

The Bugle

Saving cranes and the places where cranes dance

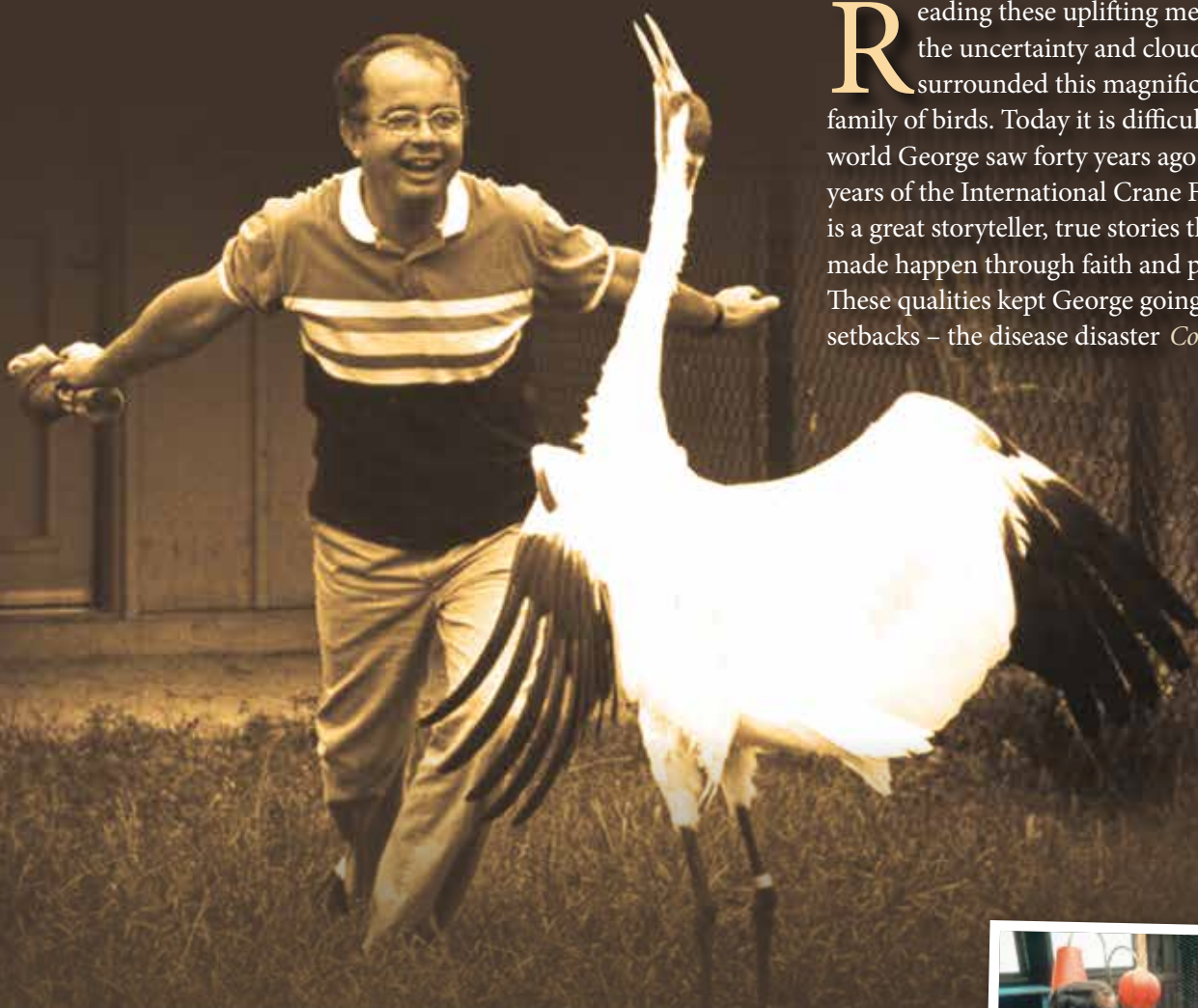
Volume 42, Number 4

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A Life with Cranes

Taken from the book foreword by Jim Harris, Senior Vice President

Reading these uplifting memories, we glimpse the uncertainty and clouds of threat that surrounded this magnificent and imperiled family of birds. Today it is difficult to imagine the world George saw forty years ago in the formative years of the International Crane Foundation. George is a great storyteller, true stories that he himself made happen through faith and perseverance. These qualities kept George going despite numerous setbacks – the disease disaster *Continued on page 2*



Finally, the Stories of Co-Founder George Archibald in Print!

