

*The ICF* **Bugle**

*Inspiring a Global Community*

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the  
**Way to My  
Dream**

*By Ximin Wang*



In the summer of 2007, while studying for my master's degree in environmental education at the University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point, I worked as an intern in the Education Department at ICF for three months. It was such an amazing experience that I will never forget. Everyday, I was busy giving tours introducing the world of cranes to people from all over the U.S and worldwide. I also talked about the status of cranes, other birds and wildlife and the problems we are facing and the dream I have. I want to create a national bird watching society in mainland China for bird conservation and education with other birders. Visitors enjoyed hearing my story and gave me so much encouragement. With the knowledge of bird education which I have learned in the U.S, I returned to China in 2008 and am now trying to make my dream a reality.

*Continued on page 2*



Science has revealed much about the lives of cranes. Yet the photographer's vision also helps us understand, and feel. Recently Chinese bird watchers, and the eyes of their cameras, have begun to follow the cranes . . . even when daylight fades. At such moments, Red-crowned Cranes vanish into marshes as mysterious as ever, and the reed beds seem boundless once more and free until morning. *Photo taken at Zhalong Nature Reserve, Heilongjiang Province, by Zongren Yang of Liaoyang, Liaoning Province.*



Photo by Shaohai Sun



Photo by Ying Wang



Photo by Chongqingkacha

Additional photos can be viewed on ICF's website at: [www.savingcranes.org/china-crane-gallery.html](http://www.savingcranes.org/china-crane-gallery.html)

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In China, if you call somebody a birder, they might be very angry because in Chinese, birder means someone who is odd and unpopular. However, recently, more and more people are beginning to call themselves birders, which means someone who likes to watch wild birds, just like its meaning in English.

If you ask me how many people watch birds outdoors in China, I have to admit that probably no more than 5000 out of 1.3 billion of the population. If you want to know how many people raise birds in cages or eat birds as food, I don't know the exact number but I am pretty sure that the number of bird-raisers and bird-eaters is much more than that of bird watcher. There is a saying about the people of southern China that they eat anything with four limbs except tables, anything that flies except airplanes and anything that swims except ships. That saying is not entirely true, but traditionally, most Chinese people see birds as food, pets, potential medicine or agricultural pests. People used to enjoy birds in cages instead of in nature.

Bird-watching as a hobby was introduced into mainland China in the 1990's. Although the number of birders is small, these pioneers are beginning to make a difference. Many interesting things happened after my return. For example, we have a professional bird photo website [www.birdnet.cn](http://www.birdnet.cn). Many Chinese bird photographers upload their beautiful bird photos to the website and some of these birds have never been photographed before! I posted my story there and it was so popular and thousands of people read it and had comments for me. Most surprising was one photographer, who posted old photos of George Archibald, the Co-founder of ICF, which were taken more than 20 years

ago. It was on May 9th, 1987. He remembered the exact day when George visited that area, which was a very important wetland for breeding Red-crowned Cranes. Because of George's visit all those years ago, he became a bird-lover and bird-photographer. What a small world!

So far, there are only 15 local bird-related organizations in mainland China. Outdoor bird watching is a good way to improve people's awareness. More and more people are concerned about the environment. In 2008, *The New Yorker* and *The Economist* happened to both publish articles about Chinese birders, introducing the efforts we have made and the problems we were facing. As the editor of China's only birding magazine, *China Bird Watch*, I decided to use "China Bird Conservation and the World" as the theme of the first issue in

2009. I know it's impossible to do bird conservation successfully without the help from people and organizations in other countries, including ICF. Birds don't know countries' boundaries. We do bird conservation and education without boundaries, also. Enjoying the beautiful wildlife, including fabulous birds is human nature.

Now, I work with Rare, a U.S based international conservation organization, in



Siberian Cranes at Huanzidong Reservoir, Shenyang, Liaoning Province.  
Photo by Shaohai Sun

Kunming, Yunnan province, which is far away from my hometown. We focus on building support for conservation at the local level. We have a model campaign called "Pride", and it inspires people to take pride in the natural assets that make their communities valuable and take action to protect them. Everything is just beginning and I know the dream will be reality in the end.

*I am on the way.*

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# Notes from ICF President Jim Hook . . .

