

The Bugle

Saving cranes and the places where cranes dance!

Volume 48, Number 2

July 2022



Team Sibe

Dr. George Archibald founded the International Crane Foundation nearly 50 years ago at a time when many crane species were facing extinction in the wild. One facet of the foundation's mission in those early days was to create a species bank to bolster their survival. Using his considerable avicultural skills and gutsy determination, George pioneered innovative breeding techniques for many species that had never bred in captivity.

Continued on page 2



The hatch of a Siberian Crane at the International Crane Foundation in 2022, reminds me that the “species bank” is alive and well and a safeguard should anything happen to the remaining wild flock.

—George Archibald

Photos by Darcy Love and Han Hoekzema



Team Sibe

Continued from page 1

Mantis gets a health check in June. Siberian Crane feathers won't turn completely white until they're nearly a year old.

Extremely concerned about the critically endangered and declining Siberian Crane, George first traveled to the former Soviet Union in 1976 and forged a program of field conservation and captive management with one of Russia's leading ornithologists at a time when this was a rare occurrence for a western scientist. Our captive Siberian Cranes at the International Crane Foundation are mainly descended from ten eggs—4 in 1978 and 6 in 1979. They traveled 10,000 miles from nests on the tundra in eastern Siberia to hatch in Wisconsin. Two were infertile, 8 hatched, and 6 fledged.

In 1981, we hatched the first Siberian Crane in captivity from an egg produced by captive Siberian Cranes. At that time, there was concern we might lose all wild Siberian Cranes. We lost the flocks that migrated to Iran and India. But those in eastern Siberia that migrate to China have increased to more than five thousand, although still critically endangered because of the threats they face in the wild.

So it is with great excitement that this Siberian Crane hatched on May 22, 2022, at the International Crane Foundation. The chick's name is Mantis after an insect naming theme this year and was conceived via artificial insemination. His lineage was carefully orchestrated by our aviculturists. They used three separate pairs of Siberian Cranes to produce this chick. The biological mom is from one pair, the biological dad is from a second pair, and the chick is being raised by a third pair. The chick happens to be the grandson of a famous Siberian Crane named Wolf. Wolf was in the Guinness Book of World Records as being the oldest known (and recorded) bird ever living. Wolf came to the United States from a zoo in Switzerland and lived to be 82. The father of Mantis descends from one of the six surviving birds George Archibald brought back from the Soviet Union in the 1970s.



Wolf

Mantis will not be on exhibit, rather he will be an important resident of our "species bank." We are hoping to continue those original bloodlines brought to Wisconsin from Russia. These decisions are made carefully by members of the Species Survival Commission (SSC). We hope Mantis will become the dad to many more of his species.

Aside from being one of our staff's favorite species to work with, Siberian Cranes are important to our collection because they are the best surrogate incubators for Whooping crane eggs which assists in our Whooping Crane reintroduction efforts. Siberian Cranes are critically endangered. Having this breathtaking species on exhibit in their beautiful new exhibit as ambassadors for their wild counterparts fosters empathy and a connection to the other critically endangered crane species.

Notes from the President

By Rich Beilfuss

A Great Day for The Kafue Flats and Zambia



Kafue lechwe and Grey Crowned Cranes

I want to share my immense pride and joy over my recent trip to Zambia, including one of the top highlights of my 30 years working in Africa. About three years ago, we decided that the only way we could save the Kafue Flats—one of the great wetlands of Africa for wildlife and people—was to commit deeply. Since the 1990s, we'd been doing aerial surveys and field research, engaged dam operators to improve water conditions, and ran a great community-based project to control invasive mimosa shrubs on this floodplain. But all this time the Kafue Flats continued to decline, with unsustainable land use and plummeting wildlife populations. So, we signed a 20-year agreement with Zambia's Department of National Parks and Wildlife, in partnership with WWF-Zambia, to

support law enforcement, community engagement and livelihoods, ecological management, and research and monitoring aimed at restoring the Kafue Flats before it's too late.

Why law enforcement? We've been a leader worldwide in community-based conservation solutions for decades. But we need to do more to save the majestic herds of lechwe antelope, buffalo, zebra, hippo, and other wildlife that are being decimated for the illegal bushmeat trade. We need well-trained, supported, and effective anti-poaching forces. Law enforcement might seem off-mission for a crane conservation organization, but the reality is that cranes and many of the other 470 species of birds that use the Kafue Flats are highly dependent on wildlife grazing to create the habitat conditions they need. Without its charismatic wildlife, we also fear the Kafue Flats would lose government support and be converted to sugar fields, to the detriment of wildlife and people of the flats.