The International Crane Foundation is delighted to announce the publication of George Archibald's new book, *My Life with Cranes!*

for the captive flock, the loss of Tex the Whooping Crane to a mob of raccoons, and the unexpected death of George's close friend and conservation partner Ron Sauey.

This volume offers rich examples of George's audacity for action. Imagine taking the public bus across Iran accompanied only by a handful of cards bearing simple phrases in Persian, a short time later walking alone through rain and mud among the rice paddies toward a damgah (duck trap) in order to locate Siberian Cranes – only to be intercepted by stern hunters who didn't welcome strangers. Yet just at that moment, you might be able to guess whose loud calls rose from behind the line of trees and waterfowl traps. But there is an even more satisfying question – who else but George would walk into such a situation? This volume gives instance after instance of leaps of faith, a tireless search for meaningful action, and the passionate readiness to seize opportunity.

Most of the stories come from the early years, when dreaming big depended on taking risks and on the freedom to follow creativity. George has always offered hope, and ultimately, he has succeeded through the trust we have all afforded him for his immense caring, for the cranes certainly, and for us all.



We are very grateful to these sponsors for bringing this book to life: Willis G. Sullivan, Jr. Family, Carmen Mockrud, and Bob Hallam

An excerpt from *My Life with Cranes* describing George Archibald's first visit to China

A Crack in the Wall

In 1979, The Friendship Hotel near the Institute of Zoology was to be my home for a week in Beijing, China. That first night I was so excited that I could not sleep. A few Black-necked Cranes, the only species of crane I had never seen, resided at the Beijing Zoo. From a map in the lobby, the zoo appeared to be only several kilometers from the hotel – right for a distance, and then left for a distance. The right was easy, but which left? It was pitch dark and street signs, if visible, were all in Chinese.

Still awake, at about 3:00 a.m., I donned my jogging gear and headed out. At a major intersection, from the left, I heard the distant bugles of cranes – as if they were calling to me. As I jogged along, the infrequent calls became louder until finally I reached a high stone wall that appeared to surround the zoo. By following it, I found the closed and locked entrance gate. Continuing along, I was delighted to discover a large gap in the wall and workmen sleeping on the ground around small fires. Apparently, they were rebuilding that portion of the wall during the day.

Tiptoeing among the sleeping workers, I was soon inside the

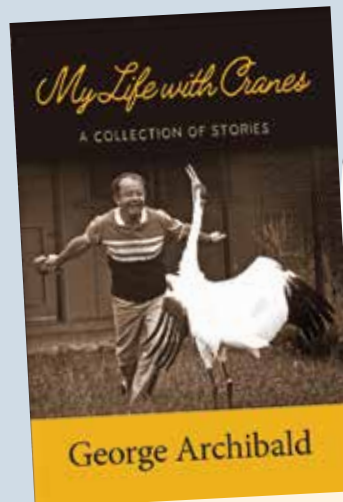
zoo as the first rays of dawn made it possible to follow paths. Soon I reached a large pond with an island.

There were many birds on the water and on the island. With increased light, I could make out the unmistakable form of a Black-necked Crane. What a moment – at long last, to see a Black-necked Crane! Suddenly people were everywhere. Apparently, the gates of the zoo had been opened and many people were walking through the zoo for exercise or as a shortcut to another street. I followed the flow in the direction of what I presumed would be the entrance gate I had passed in the darkness.

