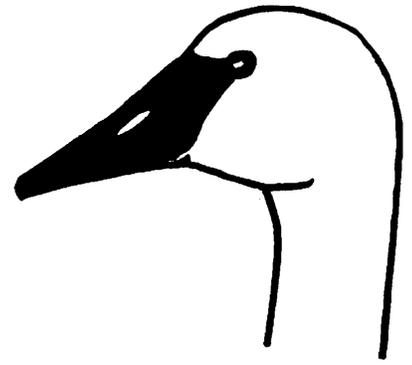


# TRUMPETINGS

Voice of The Trumpeter Swan Society  
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## **PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS AND ANNUAL APPEAL**

-Fundraising has become much more difficult during the recent period of political and economic turmoil, yet Trumpeter Swan populations and their important habitats continue to face many problems. We include our Annual Appeal in the fall issue of *Trumpetings* to reduce mailings. We thank you for your past support of TTSS and ask you once again to take a few moments to make your annual contribution. We now have the ability to assist you with tax and estate planning for gifts of stocks, bequests, or other planned giving. Please contact us for more information.

Through partnerships between the private sector and agencies, TTSS provides the vision, detailed knowledge of the species, and crucial networking of diverse efforts to make Trumpeter Swan populations more resilient and secure. As many agencies cut wildlife budgets and personnel, our unique role and ability to merge the efforts of many partners becomes even more important. During these troubled times, TTSS will increase its efforts to keep key restoration, management, and research programs moving forward effectively.

During the past year, we continued to strengthen our partnerships with conservation groups, universities, dedicated private individuals, and resource agencies in the U.S. and Canada. In February, our 19<sup>th</sup> Conference brought together over 100 swan biologists, managers, conservationists, and researchers from across North America to share information, discuss current problems, and explore ways to work together more closely. We are currently working to publish the papers presented at the 19<sup>th</sup> Conference to bring this information to a much broader audience.

In 2003, TTSS continued its efforts to improve habitat at Hines Marsh in western Washington, and saw the return of wintering Trumpeters after an absence of over 40 years. We were instrumental in improving international coordination of efforts to reduce lead poisoning in Washington and British

Columbia and assisted agencies in development of a multi-year research plan to address recent lead poisoning problems. We began working with the Washington dairy industry to provide additional winter habitat for swans and also identified habitats to mitigate for swan habitat losses associated with the Elwha Dam removal.

Through our Greater Yellowstone Trumpeter Swan Initiative, we monitored nesting Trumpeters in Idaho, continued developing site management plans for nesting territories, assisted with planning for future restoration efforts in Montana's Black River drainage, and began mobilizing partners to focus attention on rebuilding a secure nesting flock at Red Rock Lakes NWR and the surrounding Centennial Valley. We worked hard to improve understanding of the problems that threaten the restoration of the Greater Yellowstone (Tri-state) nesting population. We instigated a technical workshop, which for the first time brought local managers together with a leading expert in the conservation of imperiled bird populations to explore ways to improve data analysis and evaluate potential restoration strategies.

We increased our efforts to understand and restore the Western Canadian nesting population by participating in the efforts of the Alberta Recovery Team, and by continuing research to identify migration habitats and wintering sites through satellite telemetry of swans nesting in the Yukon and British Columbia. Data from our research is already being used to help protect important migration habitats. Our capture efforts also provided genetic samples from remote Canadian nesting areas to assist other researchers who are attempting to determine what genetic issues are important to restoration efforts. TTSS also continued to coordinate information exchange and marking data among all the states and provinces involved in restoration of the Interior Population.

TTSS continued its public education efforts by publishing *Trumpetings* (quarterly) and *North American Swans* (annually) and working on a revision/update of our website. We made our first

research grant from the North American Swan Fund and plan to support additional research in 2004. In 2004, we will continue most of our current projects and increase our efforts to protect winter habitats and rebuild secure distributions for all populations. We will increase our efforts to involve the country's best avian conservation biologists in data analysis and development of restoration strategies. As always, we will strive to represent Trumpeters and their habitat needs whenever proposed habitat or population management actions affect their security.

Through your financial support of these efforts, you are helping to make Trumpeter Swan conservation happen. Your generous response to our Annual Appeal helps TTSS remain effective. Please also consider giving a gift membership to a friend or relative, sending us the names of potential new members and donors, or making an enduring gift to our North American Swan Fund, where your contribution will forever benefit swan research, habitat protection, and public education.

Thank you for your support of TTSS and Trumpeter Swan restoration.