Our plan is to bolster law enforcement while increasing employment and income for the communities who depend on the flats. When we took on this challenge, there were very few scouts protecting this vast area, and they had almost no support whatsoever with respect to housing, food, water, transportation, or other basic needs. They had not been paid in 18 months—imagine! We provided support and backpay for the long-serving scouts and recruited 55 new wildlife scouts to train and deploy across the flats.



Continued on page 4



Notes from the President

By Rich Beilfuss

A Great Day for The Kafue Flats and Zambia

Continued from page 3

On June 7, we attended the graduation ceremony for the scouts. They were so impressive! Out of an overall group of 104 scouts that were trained this year to protect conservation areas all over Zambia, our 55 newly trained scouts for the Kafue Flats dominated the day. They were honored with a range of impressive graduate awards—including best overall performance, best leadership, most creative, and hardest-working.

The Zambia government, traditional leaders, and conservation partners shouted us out at the ceremony for our commitment to the neglected Kafue Flats, its wildlife, and communities. I had the honor of delivering a commencement address to the scouts as the representative

of conservation organizations working in Zambia for protected areas. It was a very inspirational day!

Our community scouts are now highly motivated to secure a future of the Kafue Flats. But they live and work in appalling conditions— their houses have leaking roofs and unsafe foundations, they lack safe water supplies, sanitation, and other basic human needs, and their field operations are chronically underfunded. We are focused now on critical infrastructure to support their success— better housing, running water, vehicles, communications, equipment, and other needs. It's as much a humanitarian commitment as a conservation necessity.

I look forward to celebrating a new day for the Kafue Flats—a healthy floodplain teeming with vast herds of wildlife and the largest population of Wattled Cranes in the world, and a thriving community that helped make it happen. After this past trip, I feel much closer to that day and dream.



No Egg Left Behind

Not every egg in the Whooping Crane reintroduction project hatches in the wild.



What happens to them?

Even the most vigilant Whooping Cranes can be driven from their nests by predators, ferocious biting flies, and other disturbances. Our field staff keeps track of every egg laid in every nest across Wisconsin using aerial surveys, nest cameras, and dedicated volunteers. Abandoned eggs, which have no chance of survival otherwise, are removed and brought to our captive breeding experts, warm incubators, and surrogate parents. Some chicks are kept in captivity because they are genetically valuable for our captive breeding program, but most are raised for release. This all requires a tremendous effort to coordinate a suitable new captive home or to raise these chicks for release into the Eastern Migratory Population.

Seventy-four Whooping Cranes in this population are not enough, so every bird, and every egg, counts. The tremendous number of hours, staff, equipment, mileage, and technical expertise it takes to get these eggs hatched and back into the wild is daunting. It's your support that enables us to **leave no egg behind!**

We are so thankful for your past support—but we have so much more to accomplish, and we can't do it without you.

Ideally, chicks hatch in their nest with their parents, like this beautiful scene, but if an egg is abandoned, we, with your help, will make sure the egg has every chance to hatch and be reintroduced.
Photo by Michael Forsberg

Through a generous commitment from anonymous supporters, you can **DOUBLE** the impact of your gift. Your gift will be matched 100% until we reach our goal.

WAYS TO GIVE

Send a gift today by using the enclosed envelope or donating on our website at savingcranes.org/donate/ Or call 608-356-9462 ext. 807

When wild populations are at great risk, such as with the Whooping Crane, captive rearing is an essential part of saving an endangered species from extinction. What does it take to raise a crane in captivity? Experienced and dedicated staff, healthy cranes, time, and you!

Whooping Crane Eastern Population

UPDATE JULY 2022

In the last month, nesting season has completed! A huge thank you to the staff of the Fish and Wildlife Service, the Departments of Natural Resources of flyway states, the International Crane Foundation, and all the volunteers who help us keep track of the cranes throughout the year.

The current estimated population size is 74 with 38 females, 35 males, and one unknown. Sixteen of these 74 individuals are wild-hatched, and the rest are captive-reared. To the best of our knowledge, as of 1 July, there are at least 68 Whooping Cranes in Wisconsin and two in Michigan. The remaining birds' locations have not been confirmed in the last month. For more detailed information on this report visit our website at <https://savingcranes.org/2022/07/whooping-crane-eastern-population-update-july-2022/>



Whooping Crane chick W4-22 and one of its parents in Portage County, Wisconsin. The nest mound is visible in the upper left corner.

YOU'RE INVITED!

September 17 from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.
International Crane Foundation Headquarters in Baraboo, WI

Members matter! Mark your calendar for our annual *Member Appreciation Day* on Saturday, September 17, from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Learn about our work to save cranes and their habitats through talks and presentations by our talented staff, enjoy tours of the *Cranes of the World* exhibits, and experience unique behind the scenes events. Visit our website at savingcranes.org/memberday as the event approaches for a schedule of activities.

