spectacular cranes. After all, the presence of cranes indicates the welfare of wetlands — and wetlands are vital to terrestrial life.

I agreed on ICF's behalf to help coordinate research and conservation initiatives in Africa as well as publish a special newsletter, *The Crowned Crane*, that will be distributed together with *The ICF Bugle* to all members. ICF thus has new commitments to our colleagues in Africa and to the strange but attractive cranes of that continent, cranes with crowns, wattles, and long trailing wing feathers.



Blue or Stanley Cranes are widespread in grasslands of South Africa, where they are the national bird. Photo by George Archibald.

# A Gift to the World

"A Gift to the World" is the theme of a public subscription campaign that ICF is launching this summer. We're very excited about this major funding effort. It will strengthen all aspects of ICF's operations and help us realize some of our long-term dreams.

The goal is to raise a minimum of \$1.5 million, which will be used to build the Crane City breeding pens, to establish an endowment for stability in the operating budget, to upgrade professional staff compensation, and to help keep ICF debt free on its capital improvements.

Co-chairing the campaign are Stuart and Ann Tisdale of Milwaukee, Wisconsin. Assisting in the formation of the campaign cabinet and serving as its nucleus are board members Mary Wickhem, James Kuehn, and Fred Ott. These friends of ICF all are devoting considerable effort to the campaign. We would like to introduce them.

The Tisdales are outdoor enthusiasts with a strong interest in preserving our natural resources. They are also civic-minded individuals who generously give their time and energy to projects they undertake.

Stuart is president and chief executive officer of Sta-Rite Industries, Inc., as well as president of WICOR, Inc. He is a director of several large institutions, including the Wisconsin Gas Company, Twin Disc, Inc., and the M&I Marshall & Ilsley Bank.

He also has taken a strong leadership role in civic affairs. He is president of the Columbia Hospital Board, and serves as a director on the boards of the Medical Col-



Stuart and Ann Tisdale are co-chairing ICF's capital funding drive, that begins this summer.

lege of Wisconsin, the Greater Milwaukee Committee, the Metropolitan Milwaukee Association of Commerce, the YMCA, and the Public Expenditure Survey of Wisconsin.

Both Tisdales are members of the Tympanuchus Cupido Pinnatus Society, which is dedicated to preservation of prairie chickens through purchase of land used for nesting. The Tisdales are also members of Trout Unlimited, which promotes catch-and-release fishing and works with the Department of Natural Resources to maintain and reclaim trout streams.

Ann Tisdale, with a master's degree in educational psychology, has served for several years as director and board president of Penfield Children's Center, a treatment center for disabled babies and tots. Ann is also on the Alverno College President's Council and served as a director of Milwaukee Mental Health Consultants.

Mary Wickhem has been president of the ICF Board since it expanded in 1978. Her legal expertise and wise counsel have been invaluable in helping ICF grow.

Mary's love of the outdoors has always been combined with an enthusiasm for civic causes. A resident of Janesville, Wisconsin, she served on the Rock County Board of Supervisors and successfully campaigned for a much-needed bridge over the railroad tracks. She also served on the Governor's Commission on the Status of Women, the National County Boards Association, Wisconsin Air Pollution Council, and the Wisconsin Parks and Recreation Association.

Jim Kuehn is well-known to ICF members as the board member who has kept the organization on its toes financially. Through sound advice on short-term and long-term money matters, Mr. Kuehn has played an important role in helping ICF move to its new site and embark on the current campaign.

Jim is chairman of the board of Wiscold, Inc., which provides cold storage services in Milwaukee and Beaver Dam. Jim has a life-long interest in conservation, and he continues a family tradition in serving on the board of the Milwaukee Zoological Society.

Fred Ott has spent most of his adult life organizing good causes, mostly for conservation purposes. His family, too, was an early supporter of the Milwaukee County Zoo. As a youngster, Fred frequented the Milwaukee Museum and became an early fan of Owen Gromme. Years later, Fred founded the Friends of the Museum and helped publish the famous Gromme book, *Birds of Wisconsin*.