Ruth Shea, Executive  
Director

*All contributions from U. S. citizens are tax deductible. To reduce mailings, we combine membership renewal with our annual appeal. Your membership label indicates the year through which your membership is current. Please be sure to check the appropriate box so that your donation and/or membership can be properly credited. Thanks!*

## **NEWS FROM THE NORTHWEST AND ALASKA**

### **TRUMPETER SWAN SURVEYS ON ALASKA'S CHUGACH NATIONAL FOREST - 2002 -**

Abstract by Deborah J. Groves, Bruce Conant, Edward J. Mallek, USFWS, and Daniel Logan, USFS.

Trumpeter Swan aerial surveys were conducted during May and August 2002 on the Copper River Delta and surrounding areas of the Chugach National Forest in southcentral Alaska. The surveys were accomplished through cooperation between the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the U. S. Forest Service. In May, 1,015 white (adult and subadult) swans and 129 nests were counted. In August, 898 white swans and 228 cygnets in 69 broods were counted. Production was slightly above average. Nest success was 0.53, average brood size was 3.3, and young made up 20% of the

early fall population. The fall white swan population increased 3% from 2001 and was 35% above the 27-year average. There are now 51 [24 spring and 27 fall] comparable swan surveys in 27 different years for this area. A continued standardized Trumpeter Swan survey program is recommended.

*Editors' note: for the full report you may contact D. J. Groves at USFWS, 3000 Vintage Blvd., Suite 240, Juneau, AK 99801. Summaries of previous surveys have been published in TTSS' larger publication, North American Swans.*

## **PREPARATIONS UNDERWAY FOR WINTER MONITORING OF LEAD POISONING IN THE NORTHWEST**

– Laurie Wilson, Wildlife Biologist with the Canadian Wildlife Service, reports that once again wildlife crews are gearing up to watch for Trumpeter Swans returning in early November to winter on the British Columbia/Washington border. Volunteers will again conduct population surveys and roost sites will be monitored for sick swans. Last winter, approximately 183 swans died of lead poisoning. Over 850 swans have died in this relatively small geographic area in the last 4 years.

This year, the US Fish and Wildlife Service completed a strategic plan for the project and the budget has been increased due to increased funding from USFWS. Emphasis will once again be on trapping and radio tracking swans to try to locate sources of the lead contamination. So far, the source of lead has been elusive.

Necropsies will be conducted later in the winter. Mike Smith will continue to lead the US crew for capturing swans. 200 new radio collars have been purchased to outfit captured swans. Many individuals will be involved. Population surveys will be conducted in Whatcom County, Washington, by the North Cascades Audubon Society and in the Sumas Prairie area, British Columbia, in Canada by the Central Valley Naturalist Club in Abbotsford. TTSS worked to help secure federal funds and provided comments on the draft strategic plan for the project. Recently, the Society loaned a laptop computer to the project and will pay for travel for one USGS scientist to help with trapping. TTSS has also applied for a grant to help with additional funding needs.

As of November 1, there have been sightings of swans in Sumas Prairie and Judson Lake, Abbotsford, areas on the Canadian side. A group of concerned property owners on Judson Lake are maintaining a website to monitor sick swans and to educate local residents about this tragic situation. You may visit their site at [www.judsonlaketrumpeterswans.ca](http://www.judsonlaketrumpeterswans.ca)

## **PROGRESS AT WASHINGTON'S HINES MARSH**

– Progress to conserve the west coast's largest intertidal wetland continues. Summer 2003 marked the end of our second season of restoring open water for the marsh with funding from the North American Wetlands Conservation Act program. All the partners that include federal and state agencies and private groups are excited about the progress made. Originally it was anticipated that 30 acres could be cleared of woody debris, but, in fact, the clearing of 60 acres was accomplished. In February 2003, 11

Trumpeter Swans showed up and we wait for the swans to return this winter. The story is not finished yet! We will update this project shortly on the Society's web site.

Martha Jordan

## **NEWS FROM THE ROCKY MOUNTAINS -**

### **A FRESH LOOK AT GREATER YELLOWSTONE RESTORATION EFFORTS**

– On 27-29 October 2003, the Greater Yellowstone Trumpeter Swan Working Group combined its annual meeting with a technical workshop to assess existing data and focus on key questions and strategies in the ongoing effort to prevent the loss of the Greater Yellowstone Trumpeter Swan nesting population. Dr. Steven Beissinger, Chair of the Department of Environmental Science, Policy & Management, at University of California, Berkeley, led the workshop. Dr. Beissinger specializes in the conservation of avian populations and brings fresh perspectives, as well as expertise in analytical techniques to the restoration effort. Local swan managers and TTSS are hoping to establish a process that will critically review all available data and help focus attention on the most significant factors that management efforts could impact to improve the population's status.

