

The Bugle

Saving cranes and the places where cranes dance!

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We're Open!



Our Cranes and Culture Plaza offers a contemplative and relaxing spot for guests as they encounter species that have inspired artists, poets, and musicians for centuries. Visitors can interact with a Zen rock garden and prayer wheels, cool off by the fountain, and listen to an ancient song about Thrung Thrung, the Black-necked Crane of Bhutan. This is the perfect spot to reflect and refresh before continuing through the exhibits to see the White-naped, Whooping, and Siberian Cranes.

Photos by Andrew Jalbert courtesy of Vogel Bros. Building Co., and Betsy Didrickson





We're Open!

By Darcy Love
Managing Director - Cranes of the World

The expansive pond in the Siberian Crane exhibit gives visitors a glimpse of the vast territory this species needs to thrive in the wild. O'Keefe (m) and Peiper (f) are charismatic ambassadors as they can often be observed unison calling, threat displaying, or foraging in their pond.



Our Sandhill Cranes can now be viewed through a large window from the comfort of the George Archibald Welcome Center. While there, visitors can explore several family-friendly interactive exhibits, including a touchscreen featuring video from our staff in the field.

Ten ponds, seven murals, three prayer wheels, and a pair of Red-crowned Cranes dancing atop a fountain—these are just a few of the new features you'll enjoy when you visit *Cranes of the World* at the International Crane Foundation. Our crane gates reopened on May 1, 2021, after being closed for two long years—first for our \$10.4M renovation and then in response to the pandemic.

Cranes represent many things to many people. They are harbingers of spring, symbols of good fortune, fidelity, long life, and survival in a rapidly changing world. We hope that you can visit soon to connect with our cranes as they transport you around the world to learn about the work we do to save these magnificent birds in the wild.

Every pair of cranes on exhibit has its own pond. Visitors can observe natural behaviors as the cranes forage for food, unison call, dance, and protect their



Visit the Whooping Crane exhibit to learn about the extraordinary comeback of the rarest crane in North America.

territory. Hand-painted murals adorn the walls of seven new exhibits, conveying guests to the remote and beautiful areas wild cranes live. Many species face threats unique to where they breed, nest, winter, or stop for rest during migration. Working with local communities is key to finding long-term solutions for the survival of the cranes. The murals bring the stories of the cranes, and our work, to life.

Wander our nature trails in any season, and you will encounter colorful displays of vibrant native plant and grass species. The diverse landscape also supports a variety of birds and butterflies, the result of over 40 years of restoration efforts.

We are truly grateful for your continued support. The magnificent transformation of our visitor experience was only possible because of you. We, and the cranes, are excited to welcome you back!





Getting Kids (and Teachers) Excited About Cranes in Northeast Asia

By Spike Millington, Vice President – Asia

The International Nature Schools and related Crane Camps typically last a few days. They are tremendous fun and generate a lot of excitement among local schoolteachers and outreach staff from nearby nature reserves, but also the children themselves, who have rarely experienced such “hands-on” teaching.



We need to take care of our cranes in faraway places and only together can we save them. This is an important concept for bringing diverse communities and cultures together.

ICF has supported a similar program for many years at sites on the high plateaus of southwest China, home to Black-necked Cranes, an important bird in the Buddhist religion of the area. Schools around Ruergai NNR, where the cranes nest in high-altitude wetlands and Cao Hai, where the cranes

winter in farmlands around the nature reserve, come together to share experiences and learn how these areas are connected by cranes.

All the cranes in northeast Asia are long distance migrants, regularly crossing international boundaries, their migrations linked by a series of nesting, staging and wintering sites. The examples of Siberian and Black-necked Cranes show that these sites are not just linked by the cranes, but increasingly, by communities living around the sites, as represented by schools and education communities.

We have just approved a new project to strengthen and expand these human connections, by linking schools and nature reserves along the migratory routes of the eight species of cranes in northeast Asia, such as Hooded Cranes nesting in Russia and wintering in Korea and Japan, and White-naped Cranes breeding in Mongolia and wintering at Poyang Lake. Ultimately, it is only by engaging local communities and developing a strong constituency for conservation of cranes and the wetlands they need that we will be able to save them.

But how to make this part of the regular teaching curriculum in schools?