I was shocked after leaving the zoo. Streets that had been almost empty were now jammed with traffic. Sidewalks were so covered by blue-suited pedestrians that it was impossible to run. Somehow, in the confusion, I made it back to the hotel, jumped in the shower, and threw on my suit just before the doorbell rang. It was Ding, Zhou, Liu,

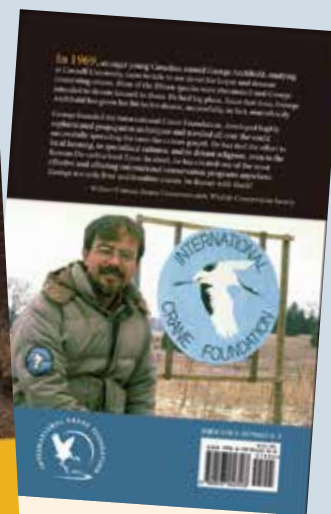
and an interpreter. "Dr. Archibald, did you have a good rest?"

If they only knew...



My Life with Cranes by George Archibald

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The 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

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Notes from the President

By Rich Beilfuss

Scaling Up Our Impact!



In September, I had the honor of representing the International Crane Foundation at the International Union for Conservation of Nature's (IUCN) World Conservation Congress in Hawaii. The IUCN Congress theme, Planet at the Crossroads, focused on the perilous state of the world's biodiversity, and the critical role natural ecosystems play in underpinning our economies, well-being, and survival. Our future depends on the choice before us: to continue on the world's current trajectory or to take the other road, of sustainable, nature-based solutions for living on our planet.

The Congress, held every four years, is a tremendous opportunity to engage in problem-solving at a truly global scale. More than 10,000 conservation leaders and practitioners joined together from 194 nations, including President Obama, Jane Goodall, Professor E.O. Wilson, and many others. I was accompanied by two ICF senior leaders, Jim Harris and Kerryn Morrison, who hosted an excellent roundtable on solutions for conflicts related to cranes and agriculture. I was invited to give presentations at discussions on freshwater conservation and river delta management. But the real value of the Congress for us all was the opportunity to strategize about "going big" with leaders from fellow conservation organizations, businesses, governments, indigenous communities, faith and spiritual traditions, and academia.

"If your projects aren't scaling up, they are just hobbies" – was one of many provocative challenges expressed at the Congress. I am proud of the impact ICF's long-term conservation projects are having on cranes, vital wetlands, and local communities. Our conservation programs span across Asia, Africa, and North America, and we support a network of more than 300 specialists working on behalf of cranes and their landscapes. We form strong partnerships to apply lessons learned through our successful conservation models. But the fate of our planet will ultimately be gauged by the degree to which we and others can further scale-up such efforts to reverse the decline of our biological heritage at a global scale.

The Congress featured important tools for scaling up. The new "Sustainable Development Goals"

are mainstreaming land and water conservation into government policy at the same level as human health, education, and welfare. By aligning our programs and projects with these globally recognized goals, we increase our credibility and relevance as the partner of choice wherever we work.

Businesses around the world are signing up to the Natural Capital Coalition and the Global Water Mandate, mainstreaming the environment into their business practice. By creating a bridge between the language of business and the language of conservation, new

opportunities emerge for strategic partnerships that benefit businesses and cranes.

The Congress launched new guidelines for assessing species vulnerability to climate change, prepared by the IUCN Species Survival Commission (SSC) Climate Change Specialist Group. These guidelines should be highly useful for us in different parts of the world where climate change threatens cranes and their ecosystems. The Congress also launched a new system of Key Biodiversity Areas (KBAs), many of them places where we are actively engaged.

Major global development institutions, such as the World Bank, have redirected their attention to supporting nature-based solutions that sustainably manage and restore ecosystems to address societal challenges such as food and water security, simultaneously providing for human well-being and biodiversity benefits.

