This Sarus Crane chick was one of two baby cranes hatched from the nest their parents built on a rice field in the Ayeyarwady River Delta of Myanmar. During the first month after hatching, crane chicks often swim around their nest, learning to find food from their parents. In the Ayeyarwady Delta, Sarus Cranes live on rice paddy fields that are flooded for a prolonged period, often planted with a variety of rice that can withstand deep and long flooding, called “floating rice” or “deep-water rice.”

These rice fields are rich in wetland biodiversity, but are currently under serious threat from modern, more intense rice farming.

Photo by Dr. Myo Sandar Winn, Yangon University, Myanmar
Family, friends, and colleagues are invited Sunday, June 16 at 10 a.m. to celebrate the life and legacy of Jim Harris, our former Director of Public Education, President & CEO, and most recently, Senior Vice President of Asia. Jim passed away on Sept. 19, 2018. During his 34 years with the International Crane Foundation, Jim touched countless lives. He inspired many with his fascination for the natural world, his passion for learning, and his selfless interest in the welfare of cranes and people around the world. The gathering will be held at our headquarters in Baraboo, Wisconsin. If you are unable to attend, please take a walk in a marsh or go birdwatching in memory of Jim. To learn more about this celebration of life or to share a tribute, visit our website www.savingcranes.org/celebrating-jim-harris-life-legacy.

Those who witness crane flocks discover an ancient creature’s response to a crowded and changing world. Our challenge is to rediscover old balances and create new ones, linking cranes, the land, and people.

Be the Messenger!
CHINA PROGRAM UPDATE
By Yu Qian, China Program Director

In March, we were invited to host the 11th Faku International Siberian Crane Festival in Shenyang Province, which is an important staging area for critically endangered Siberian Cranes. Nearly 2,000 Siberian Cranes were recorded in Huanzidong in March. Our China staff and volunteers from the Northeast Forestry University gave a well-attended environmental education presentation and a field birdwatching workshop for a primary school located next to the Huanzidong wetland. We were thrilled to have Shenyang Provincial Television and China Central Television reporting on these activities.

Our official social media accounts for WeChat (Chinese Twitter) and Weibo went live last month. These are the most widely used social media in China. We hope to reach a very wide audience and will be sharing our activities, news, and achievements in China through these two channels.

The Bugle - Vol. 45, No. 2 - May 2019

Take your friends out into the marsh with you. Make new friends for our vanishing wetlands. Nothing can spark excitement more than the sight of a wild crane.

– Jim Harris

PHOTO: YING WEI
I

n March of this year, I accompanied Kerryn Morrison, our VP International-Africa, to Ethiopia to work with the people of Lake Boyo in the Great Rift Valley on a conservation plan. Erosion at Lake Boyo is seriously affecting the Wattled Cranes there. Our Ethiopian crane colleagues, Dr. Hadis Tadele and Dr. Shimelis Aynalem also joined us.

The magnificent Wattled Crane is the largest and rarest of the African cranes numbering just over 9,000, with the majority living on the floodplains in the south-central part of the continent. Lake Boyo is considered a northern stronghold for the species, but threats are looming. A recent count tallied 154 Wattled Cranes and 11 Black Crowned Cranes at Lake Boyo.

When water levels peak in September, Lake Boyo is a huge triangle of water measuring about two miles at the base and ten miles in length. When water levels recede and evaporate, vast shallows appear rife with lush vegetation. The lake once supported a large population of Wattled Cranes and many other species. Then, as the water recedes and evaporates, vast shallows appear rife with lush vegetation. The lake once supported a large population of Wattled Cranes and many other species. Then, as the water recedes and evaporates, vast shallows appear rife with lush vegetation. The lake once supported a large population of Wattled Cranes and many other species. When water levels peak in September, Lake Boyo is a huge triangle of water measuring about two miles at the base and ten miles in length. When water levels recede and evaporate, vast shallows appear rife with lush vegetation. The lake once supported a large population of Wattled Cranes and many other species.

In late 2011, a young male Blue Crane named Kito joined our Spirit of Africa exhibit at the International Crane Foundation. He quickly adapted to his new home. The following year, a young female named Periwinkle arrived. In the beginning, the only thing between their adjacent enclosures was a chain link fence. The cranes quickly took a liking to each other, and when Periwinkle was finally allowed into the larger exhibit area, Kito immediately welcomed her.

Nearing the end of the dry season, realizing the ecological crisis, the District initiated a restoration program in 2011 to reduce soil erosion by terracing hillsides, planting trees, and converting erosion pits into grasslands. But much more needs to be done.

During our visit, Hadis organized a workshop to develop a conservation plan for Lake Boyo. We were joined by the District Administrator of the Boyo Valley, Yohannes Jifilo, and soil scientist, Joseph Doboch. Participants also included two highly respected elders and two village leaders from Lake Boyo. A conservation planning method called Open Standards for the Practice of Conservation guided our progress. We initiated the workshop by asking each person for their visions for Lake Boyo. We discussed goals, threats, and conservation actions. Kerryn Morrison was brilliant in leading the meeting, carefully listening to each person during translations across three languages. We are fortunate to have such a gifted professional directing our work in so many African nations. Hadis, new to the Open Standards method, communicated to the participants with clarity and enthusiasm. They made a great team.

