



**Home in the North:** Thousands of egrets from Southeast Asia fly to Poyang Lake in summer time and around 98 per cent of white cranes from around the world settle here in winter.

Photos by GONG ZHENG and ZONG YUZHEN



# A moment of grace

Old Jiangxi couple devoted to protecting birds in their paradise

By YU NAN  
China Daily staff

**P**recious wild birds and protecting the environment are the themes of a photography exhibition that is being held during the week-long National Day

holiday at the Science Museum in Beijing Zoo.

The exhibition has around 77 photographs taken by 60-year-old Gong Zheng and 57-year-old Zong Yuzhen from Jiangxi Province. The couple have captured waterfowl, such as egrets, white cranes and white swans, that live in China's largest freshwater lake — Poyang Lake — in East China's Jiangxi Province.

The couple have spent around 10 years taking photographs which aim to evoke people's conscience into caring and protecting wild animals and the environment.

Gong Zheng and his wife Zong Yuzhen, live in Nanchang, capital of Jiangxi Province, close to Poyang Lake. Photography is their passion and profession.

About 10 years ago the pair used to concentrate on filming people, society and landscapes, that is, before they saw the birds in Poyang Lake.

"These birds are so beautiful and graceful that we always had an urge to take photographs of them," said Zong, who is also chairman of Nanchang Photographers' Association.

For the last five years, these photographers have spent most of their working lives at Poyang Lake.

Poyang Lake is a rare paradise for migratory birds, which are probably attracted to the clean, fresh water.

Thousands of egrets from Southeast Asia spend their "summer holidays" in Poyang Lake, and about 98 per cent of white cranes around the world settle on the lake in winter. The lake is also home to swans, widgeons

and geese.

"Egrets like to comb their feathers at 8 or 9 o'clock in the morning and at 5 or 6 o'clock in the afternoon," said Gong. "When an egret returns home, its mate displays a certain posture to welcome the other home. Bigger egrets are much easier to approach. Only after studying their behaviour patterns are we able to wait for the right moment to take the vivid pictures that we want."

They also need to be patient.

When they have decided which bird to photograph, they have to stay alert and keep their eyes on it for a long time. Sometimes an egret does not move for about an hour. If they relax for just a second the egret might suddenly fly away.

"In the past we have almost spent the whole summer in Poyang Lake, looking at egrets," said Zong. "The temperature here is around 40 degrees centigrade and we have stood taking pictures from sunrise to sunset every day. Sometimes if we are focusing on just one egret, we end up following the bird for miles."

The couple also face difficulties and dangers when trying to photograph the birds. Gong for instance, was struck by a snake, but was luckily wearing rubber boots at the time.

"We use our cameras in order for people to learn that they should protect these birds in their paradise," said Gong. "Our cameras are not just work tools but are also a weapon in ensuring the protection of these precious waterfowl."

"When people see our pictures, they

reconsider the relationship between human beings and the biosphere, and this is a call to ask people to fight against those who still kill or hunt birds at Poyang Lake."

There are around 100 photographers altogether, who are keen on photographing the waterfowl in Poyang Lake.

However, capturing these birds on film is not an easy task. Firstly, the couple had to learn the behaviour patterns of the egrets, by observing them



Courtesy of Gong Zheng and Zong Yuzhen  
Photographers: Gong Zheng and his wife Zong Yuzhen.

## CROSSWORD (No 6404)

- ACROSS**
- 1 Kind of sheet
  - 4 Beat around the bush
  - 9 Afternoon break
  - 12 "What was that?"
  - 13 Ludicrous
  - 14 Planet, poetically
  - 15 Approved
  - 17 Hippodromes
  - 19 Install a lawn
  - 20 Branches
  - 21 Strong cheese
  - 23 Business abbr.
  - 24 Inspecting
  - 27 Guitarist —
  - 28 Certain something
  - 30 Cop a —
  - 31 Near
  - 32 Distant fort
  - 34 Type size
  - 35 Sharp turns
  - 37 Transmit
  - 38 Type of poem
  - 39 Pass, in Congress
  - 41 Ile — France
  - 42 Kids' questions
  - 43 Boor
  - 45 Weed
  - 46 Western movie "High
  - 48 Came a new day
  - 51 Commercials
  - 52 Riverbank dweller
  - 54 Genetic material
  - 55 Toddler
  - 56 Swat
  - 57 Hankering
- DOWN**
- 1 Letter before sigma
  - 2 Web-footed bird
  - 3 Stages
  - 4 Hurried
  - 5 Goal
  - 6 Prosecutor (abbr.)
  - 7 Munch
  - 8 Paranormal, to some
  - 9 Throat tissue
  - 10 Historic period
  - 11 Stomach muscles, in the gym
  - 16 Not I
  - 18 Cairo's locale
  - 20 Sub's weapon
  - 21 Mark a trail
  - 22 Admit (2 wds.)
  - 23 Snips off
  - 25 Wanting
  - 26 Athletic contests
  - 28 Potatoes — gratin
  - 29 The best (hyph.)
  - 32 Author Wilde
  - 33 Pierre's st.
  - 36 Most festive
  - 38 Porter nom
  - de plume
  - 40 Hurl
  - 42 Happy shout
  - 44 Solemn promise
  - 45 Listen
  - 46 Used a chair
  - 47 Altar vow (2 wds.)
  - 48 Winter mo.
  - 49 Hydrocarbon suffix
  - 50 Marino or Rowan
  - 53 British bye