In Keerqin, an important stopover site for cranes in Inner Mongolia and at Wucheng, the village at the heart of Poyang Lake, where most cranes in China spend the winter, we work with local schools and education authorities to introduce nature conservation. Through teacher training and the development of teaching materials, we focus on getting cranes and wetlands into the school curriculum. In Wucheng, we supported a special environmental education classroom in the primary school. Individually these programs are great, but the impact, not to mention the enthusiasm, becomes magnified when we can share experiences and bring teachers together. Just before the onset of the recent pandemic, in December 2019, we brought teachers and nature reserve staff from Keerqin together with their counterparts at Wucheng as part of the Poyang Lake International Birdwatching Week. The presence of our colleague from Yakutia meant that teachers could share experiences of the migration of Siberian Cranes all the way from the breeding grounds in Arctic Russia through stopover sites in Inner Mongolia to their wintering ground at Poyang Lake.

Many of us can identify a time early in our lives when our love of nature was sparked, by a random incident or encounter, a sudden connection with the natural world around us, inspiration from a parent or teacher, or a new world opened up by books, pictures, or stories. The difference between that spark nurturing a lifelong passion or slowly becoming extinguished amidst the competing pressures of everyday life lies in the timing. Studies have shown that instilling a long-term love of nature depends significantly on whether we develop that or are exposed to it early in our lives. Children who are not connected to nature and who do not value and respect nature when they are young are less likely to see the importance of taking care of it when they are older.

Realization of the importance of early education led our team to develop education programs in northeast Asia, initially around Muraviovka Park in Russia, where the natural landscapes and biodiversity of the park are twinned with embedded education facilities. The Park has hosted many teachers over the years, both from within Russia but also from as far away as the U.S. The teachers are inspired by both the beauty of the area and the opportunity to teach children in a natural setting. Research has shown that children need to experience nature to love it. It is difficult to teach appreciation of nature purely in the classroom. The “International Nature School” model pioneered at Muraviovka has since been taken



Milwaukee teacher Shannon Olson gives an outdoor class on water quality. International Environmental Summer Camp, Muraviovka Park, Russia.

to venues in other countries in the region, notably in China where our Research Associate Su Liying recruited enthusiastic biology students to help run the schools and invited international experts from across the region and beyond to contribute their knowledge and passion to the courses.

Today’s children can lead us to a better future for all. Our investment in early conservation education is an investment in the future of cranes and the places they dance.



The Unfinished Story of the Whooping Crane



Back from the brink of extinction, the Whooping Crane's story is still a cliffhanger. Through the efforts of people who care, they are making a steady comeback. Like a Whooping Crane sounding a guard call, scientists warn that the future of the species is still in peril. *The story of the Whooping Crane is far from over.*

Whether we are breeding them in captivity, releasing them into the wild, protecting their critical habitats, or reducing threats along their long flyways, the International Crane Foundation has been able to play a lead role in Whooping Crane recovery because of your support.

We are calling for your support now because the threats facing this iconic bird—habitat destruction, freshwater shortages, power line collisions, senseless shootings, and more—have never been more numerous.

Right now, we are:

- Boosting Whooping Crane numbers through our innovative breeding and reintroduction programs.
- Protecting critical habitat in collaboration with conservation partners in the Whooping Crane Flyway.

And, very importantly, *we are spreading the word.* We are building public awareness and support across the continent for a species whose story desperately needs to be told.

Help us write a happy ending for Whooping Cranes.

Gee Whiz, the only offspring of the legendary Whooping Crane Tex, passed away this year, just shy of his 40th birthday. A miracle from inception, Gee Whiz was born of perseverance and ingenuity. His mother Tex was imprinted on humans and would not accept a Whooping Crane mate, but our Co-Founder George Archibald spent seven years befriending her and dancing with her until she came into breeding condition. Many considered the hatching of Gee Whiz a miracle, but George had a bigger vision.

Over the next four decades, Gee Whiz became the patriarch of nearly a third of all Whooping Cranes reintroduced into the wild.

To keep Gee Whiz's legacy alive, please make a gift supporting our Whooping Crane work. Your donation ensures that we can mount the historic effort needed to protect Whooping Cranes for the long term.

WAYS TO GIVE

Please send your donation today using the enclosed envelope, donate online at savingcranes.org/support, or call 608-356-9462 ext. 807.