## Field Research

The experimental Whooping Crane flock nears the completion of its fall migration as the Ultralight Class of 2008 reaches Florida wintering sites at the St. Marks and Chassahowitzka National Wildlife Refuges. The adult and 2008 Direct Autumn Release (DAR) birds are dispersed throughout the southeast with over 30 birds in Florida, a smattering of birds in Georgia, South Carolina and Alabama, and 15-20 birds in Tennessee. As the cranes settle for the winter, our thoughts turn to the very important next steps in the annual Whooping Crane cycle, the spring migration back to Wisconsin and the 2009 breeding season.

Since we experienced the thrill of the first wild-hatched chick in the eastern migratory population in 2006, we have not enjoyed any further success in the recruitment of wild chicks. Indeed we were disappointed first in 2007 when all five nests of four incubating pairs (4 initial nests and 1 re-nest) failed to hatch eggs and then again in 2008 when the number of incubating pairs grew to eleven and again none hatched eggs. In the 2009 breeding season that begins in March we will be conducting two focused studies to better understand this lack of hatching success and mitigate whatever might be the cause.

Our colleague, Richard Urbanek, Biologist with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service notes that after the nest failures in 2007, a number of explanations were proposed but none were fully consistent with the pattern of nesting failures. In 2008, one nesting pair defended their nest against a costumed observer but once the observer left, the birds ran through a willow thicket with their heads down. Black fly harassment was hypothesized to explain their behavior. Similar behavior was noted for the same pair in 2007.

With this background, Richard will test to determine whether nesting failures by Whooping Cranes at Necedah are due, perhaps in part, to black fly attacks. Objectives of this study are to map breeding distributions of bird-feeding black

flies, to document how cranes respond to black flies, screen black flies for the presence of fly-borne disease organisms, and to monitor black fly population levels in the nesting areas.

ICF's Michael Putnam and Kelly Maguire will also pursue an investigation to better understand these nesting failures. Mike and Kelly will focus on up to six nesting pairs to test whether the birds incur negative energy balances (are the breeding cranes getting enough food?) during incubation, and if so, does the available diet in these wetlands contribute to nesting failure? In this study they will compile time budgets for nesting pairs and other birds during the pre-

nesting and nesting periods in Wisconsin.

Specifically Mike and Kelly will monitor the time spent on breeding grounds before and during incubation and record time spent in obligatory behaviors (feeding and vigilance) or elective behaviors (preening or rest).

Overall, they will work

to determine the birds' energy balance and the impact this balance has on nesting outcomes. Over time we hope to learn how the energetics of these nesting birds affects nesting success and what might be done to mitigate those effects.

And so with plans to learn about crane nesting biology and improve the results of an important long term project, we begin a new year. This year is certainly fraught with unknowns and economic challenges, yet it is my great pleasure, in closing, to acknowledge the new support of a local corporate partner, Epic Systems Corporation of Verona, Wisconsin. Epic is a 30-year-old business that provides advanced software for healthcare organizations to improve the quality of patient care throughout the world. Through Chief Information Officer, Tim Escher, Epic donated 16 late model desktop computers to ICF which drastically reduces the operating funds we must invest in computers during this coming year. This generous support could not come at a better time. Thank you, Tim and Epic!



Photo by Raymond Rupnow



ICF's official airline

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
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Associate .....	\$100
Sustaining .....	\$250
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Cranemaker .....	\$10,000

The Siberian Crane, through the Siberian Crane MoU, has proven highly effective at inspiring coordinated action at local, national, and international scales, providing major benefits to wetlands, a diversity of threatened species, and the human communities nearby.



Crane celebration in Belozersky Wildlife Refuge in southwestern Siberia, Russia. Photo by Alexander Sorokin

Logo designed by educator Aitalina Golikova for Siberian Crane education activities in Moma Ulus, Yakutia.