This is pretty heady stuff. But for each of us, Hawaii was a sobering experience, with so many species of plants and animals extinct or rapidly disappearing. Jim and I searched a silent forest for two of the few Hawaiian Honeycreeper species not yet lost. Visible before us were the tangible and destructive impacts of climate change, the devastation of alien invasive plants and animals, and the scars of pollution on this fragile island chain – Hawaii is a microcosm of the world at large. We truly are a planet at the crossroads, and conservation successes on a global scale have never been more important. Thank you for helping us make the world a better place.



SAVING CRANES

and the Places Where Cranes Dance

For over 40 years, the International Crane Foundation has advanced the conservation of cranes and their diverse habitats – both near our headquarters in Wisconsin and around the world. Thanks to your shared passion and generosity, the impact of our work now spans 50 countries on five continents. **The meaningful results fostered by these global collaborations inspire us to not only press forward with our efforts, but to grow our impact.** Your investment in the

International Crane Foundation creates hope for the future of this iconic family of birds. As we work together to protect and restore wild crane populations and their landscapes, we are discovering new pathways that will sustain our water, land and livelihoods.

Through our leadership, knowledge, creativity and shared inspiration, we are building a bright future – saving cranes and the places where cranes dance.

FROM WISCONSIN TO THE WORLD

This year, the International Crane Foundation has worked from our headquarters in Wisconsin to Africa, Asia, and beyond. Our wide-ranging conservation and research efforts include the reintroduction of Whooping Cranes, researching the habitat and ecology of Sarus Cranes along the Irrawaddy Delta in Myanmar, and so much more.

Reintroduction of an animal into the wild is challenging and requires creativity. Our job is working until we find what works best, and we are dedicated to doing just that.

– Rich Beilfuss, President and CEO



SPREADING OUR WINGS

The International Crane Foundation has raised Whooping Crane chicks for reintroduction programs since 1993. Decades of painstaking work has made us experts in strategic genetic breeding, egg production, and raising chicks for release. But our efforts to help this species recover go well beyond our headquarters! We also monitor released birds, conduct habitat research, and we are expanding our educational and awareness efforts.

Thank you for joining us in a mission that transcends geography and culture – a mission in which a family of magnificent, endangered birds are truly ambassadors for the welfare of wetlands, grasslands, entire watersheds, long flyways, people, and goodwill worldwide. **Please make your gift today to help us continue this important work. Thank you!**



FRESH FROM THE FIELD

Our Myanmar Crane Team just returned from the field after a weeklong survey in the Irrawaddy Delta where they found Sarus Crane nests, eggs, and chicks at five wetland sites. The International Crane Foundation began work in Myanmar in the early 1990s, but our collaboration with colleagues there has recently intensified as the country emerges from a long political isolation. The Sarus Crane population in Myanmar is not well understood. With increased agricultural expansion and economic development expected, it is important to locate and study the cranes and enhance our efforts to safeguard their habitat for the future.

WAYS TO GIVE

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Photos by Tom Lynn and Myo Sandar Winn, Yangon University

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Conservation cannot be truly achieved without great partnerships. With great intention, we are slowly walking Whooping Cranes back from the brink of extinction. We are so honored to receive the North American Conservation Award in recognition of our collective efforts to save this iconic species.

– Rich Beilfuss, President and CEO



Photo by Susan Carnahan

National Award for Collaborative Conservation Program

The Association of Zoos and Aquariums (AZA) announced that the International Crane Foundation, Calgary Zoo, San Antonio Zoo, and Audubon Nature Institute received Top Honors in AZA's 2016 North American Conservation Award for the Whooping Crane Recovery Program. This annual award recognizes exceptional efforts toward regional habitat preservation, species restoration, and support of biodiversity in the wild.



"The Calgary Zoo, International Crane Foundation, San Antonio Zoo, and Audubon Nature Institute are leaders in protecting North American wildlife," said Keith Winsten, chair of AZA's Honors and Awards Committee. "Conservation is a high priority for these facilities, as well as for all AZA-accredited aquariums and zoos, and this award provides well-

deserved national recognition for leadership and commitment to protecting Whooping Cranes and our natural heritage through the Whooping Crane Recovery Program."