### Solution to No 6403

ILL CA ABYSS  
SEBERG UNEASE  
IN REINS LIED  
STA PLOT LL  
SLEEPER SAP  
ALAI ERAS RI  
POPLAR EMERGE  
EN ALAE GOOD  
SEE TYLENOL  
SH LALO LEM  
MAKE ELGIN RO  
BREEDS ASWARM  
ARLOS RE ESS

## BRIDGE (By Phillip Alder)

The ins and outs of today's deal was Zealand. My friend from New Zealand discussed this club suit. Yet that is not the best guess what to do.

The automatically true. two no-trump world is opening ever, surprising 20-21 points. How the majority, a good 20 to 22 was experts preference of a group of magazine. The Bridge World ing that 21-3 with the panel, think-as aces are theoretically best. Yet that South valued at four points, points. It is worth almost 22

Declare spade, one eight top tricks: one two clubs, A, four diamonds and Yet if a trick club trick is needed, surely the cost to the club queen, trumps numents will cash a disaster. This is spade tricks. thinks West-way finesse. If he cashes the club queen, South West. When finesses through the key of he places East with dummy's c South crosses to the way bang, then finesses on

To improve odds, South should that puts wild tricks first. Here, However, under some pressure, guesswork is still an element of Now, it ace were to suppose the heart tricks, the g. Needing four club the ace an nage play is to cash finesse through West.

You pick up a singleton queen with East or any length including the queen with West. To start with the king, then to finesse through East, fails to pick up queen-fourth or longer. Not to cash the king first loses to a singleton queen with West. Unlikely, it is true, but those odds add up.

North  
♠ 7 5  
♥ 6 4 3  
♦ Q J 4 2  
♣ K 10 9 7

West East  
♠ K Q J 9 6 ♠ 10 8 4 3  
♥ J 8 ♥ K Q 10 9  
♦ 8 3 ♦ 10 9 7  
♣ Q 8 3 2 ♣ 6 5

South  
♠ A 2  
♥ A 7 5 2  
♦ A K 6 5  
♣ A J 4

Dealer: South  
Vulnerable: East-West

South West North East  
2 NT Pass 3 NT All pass

Opening lead: ♠ K

## WHAT'S ON

**Acrobatic Show**  
Chaoyang Theatre is a theatre which specializes in acrobatics all the year round. Many top acrobatic artists from all over the country are invited to perform for the Chinese and foreign tourists.  
Venue: Chaoyang Theatre, 36 Dongsanhuan Beilu, Chaoyang District, Beijing  
Time: 7:15 pm, nightly  
Telephone: 6507-2421, 6507-1818

**STAGE**  
**From Russia with love:** The Moscow State Ballet stages a French story in Beijing.  
The company will play the two-act "La Traviata" accompanied with Giuseppe Verdi's music. This is the second time the Moscow State Ballet will have performed in Beijing.  
Time: 7:30 pm, October 4  
Place: Grand Theatre of the Cultural Palace of the Nationalities, Xichang'an Jie, Xicheng District  
Tel: 6602-2530

**Joyful jugglers:** The China Acrobatic Troupe is staging a nightly variety show at the Tiandi Theatre, where the seemingly impossible is made real.  
Time: 7:15 pm, daily  
Place: 10 Dongzhimen Nandajie, Chaoyang District, Beijing  
Tel: 6502-3984

**Classical ballet:** The Moscow Classical Ballet will give two performances in Beijing.  
Established in 1968 by Vladimir Moiseyev, the company has nearly 100 dancers and a large variety of repertoire, including "The Nut-

cracker," "Romeo and Juliet" and "Cinderella."  
Time: 7:30 pm, October 5, 6  
Place: Beizhan Theatre, 135, Xiwai Dajie, Xicheng District  
Tel: 6835-1383

**CONCERT**  
**Vienna Orchestra:** Vienna Strauss Festival Orchestra, under the baton of Maestro Peter Guth, is visiting for its 10th time to perform the best charming melody of Strauss Family in Beijing on October 12 at the Beijing concert Hall.  
Meanwhile, the orchestra will also perform for the eighth Austrian Opera Ball to be held on October 13 at the Kempinski Hotel Beijing Lufthansa Centre together with some other glamorous activities including a fashion show.  
Time: 7:30 pm, October 12  
Place: Beijing concert Hall  
Time: 6 pm, October 13  
Place: Kempinski Hotel  
Tel: 64636628, 64636572

**EXHIBITION**  
**Wanfung Art Gallery:** The gallery is featuring two exhibitions. One displays oil paintings and prints by promising young artists like Han Xuejun, Xiao Se, Xie Feng, Huang Youwei and Yu Jiantao. The other exhibition features some famous artists of ink paintings.  
Time: 9 am-5 pm until October 19  
Place: 136, Nanchizi Dajie, Dongcheng District  
Tel: 6523-3320