Not a member? Join the flock on our website www.savingcranes.org or on the day of the event in the George Archibald Welcome Center. We can't wait to see you!



Member Appreciation Day

11th Annual Yampa Valley Crane Festival

September 1-4, 2022 in Steamboat Springs, Hayden, and Craig, Colorado

Enjoy Greater Sandhill Cranes during Labor Day weekend in the beautiful setting of Northwest Colorado! The festival presents favorite crane, bird, and nature activities including guided crane viewing and bird walks, a demonstration with live raptors, bird art exhibits, workshops, documentary films, and expert speakers.

The 2022 keynote speaker is U.S Fish & Wildlife Service Rocky Mountain Sandhill Crane Expert, Dr. Dan Collins. Other featured speakers include Dr. Liz Smith, International Crane Foundation Whooping Crane expert; Al Batt *Bird Watcher's Digest* columnist, radio host, author, and humorist; and Chris Wood, Cornell Lab of Ornithology eBird Director. The complete schedule is available at www.coloradocranes.org.



Crane Carts

By Stephanie Schmidt
Whooping Crane
Outreach Coordinator



This summer, the Henry Vilas Zoo and Milwaukee County Zoo have new additions to their crane exhibits—Whooping Crane conservation carts!

We created these interactive, moveable, and educational carts for a pilot study to collect data on the cart's ability to educate guests of all ages about what makes a bird a crane, the historic decline and reintroduction of Whooping Cranes, and the role cranes in zoos play in protecting their wild counterparts.

The educational carts also encourage guests to safely look for Whooping Cranes and Sandhill Cranes, protect them from the threats they continue to face in the wild, and advocate for wetlands and cranes in Wisconsin. This pilot study will wrap up in early September, and it has already delivered promising results on guest engagement, educational content, and inspiration for advocacy.

Upon completing this summer's study, we will seek funding to create additional carts like these to be implemented in zoos with Whooping Cranes or within the Whooping Crane flyways around the United States. This nationwide program aims to share the inspiring work we are doing and build widespread support across flyways to safeguard the future of Whooping Cranes in North America.



Directors

Richard Beilfuss, Madison, WI (President & CEO)
Eleanor Hoagland, New York, NY (Chair)
Steve Euler, Minneapolis, MN (Vice Chair)
Roberta Asher, River Forest, IL (Treasurer)
George Archibald, Baraboo, WI (Co-Founder)
Jill Allread, Oak Park, IL
Steven Becker, Glen Ellyn, IL
Susan Carnahan, Menlo Park, CA
Sue Chin, Ossining, NY
Kay Hale, Houston, TX
Mike Horn, McFarland, WI
Chris Hunt, Santa Barbara, CA
Paula John, Shorewood, WI
Graham Kessel, Bay View, WI
Heidi Kiesler, Glencoe, IL
Larry Kueter, Denver, CO
Tom Leiden, Hunting Valley, OH
Micaela Levine, Milwaukee, WI
Patti Manigault, Parkman, WY
Patti Brash McKeithan, River Hills, WI
Nancy Merrill, Hayden, CO
Paul Robbins, Madison, WI
Jason Sauey, Baraboo, WI
Jennifer Perkins Speers, Salt Lake City, UT

Other Officers

Robert Dohmen, Menomonee Falls, WI (Secretary)
Steve Kuhn, Lodi, WI (Chief Financial Officer)
Kim Smith, Baraboo, WI (Chief Operating Officer)
Spike Millington, Baraboo, WI (VP International - Asia)
Kerryn Morrison, Midrand (VP International - Africa)



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.

Editor: Betsy Didrickson

Bugle comments or questions? Please email Betsy at Bugle@savingcranes.org or P.O. Box 447, Baraboo, WI 53913
To become a sponsor of this publication, please contact the editor.

Memberships make our work possible. Please join or give a gift membership. If you have questions about your membership, please email membership@savingcranes.org

Membership Annual Rates:

Individual	\$40
Family	\$60
Associate.....	\$100
Champion	\$250
Guardian.....	\$500
Patron.....	\$1,000
Benefactor.....	\$5,000
Cranemaker	\$10,000



International Crane Foundation

E11376 Shady Lane Rd.
P.O. Box 447
Baraboo, WI 53913-0447
www.savingcranes.org

Address Service Requested

www.CRANESHOP.org

Nepalese Crane Blouses

These beautiful pullover ladies' blouses are designed in four colors and created in Nepal exclusively for the International Crane Foundation. These blouses are 100% cotton knit with long sleeves and a rounded hem for a flattering fit. Beautiful Red-crowned Cranes are screen-printed over the blouse.



Available online at
www.craneshop.org or by
phone at 608-356-9462 ext. 171.