Students in Yakutia, Russia learn about Siberian and Sandhill Cranes at the 2008 environmental camp at the Kytalyk Republic Resource Reserve. The boy is holding a jianzi, a feathered toy that is played like hacky sack, a gift from Chinese students who are also learning about Siberian Cranes near their homes in eastern China. Photo by Maria Vladimirtseva

## Synergy! Celebrating ICF's Partnership with the Convention on Migratory Species



In the early 1990s, ICF staff knew that effective action for the Siberian Crane depended upon a high degree of coordination along the long flyways of this critically endangered crane. Unfortunately, these migrations included such diverse countries – Iran, Afghanistan and Russia, Pakistan and India, to name a few – that the flyway approach seemed like an ambitious goal, even a dream. So when ICF Co-founder George Archibald visited the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (CMS) in Bonn, Germany, he readily accepted the suggestion of CMS' Douglas Hykle to develop a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), which would coordinate conservation efforts for the Siberian Crane among the range states. In 1993, ICF and CMS together created a Memorandum of Understanding Concerning Conservation Measures for the Siberian Crane, eventually signed by all 11 range countries. Ten years later, ICF, CMS and four of the range states (Russia, Kazakhstan, Iran and China), secured funds for a \$22 million, six-year UNEP/GEF Siberian Crane Wetland Project (SCWP) to protect a network of wetlands critical to the western and eastern Siberian Crane flyways and hundreds of other species. The benefits from such a flyway approach are rich and varied. As SCWP now nears its end, we expect a strong continuation of our work in concert with CMS.

See [www.scwp.info](http://www.scwp.info), [www.sibeflyway.org](http://www.sibeflyway.org), and [www.cms.int/species/siberian\\_crane/sib\\_bkrd.htm](http://www.cms.int/species/siberian_crane/sib_bkrd.htm) for more information.



ICF and its partner countries recently presented results of the UNEP/GEF Siberian Crane Wetland Project in a special plenary session at the CMS Ninth Conference of the Parties, in December 2008 in Rome, Italy. Following the presentations, certificates for the

Western/Central Asian Site Network for the Siberian Crane and Other Waterbirds were awarded to two sites in Iran, one in India and five in Kazakhstan. Photo by Sergei Smirenski



On December 1, 2008, Stanley Johnson, Ambassador for CMS, conferred the title of "Champion" to George Archibald, Co-founder of ICF, for his long-standing commitment and collaboration with CMS in the protection of cranes. CMS works to conserve terrestrial, marine and avian migratory species throughout their range. It is an intergovernmental treaty under the aegis of the United Nations Environment Programme, concerned with the conservation of wildlife and habitats on a global scale.

Photo by Sergei Smirenski

# Become Involved with Crane Conservation in 2009!

Details about these events are posted on the ICF website, [www.savingcranes.org](http://www.savingcranes.org) under “Upcoming Events” or are available by contacting Ann Burke at 608-356-9462 x147 or [aburke@savingcranes.org](mailto:aburke@savingcranes.org)