As founder and past president of the Citizens Natural Resources Association, Fred raised thousands of dollars in the fight against using DDT in the United States. He also helped organize the Riveredge Nature Center in Newburg. A friendly, outgoing person who works in sales for the Leslie Paper Company, Fred is an adept fund raiser who has put his skills to good use for ICF.

We have high hopes for our "A Gift to the World" campaign. We'll keep you informed of its progress.

**The ICF BUGLE is the quarterly newsletter for members of the International Crane Foundation (ICF). Production and mailing costs are being met by a special grant from Clairson International of Ocala, Florida. Articles review ICF programs as well as crane research around the world.**

**Co-Founders: George Archibald  
Ron Sauey**

**Editor: Jim Harris**

**ICF offers memberships at the following annual rates:**

<b>Individual</b>	<b>\$15</b>	<b>Foreign</b>	<b>\$20</b>
<b>Family</b>	<b>\$25</b>	<b>Sponsor</b>	<b>\$500</b>
<b>Associate</b>	<b>\$100</b>	<b>Patron</b>	<b>\$1,000</b>



# ANNOUNCING:

## The 11th Annual Meeting of the International Crane Foundation

Saturday, September 7, 1985

ICF members and their guests are invited to attend the annual meeting and dinner. Reservations are required; please use the form provided below. Be sure to respond by August 28th, as reservations are limited.

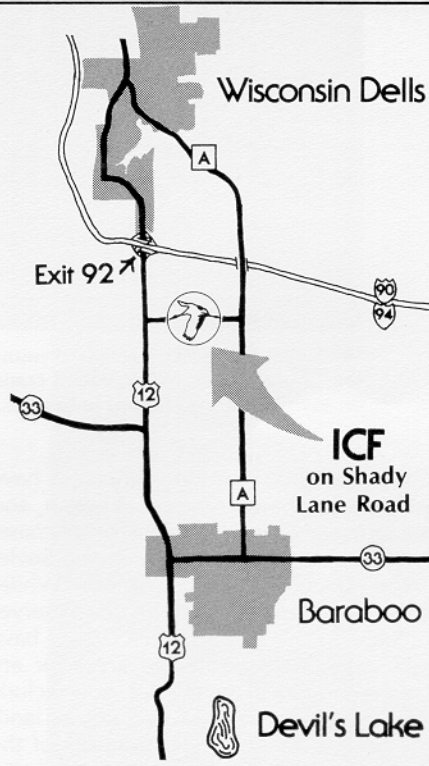
### Schedule

4:00 p.m. **TOURS** for members and guests at ICF's new site.

5:30 p.m. **COCKTAILS** (cash bar) at the Holiday Inn, Wisconsin Dells

6:30 P.M. **DINNER** at the Holiday Inn

7:30 p.m. **ANNUAL MEETING PROGRAM** by George Archibald on cooperative work between ICF and China, and on other new initiatives in Wisconsin and abroad.



# Contributions

Received April - May, 1985

**Grants and Awards:** Badger Meter Foundation, John G. Cleaver Foundation, Dewing Foundation, John Henry Dick, Price Foundation, George Ranney, Sr., RTE Corporation, South African Ornithological Society, Vollrath Company Foundation, Water Services of America, Mr. and Mrs. Paul Weekly, and World Wildlife Fund-International.

**Patrons:** Dorothy Carpenter, John Constable, James Compton, and David Shen.

**Sponsors:** Mary Patterson.

**Associates:** Stanton T. Armour, Mr. and Mrs. S. S. Auchincloss, Susan Avery, Joyce Brink, John and Barbara Canfield, Central Ohio Anglers & Hunters Club, Louise Coumbe, David Dengler, Mr. and Mrs. Thomas Donnelley, Jane Eastham, Theodore Elliot, Caroline Farr, Mr. and Mrs. Kenneth Findley, Robert Fisher, Mr. and Mrs. Volney Foster, Mr. and Mrs. James Heyworth, Paul Hickie, Hatti Higa, Sharon Hegbloom, Cal Hutchinson, Robert Jackson, Charles Jahn, H. Fisk Johnson, Linda Tellington Jones, James Kieckhefer, Bob and Nan Kohls, Joyce and Lynn Knutson, Beverly Kumersek, James Landrigan, Marathon Box Foundation, Charles Merrill, William Messinger, Thelma Moss, C. J. Newbold, Charlotte Oglesby, Carol Oleson, Mildred Osborn, Christine Plochman, Charles Potter, Ellen Powers, William Preston, Campbell Read, Christina Savit, Silverbrook Middle School, Dwight Steele, Mrs. A. M. Thompson, Alice Thorngate, Mr. and Mrs. Ives Waldo, Mrs. Ruth Weeden, M. and S. Weinstock, Mr. and Mrs. Nash Williams, and Mr. and Mrs. Peter Willman.