In 1944, just 21 Whooping Cranes were left in the wild. With concerted effort, their numbers have climbed to about 450. While today's number is encouraging, it isn't enough to guarantee the long-term survival of the species, especially given the number of threats they face, which include water shortages, power line collisions, habitat loss, and shootings. Award recipients have worked to help Whooping Cranes recover by breeding them in managed care, protecting key habitat, and using education and outreach to engage the public in protection efforts. With the species' very existence at risk, these facilities are working together to innovate, learn, and apply the latest science until Whooping Cranes are surviving on their own – safe and secure in the wild.

Travel to Mongolia with George Archibald JUNE 5-16, 2017



Anyone who has ever read of Lewis and Clark's expedition and felt a yearning for travel through plains and over mountains untainted by human disturbance should travel to Mongolia! Dr. George Archibald will lead a group of adventurers on an expedition through Mongolia's vast open landscapes. We invite you to join the journey, where you will travel by four-wheel drive vehicle across the steppes to a traditional "ger" camp

and tented campsites – viewing birds, wildlife, and plants along the way. George will provide commentary on the projects the International Crane Foundation has helped to launch that will ensure the future of the endangered White-naped Crane, and five other crane species native to the country. Nyambayar Batbayar, Director of the Wildlife Science and Conservation Center of Mongolia will join the group, lending expert interpretation on the natural and cultural significance of the area. If you would like to join this adventure, or be notified of other travel opportunities, please contact Kari Stauffer by email travel@savingcranes.org, or by phone 608-356-9462, ext. 115. *Photos by Martin Cooper and Andrew Holman*





A Productive Partnership

CHINESE AND U.S. RESEARCHERS COLLABORATE TO SAVE BLACK-NECKED CRANES

By Anne Lacy, Crane Research Coordinator

In early June, I boarded a 13-hour flight from Chicago to Beijing to begin the first stage of my two-day journey to Ruoergai National Nature Reserve in southwest China. Over 500 Black-necked Cranes summer amid Tibetan herders and Chinese tourists all sharing this exotic landscape. I joined International Crane Foundation colleague Li Fengshan, along with three visiting U.S. Forest Service scientists, at the reserve for two weeks of fieldwork and information exchange (and excellent meals together!) An important goal of our visit was assisting the reserve staff in developing a monitoring plan for Black-necked Cranes – in part modeled on our experiences monitoring Sandhill and Whooping Cranes in the United States.

We estimate that approximately 10,000 Black-necked Cranes remain in central Asia. The International Crane Foundation's research focuses on expanding the size and range of these populations, which are threatened by habitat loss and, increasingly, climate change. We are undertaking long-term monitoring of select crane breeding areas, such as Ruoergai, to assess the impacts of climate change on cranes and key wetlands, and to develop measures to adapt to these changes.

Our daily activities at the reserve varied – most days involved establishing survey routes to observe and count cranes. By using GPS and studying maps, we were able to locate a considerable number of the sedge marshes favored by the cranes for nesting. We also spent time with a Sichuan University graduate student Zhao Chenhao studying Black-necked Crane breeding ecology. It is essential to know the species' interactions with its harsh environment – for example, water depth and preferred vegetation near the nests. We

also worked with the Forest Service team to measure the effects of heavy grazing in the area.

We visited a local school to bolster environmental education efforts at the Reserve. Actually, we learned a lot at this school! The teacher began the lesson on local culture, and we set about making a traditional herdsman meal of Tsampa (yak butter, milk, and barley flour). After kneading in our hands, this mixture became a smooth, solid paste that is nutritious and easily transported. Yum! Over time, we hope that increasing community awareness and pride in crane conservation will lead to stronger protection for Black-necked Cranes in Ruoergai as it has in other areas of China.