Our meetings ended with a commitment from leaders and locals to control an aggressive shrub in the wetland, expanded terracing, forests and grassland restoration on the uplands, and studying the basin hydrology to determine if a water gate might be effective. Working together, we now have a plan we can put into action.

We are grateful to the Walter Guiness Charitable Trust and Delight Garlein for supporting the research of Hadis Tadele and the recent workshop.
A Unique Family of Whooping Cranes

By Hillary Thompson, Crane Analyst

Last fall, a unique family of Whooping Cranes was released at Horicon Marsh in Wisconsin. Grashopper, or 16-11 as he is known to scientists in the Whooping Crane Eastern Partnership, is a male Whooping Crane who occupied a territory at Horicon after he was raised and released there in 2011. When he was unable to find a Whooping Crane mate, we brought him back into captivity to try our hand at matchmaking. Our partners at White Oak Conservation in Florida successfully introduced Grashopper to Hemlock, a female Whooping Crane. The two became a pair and nested in captivity, where they raised two chicks. We then brought the family group back to Grashopper's territory in Wisconsin, in Horicon Marsh.

Unfortunately, Hemlock didn't survive long enough to migrate with the family, but Grashopper wrangled his two kids on his own. The trio stuck together as he showed the youngsters how to find food and avoid predators in the marsh. They migrated together, although not very far, to their wintering area in northwestern Indiana. The three encountered a few other Whooping Cranes during the winter and eventually migrated back to Wisconsin with another young male. Since their return this spring, they have all been doing well, and the two young birds are starting to explore more of the marsh on their own. We will continue to watch them grow. We hope they will eventually have territories of their own and contribute to a growing population of Whooping Cranes in the Midwest.

Shop for a Cause!

Purchase one or both of these lovely puzzles created exclusively for the International Crane Foundation! The 54-piece puzzle, Waders, measures 5 x 7 inches. The 300-piece puzzle, Spring Arrivals, measures 12 x 16 inches. Both puzzles come in their own tin. Warning: Small parts pose a choking hazard for children under three.

To order, visit www.craneshop.org or call 608 356-9462 ext. 171. $12.50 (54 pieces) and $18.50 (300 pieces)

Journey of the Whooping Crane

is now available for download and rental on Amazon, Google Play, and iTunes.

Featuring International Crane Foundation Co-founder George Archibald, Journey of the Whooping Crane, produced by Klett Turner of Red Sky Productions, presents a natural history of the Whooping Crane and the splitting success story for an endangered species. To learn more about this one-hour natural history documentary, visit http://whooping-crane.org/

Our Dreams Take Flight through Your Gifts

Sandhill Crane research informs Whooping Crane recovery

By the 1930s, as few as 25 pairs of Sandhill Cranes remained in Wisconsin, making them all but extirpated in the state. But, thanks to the Migratory Bird Treaty Act of 1918 and the protection of more than 50 percent of Wisconsin wetlands, today Sandhill Cranes are a fantastic conservation success story. The International Crane Foundation is charged with writing the next chapter.

With your support, we are conducting new research with Sandhill Cranes to determine the viability of new Whooping Crane release and breeding sites in Wisconsin. One such site is Horicon Marsh, the largest freshwater cattail marsh in the United States. One current study analyzes breeding densities for Sandhill Cranes at Horicon Basin to measure nest success, area ecology, and chick survival rates to fledging. The study will inform decisions on future habitat for releases of Whooping Cranes.

Your gifts help us achieve our dreams for Whooping Cranes!

We are working toward a future of:

• At least 25 Whooping Crane nesting pairs and a self-sustaining wild flock in the Eastern Flyway, from Wisconsin to Florida.
• At least 1,000 Whooping Cranes and 250 bonded pairs in the Central Flyway that extends from Canada to Texas.
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Help us write the next chapter in the story for Whooping Cranes and all crane species threatened with extinction.

SEND A GIFT TODAY BY USING THE ENCLOSED ENVELOPE or donate online at www.savingcranes.org.

We thank you for fueling our dreams!

Cranes in the Midwest.

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Join us for An Evening with the Construction Cranes

Saturday, June 15, 2019
5 to 8 p.m.

This year only, guests will see a special glimpse of our much-anticipated transformation – a sneak peek at the major renovations to our visitor experience. We are deeply grateful to our $10,000 lead sponsors Tom and Kathy Leiden and an anonymous donor.

To purchase your tickets or to sponsor this event, call 608-356-9462 ext. 807, or register online at www.savingcranes.org/ewtc/

$75 for members and $100 for non-members. Admissions and memberships support our work!