Please clip or copy, and mail to ICF, Rt. 1, Box 230 C, Baraboo, WI 53913  
Reservation deadline — August 28

- \_\_\_\_ Please make dinner program reservations for \_\_\_\_ people at \$14 per person. My check is enclosed.  
\_\_\_\_ I cannot attend the meeting, but my donation is enclosed.  
\_\_\_\_ I cannot attend the meeting, but please send me a copy of the Annual Report.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

# Crane Working Group of the U.S.S.R.

Starting in the late 1970's, the Ministry of Agriculture of the U.S.S.R. helped establish captive flocks of Siberian Cranes at ICF in Wisconsin and the Oka State Nature Reserve, not far from Moscow. Eggs were collected from the wild Siberians in Yakutia and transported in portable incubators to the two centers. This activity was one of the primary ingredients in the rapid growth in crane research and conservation in the U.S.S.R.

In 1980 the Crane Working Group (CWG) of the Soviet Union was established with Dr. Vladimir Flint of the Institute for Nature Conservation as Chairman, Dr. Sergei Smirenskii of Moscow State University as Secretary, and Dr. Irena Neufeldt of the Zoological Institute in Leningrad as Editor of Publications. CWG contains more than 200 professional and amateur ornithologists who have been responsible for amazing strides in crane research and conservation.

CWG has met four times nationally and four times locally since its inception. CWG has published two compilations of the papers presented at these meetings. Three more books are now under production. To secure more information on cranes, CWG sent 2,500 letters to hunting organizations, schools, and universities throughout the Soviet Union and gained 1,500 productive responses. Five hundred more responses came in as a result of articles about cranes in three national magazines.

In September 1984, the fourth meeting of CWG convened at Matsula Nature Reserve that borders the Baltic Sea in Estonia. This is a staging area for about 10,000 migrant Common Cranes. Over 50 participants from widely separated areas of the U.S.S.R. discussed 25 papers primarily devoted to crane migration and to conservation of critical crane habitats. Since the third meeting of CWG at the Oka Nature



Dr. Sergei Smirenskii catches a young crane at Chingansky Nature Reserve near the China border. White-naped cranes marked at Chingansky were later spotted on their wintering grounds in Kyushu, Japan.

Reserve in 1982, four films on cranes have been made (about Common, Siberian, and Red-crowned Cranes), four species of cranes have been bred in captivity in the Soviet Union (Hooded, Red-crowned, White-naped, and Sarus), and three new reserves for Siberian and Red-crowned Cranes have been established. Protected areas for endangered cranes in the U.S.S.R. now include more than three million hectares of land. The Soviets also enlarged the area of the Chingansky Reserve for Red-crowned and White-naped Cranes along the Amur River. They began an experiment of substituting Siberian Crane eggs into nests of the Common Crane, in the region of sympatry

between the two species near the upper reaches of the Ob River.

The leaders of the CWG are particularly pleased by the strong interest in CWG activities by laymen. Local people who live near the wild cranes faithfully provide vital input to CWG's initiatives.

The Crane Working Group is to be congratulated for a rapid and expanding contribution to the understanding and conservation of the seven species of cranes that live in the Soviet Union. For copies of Soviet publications on cranes, please contact Dr. Irena Neufeldt, 199164 Leningrad, Zoological Institute, Academy of Sciences, Leningrad, U.S.S.R.

## International Crane Foundation

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Address Correction Requested



Annual Meeting

See p. 7