Archive Photo

- Feb 24** “Cranes Have No Political Boundaries: Saving the Cranes in North Korea.” Lecture by George Archibald, ICF co-founder. Rothko Chapel, 1409 Sul Ross St., Houston, Texas at 7:00 pm [www.rothkochapel.org](http://www.rothkochapel.org)
- Feb. 26 – March 1** *Annual Celebration of Whooping Cranes and other Birds.* Includes guided boat tour and presentation by George Archibald. Port Aransas, Texas. [www.portaransas.org/cranes.html](http://www.portaransas.org/cranes.html)
- March 20-22** *39th Annual Rivers and Wildlife Celebration.* Gary Ivey, ICF Western Crane Conservation Manager will be a guest lecturer. Kearney, Nebraska. [www.nebraskabirds.org/news/RWC.html](http://www.nebraskabirds.org/news/RWC.html)
- March 28** First session - ICF Volunteer Naturalist Training. 9:00-4:30 pm. ICF, Baraboo. Please plan to attend **both** the March 28th and April 4th training sessions. Advanced registration desired, but not required. Contact Korie Klink, 608-356-9462 x127, [korie@savingcranes.org](mailto:korie@savingcranes.org)
- March 31-April 1** “Fire on the Prairie: Introduction to Prescribed Fire in Land Management.” ICF, Baraboo. Requires \$100 fee and advance registration. Contact Alison Duff, 608-356-9462 x157, [prairie@savingcranes.org](mailto:prairie@savingcranes.org)
- April 3-5** *John Scharff Migratory Bird Festival.* Gary Ivey, ICF Western Crane Conservation Manager will be a guest lecturer. Burns, Oregon. [www.migratorybirdfestival.com](http://www.migratorybirdfestival.com)
- April 4** Second session - ICF Volunteer Naturalist Training. 9:00 – 4:30 pm. ICF, Baraboo. Advanced registration desired, but not required. Contact Korie Klink, 608-356-9462 x127, [korie@savingcranes.org](mailto:korie@savingcranes.org)
- April 15** ICF site opens for the season and the 2009 Children’s International Art Exhibit opens.
- April 18** *Annual Midwest Crane Count.* 5:30 - 7:30 am. Requires advance registration. Visit [www.cranecount.org](http://www.cranecount.org) for full details.
- May 9** *Horicon Marsh Bird Festival.* Celebrate the completion of the five Wisconsin Birding and Nature Trail Guides (ICF is on the “Southern Savanna” Trail). George Archibald will be the featured speaker. 1:00 p.m. Horicon National Wildlife Refuge, WI. [www.horiconmarshbirdfestival.com/birdfestivalevents.cfm](http://www.horiconmarshbirdfestival.com/birdfestivalevents.cfm)
- June 6** “Exploring the Prairie: Identifying June Wildflowers.” 2:00 pm. ICF, Baraboo.
- June 20** Join us for the **Grand Opening** of ICF’s four new African crane exhibits! These new exhibits feature the magnificent cranes of sub-Saharan Africa: the Grey Crowned, Black Crowned, Wattled and Blue Cranes. The dedication ceremony will begin at 2:00 pm. ICF, Baraboo. Wear safari-inspired clothing!
- September 19th** *Annual Whooping Crane and Wildlife Festival,* Necedah, WI. [www.whooping-crane-festival.com](http://www.whooping-crane-festival.com)
- September 26** ICF’s Annual Celebration and Member’s Banquet. A full day of activities followed by an evening banquet at the Glacier Canyon Lodge, Lake Delton WI. Watch for upcoming details.
- October 2** Guided tours of ICF’s renewable energy systems and energy conservation practices as part of the National Solar Tour. [www.ases.org/index.php](http://www.ases.org/index.php)
- October 31** ICF closes for the season.



Student artwork by Dalan Hartmann

## Counting Cranes!

Do you love cranes? Do you enjoy spending time outdoors? If the answer is yes, join others just like you during our Annual Midwest Crane Count on Saturday, April 18, 2009, from 5:30-7:30 a.m. counting cranes. We invite everyone to be a part of this effort that helps ICF gather valuable data to further our research. Join volunteers of all ages throughout Wisconsin and the surrounding states. For more information, visit [www.cranecount.org](http://www.cranecount.org) or contact our Conservation Education Dept. at 608-356-9462 x127.

# Enrich your World . . . Volunteer

By Korie Klink, Education Specialist



Volunteer Interpretive Naturalists are the heart and soul of the Conservation Education Department. As a volunteer, you will actively participate in ICF's conservation efforts by engaging thousands of visitors from around the world each year. ICF's family of volunteers are also invited to participate in special field trips, learning opportunities, behind-the-scenes events, and social gatherings.  
Photos by Korie Klink

*"Volunteering for ICF turned our retirement from ordinary to extraordinary."*

*"The birds and staff at ICF really get into your blood- once you start you're 'hooked'."*

*"Volunteering at ICF has opened doors to me that I never knew existed..."*

*"ICF has given me the opportunity to enrich my life and make myself a better person."*

*"At a 'give back' time of my life I could not have been luckier than to have made contact with ICF."*

*"I like having the opportunity to be involved with an organization that is actively making a difference in the world – not just for cranes, but for people as well."*

*"It was work, but it was fun, fun, fun!"*

We invite you to join our Volunteer Naturalist family! Volunteer Naturalists enrich the lives of our 25,000 annual visitors by sharing the wonderful stories of crane conservation from around the world. Join us for our 2009 Volunteer Naturalist Training sessions on **Saturdays, March 28 and April 4**. The training sessions will be held in the Donnelley Family Education Center on the ICF campus from 9:00 am – 4:30 pm. Lunch and refreshments will be provided. To register for the training, or to receive more information, please contact Korie Klink, Education Specialist, at [korie@savingcranes.org](mailto:korie@savingcranes.org) or 608-356-9462, x127.

## Just In Time for your Valentine!

These heart-shaped earrings will delight the recipient. Dangling from the bottom of the heart is a glass bead and a pearl. Overall length is 1.75 inches. Recycled paper gift box. \$24.99 + shipping.