The first-annual Black-necked Crane survey yielded a count of 225 cranes in the reserve. Due to size and accessibility of Ruoergai wetlands, the survey was designed to cover only part of the reserve (from the data, we estimated the total number of cranes in the reserve). We observed few nests, but we counted many pairs, indicating that some of the cranes were either not yet nesting or had lost their nests. We did spot several family groups foraging in the reserve with two chicks, which is always a delight to see!

I left Ruoergai after two weeks awed by the challenges this high altitude, heavily impacted landscape poses for cranes. The contrast of mountains, yak herds, and nomad tents with the red barns and gently rolling farmlands of central Wisconsin could not have been greater. Yet the cranes brought familiarity – much of their social and reproductive behavior is so similar to our Sandhill Cranes. Lessons from our long-

term crane research near our headquarters helped guide the methods we developed, and the recommendations we gave, for this fragile corner of the Tibetan Plateau.



Pictured here is parent-reared Whooping Crane chick, Zion. Chick names were chosen this year from our naming theme honoring the National Park Service's centennial celebration. Photo by Ted Thousand

Modern Families

By Sara Gavney Moore, Communications Specialist

The sight of a crane family in the wild, with a lanky, cinnamon-colored chick (or chicks!) between the adults, is a thrilling experience. This year, our captive Whooping Crane flock also included several families – three adult pairs that each raised a healthy chick for release into the wild. In the past, our adult Whooping Cranes have helped incubate eggs and occasionally reared a chick, but this year's focus on "parent-reared" chicks reflects a change in our rearing and release methods for Whooping Crane reintroduction in the eastern United States. These revised methods limit the amount of time chicks spend with costumed staff (the costume hides the human form so that chicks do not imprint on, or bond, with people), while emphasizing as much interaction as possible with adult Whooping Cranes.

While the three parent-reared chicks grew throughout the summer, our staff also continued to costume-rear six Whooping Crane chicks – four for release later this year in Louisiana, and two to remain in our captive flock. These genetically important chicks are critical for the future health of the species. Prior to their first fall migration, the parent-raised chicks will be released in Wisconsin near wild Whooping Cranes. The goal is for the adult birds to adopt, or associate with, the young birds and teach them their migratory route south for the winter. These different rearing and release methods reflect the continuing innovation needed in wildlife conservation and reintroduction. Our work today builds upon over 40 years of Whooping Crane reintroduction efforts, with the ultimate goal of creating healthy, self-sustaining populations in the wild.



Foster parents Luna and Ioshchi with their chick Bryce in Crane City. Chick names revert to numbers after they are released into the wild.



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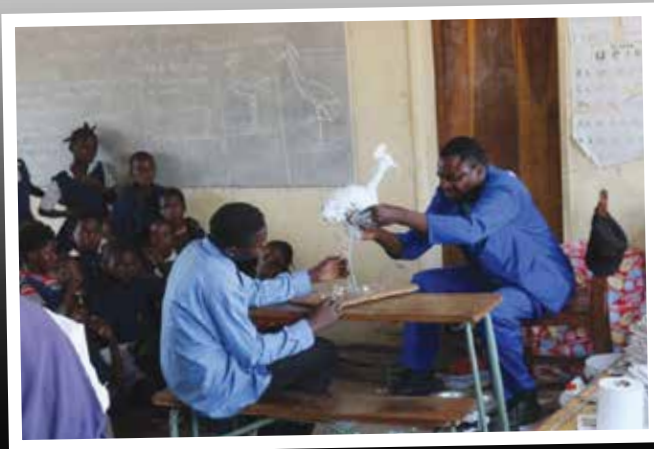


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Owani!

By Griffin Shanungu, Zambia Crane and Wetland Program Manager

In Zambia, we believe that if you teach children what is right to do when they are still young, they will never depart from it when they are older. Environmental education in schools is an important strategy in our efforts to safeguard cranes in Zambia. We engage children in drama and art so they appreciate nature – with a particular focus on Grey Crowned Cranes. They are called *Owani* in the local language. Recently, a local artist went to schools in Liuwa to show the children the basics of sculpting. The children were very engaged and excited to learn about the cranes in such an interactive way.