We are confident that the end of this story will be a happy one. But we can't do it without you.



The Official Grand Opening for *Cranes of the World* is Saturday, September 18!

Make a day of it while enjoying over 10 acres of new exhibits and experiences, including the all-new George Archibald Welcome Center with an expanded gift shop. Make time to hike our bird-watching and nature trails. Events will include family-friendly fun, ribbon-cutting, and tours of the new exhibits. Check our website at www.savingcranes.org for more information.

Save the date for our annual **Member Appreciation Day** at our headquarters in Baraboo, Wisconsin, on Saturday, October 16, 2021! Not a member or need to renew? www.savingcranes.org/membership/



A big thank you to the generous sponsors of our recent online celebration, Let's Whoop It Up!

Crane Saver (\$25,000)	High Flyer (\$10,000)	Nest Builder (\$7,500)
Tom and Kathy Leiden Bob Dohmen Patti Manigault	Anne and Hall Healy	Heidi Kiesler WBEZ Radio, Chicago



One of the many fun activities at the festival—birding by boat.

A Must See! 10th Annual Yampa Valley Crane Festival in Steamboat Springs, Hayden, and Craig, Colorado, Sept. 2-5, 2021



Set in the magnificent landscape of northwest Colorado, this festival celebrates the majestic Sandhill Cranes as they migrate through the Yampa Valley with guided crane viewings, expert speakers, films, bird and nature walks, workshops, live raptors, and children's activities. The festival's keynote speaker is Dr. Rich Beilfuss, president and CEO of the International Crane Foundation. Rich's talk, *Cranes: Ambassadors for Conservation*, will focus on emerging challenges that cranes around the world face, including the impact of climate change on the wetlands and water that cranes and people need to thrive.

Yampa Valley Crane Festival's daily schedule of events is posted at www.coloradocranes.org.



All new gift shop display fixtures are courtesy of Leiden Cabinet Co., LLC

Created exclusively for the International Crane Foundation, these wooden laser-etched ornaments depict cranes standing and dancing. The approximate size is 4.5" by 2" wide. Priced at \$12.95 each, they make a beautiful gift or keepsake. Available online at www.craneshop.org or by phone at 608-365-9462 ext. 171.



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

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Chick Check

WILD-HATCHED WHOOPING CRANES IN WISCONSIN

*By Hillary Thompson
North American Crane Specialist*

Photo courtesy of Horicon National Wildlife Refuge

This spring, Whooping Cranes in Wisconsin were busy building nests, laying eggs, and hatching chicks! Twenty-one breeding pairs of Whooping Cranes nested this year, hatching 14 chicks. As of the end of June, six of those chicks are still alive. Interestingly, three of those chicks are at Necedah National Wildlife Refuge, which was the original release area in Wisconsin and is still where most of the breeding pairs spend the summer. The other three chicks are in eastern Wisconsin at newer release areas such as Horicon National Wildlife Refuge and White River Marsh.

This is the first year that pairs at White River Marsh hatched chicks. One of those chicks is W2-21, who is getting close to fledging! Parents 4-12 and 3-14

were the first pair to nest at White River Marsh in 2017, and this is the first year they've hatched a chick. They've been very secretive this summer, keeping their chick in a safe spot until it's able to fly and explore more of the marsh. One of the chicks at Necedah, known as W10-21, hatched to parents 12-03 and 12-05, who are two of the oldest birds in the population and have fledged chicks the past two summers. We have our fingers crossed they'll fledge another chick this year and be the first pair to fledge a chick three years in a row!

Another chick we're excited about is little W8-21 (pictured above), who hatched at Horicon National Wildlife Refuge this spring. Last spring, parents 38-17 and 63-15 were the first pair to hatch a

chick at Horicon and the first to fledge a chick in eastern Wisconsin. Mom 38-17 was a parent-reared Whooping Crane who didn't migrate her first winter and instead spent it in the frozen marshes of Wisconsin. The next spring, she met 63-15 and has migrated with him ever since. Their chick from last year, W13-20, returned to Horicon with them this spring and is hanging out around the area now, waiting to find a mate of his own.

Now we wait (not-so-patiently) to see how all of the families progress—monitoring their movements and behaviors, to see how they keep their chicks safe. If all six chicks fledge, that will tie the record for the number of chicks fledged per year in the Eastern Migratory Population!