Shop online at [www.craneshop.org](http://www.craneshop.org)  
or call Barb Bluske at 608-356-9462 x117.



# Join the 2009 Bird-a-thon!

By David Koehler, Director of Development

Support ICF and conservation while enjoying a day of birding! ICF is pleased to announce its 21st annual Bird-a-thon! This time-honored tradition occurs each spring as birders of all ages and abilities collect pledges from friends and family and take to the field for a single day of identifying bird species. The Bird-a-thon is a fun way to involve others in crane conservation and ICF's important work – all sponsors of \$25 or more receive one-year memberships! Funds raised through the Bird-a-thon directly support our worldwide programs to protect cranes and wetlands. Prizes will be



Photo by Raymond Rupnow

awarded to top performing birders/teams with the grand prize generously donated by Eagle Optics (think high-end bird viewing device!)

Participation is easy – form your own birding team, sponsor your favorite team, or make a gift or pledge to support Team Craniac comprised of ICF's Co-founder George Archibald and friends (they typically find around 120 species).

Please use the enclosed envelope to make your gift or pledge or to request a packet to plan your own Bird-a-thon. Contact Kimberly Dachel, Donor Relations Manager for additional details: 608-356-9462 x143 or kdachel@savingcranes.org.

## Investing in the People and Science of Crane Conservation

By David Koehler, Director of Development



**W**e've reached the final stretch of ICF's 2008/2009 annual campaign: *Investing in the People and Science of Crane Conservation*. The campaign supports ICF's diverse field programs, our investments in the educations of tomorrow's leaders in conservation, and strengthens our use of science to guide projects such as the reintroduction of Whooping Cranes.

To date, we've received over 150 gifts that bring us within \$50,000 of our goal of \$600,000. There is still time to make a gift to this campaign that concludes on March 31, 2009. Thanks to generous donors, your gift will be matched 100% until we reach our goal! Please use the enclosed envelope to make a gift or contact our development team at 608-356-9462 for more information.

We are very thankful to so many of you for helping with this important effort and recognize ICF's Board of Directors and the following donors for their special gifts:

Bob Binger; Boker Investment Management Inc.; The Buchanan Family Foundation; Deborah Donnelley; Karen and Eric Ende; Bill and Karen Fox; The Good Works Foundation; Heather Henson; The Jane Henson Foundation; The Arthur L. & Elaine V. Johnson Foundation; Paul King; Krause Family Foundation, Inc.; Mason Foundation Inc.; Nartel Family Foundation; The Paulson Family Fund of the Goldman Sachs Philanthropy Fund; Phil and Joan Pines; The Gordon and Jeanne Shepard Family Fund of The Saint Paul Foundation; Maggie Seeger; Diana Smith; Joanna Sturm; Swordpoint Foundation; Geoffrey and Elizabeth Towell; Windway Foundation, Inc.; and Wolf Creek Charitable Foundation.

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*ICF's 2008/2009 annual campaign, Investing in the People and Science of Crane Conservation, makes possible our field studies around the world. ICF-supported Research Associate Gopi Sundar paused during his regular bird counts to record this pair of Sarus Cranes and their wetland in one of the most densely farmed landscapes in the world. The cranes, nevertheless, continue to thrive. Gopi is working to find out why, as lessons here may have application for other crane landscapes.*  
Photo by Gopi Sundar





## Explore India with Two Extraordinary Naturalists: November 1-15, 2009

A village in the desert of Rajasthan where about 8,000 cranes come every morning and evening, forests with tigers and gaurs, the largest of wild cows, and the world's tallest flying bird – the Sarus Crane – are but a few of the treasures in store during George Archibald's upcoming expedition to the India. Along with George, the in-country guide is well-known biologist and authority on cranes, Gopi Sundar. For details contact George's assistant Julie at: 608-356-9462 ext. 156, or email [julie@savingcranes.org](mailto:julie@savingcranes.org).



*Birds of many feathers gather on a mildly foggy morning in northern India to pick out fish in a drying canal. Many such biodiversity warm-spots dot the Indian countryside, and we invite you to explore some of them with George Archibald and Gopi Sundar.*

*Red Throated Flycatcher. Photos by K.S. Gopi Sundar*



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