### **SEPTEMBER SURVEY CONFIRMS RECENT DECLINE OF GREATER YELLOWSTONE POPULATION**

– Although the official report providing results of the September fall survey is not yet available from U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service, preliminary data from the 2003 survey confirm the decline of the Greater Yellowstone population that was first detected by the September 2002 survey. Compared to September 2001, when 364 adults and 62 cygnets were counted (426 total swans) only 273 adults and 53 cygnets (326 total swans) were counted in September 2002. The apparent loss of 25% of the adults in one year heightened concern for the viability of this small population. The September 2003 survey, which found approximately 291 adults and 95 cygnets (386 total swans), confirms that the low count in 2002 was not due to survey error. Fortunately, the slight increase in the adult segment in 2003, coupled with good cygnet production, provide potential for the population to increase this year, if substantial winter losses can be avoided. With water levels in the eastern Idaho wintering areas at all time record lows (9% of storage capacity), concern is high that severe weather could lead to more high mortality.

Ruth Shea

### **FLATHEAD MONTANA FLOCK CONTINUES TO GROW**

– Dale Becker, Wildlife Manager for the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes and a TTSS Board member, reports that the Tribes released 34 additional Trumpeters in Montana's Flathead Valley in 2003. Raised in captive

propagation facilities in Wyoming and Montana, these yearlings and cygnets join at least 24 swans that have survived from the group of 34 released in 2002. Swans are marked with red neckbands with white codes (T with 2 numerals). Thirteen of the newly released swans are carrying satellite-based radio transmitters on the neckbands. During the past summer, six pairs of 3-year-old Trumpeters from previous releases appeared to be setting up territories. Hopes are high that next year will bring the first nesting in the Flathead Valley in well over a century!

**GONE SOUTH, BUT NOT FORGOTTEN** - Danny Gomez, Refuge Manager at Red Rock Lakes National Wildlife Refuge (NWR), Montana, from 1989-2003, has recently been transferred to Sonny Bono Salton Sea NWR in southern California, where he will serve as Deputy Project Leader. Danny worked tirelessly to help rebuild the Greater Yellowstone population of Trumpeter Swans in the difficult years following termination of winter feeding at Red Rock Lakes and will retain a life-long commitment to their secure restoration. Thank you Danny, for all your efforts and dedication on behalf of Trumpeters!

## **NEWS FROM THE INTERIOR POPULATION**

### **TRUMPETER SWAN RESTORATION IN ONTARIO**

- Harry Lumsden, Coordinator of Trumpeter Swan restoration in Ontario, reports that at least 38 pairs of Trumpeters were known to have nested in Ontario in 2003. It is expected that additional pairs with broods will be counted when the swans migrate to their traditional wintering sites. All swans released in Ontario are marked with yellow wing tags with a 3-digit number code. Observations of marked swans are very important. Please submit Ontario swan reports by calling 905-727-6492 or e-mailing [THEHOLTENTWO@cs.com](mailto:THEHOLTENTWO@cs.com).

Ontario's captive breeding program lost a number of older experienced nesters this year. One was 25 years old. There are only 15 pairs left in the program and, of those, five pairs did not nest in 2003. Fifty-two captive raised Trumpeter Swans were released at seven sites in Ontario: six at Tadanac Club on Georgian Bay; fourteen released at Callander Bay on Lake Nipissing; twelve at Catarauqui Creek Conservation Area at Kingston; eight on the Rankin River near Boat Lake, Bruce Peninsula; six on Wilcox Lake at Flesherton; four on the Stouffville Reservoir and two on Little Lake near Puslinch Lake at Cambridge.

Ontario's Trumpeter restoration program received a major boost when the Trillium Foundation approved a grant of \$15,000 per year for 4 years through the efforts of Ray Kingdon. Mathew Gaasenbeek worked with the Garfield Weston Foundation to provide another \$5,000. Many members of the Tadanac Club have also made generous donations. Thanks to funds from the Trillium Foundation, the Lake Nipissing Partners in Conservation (LNPC) have launched a comprehensive public awareness program to promote the Trumpeter Swans. To learn more about their swan monitoring program and other LNPC activities, visit their web site at [www.nipissingpartners.ca](http://www.nipissingpartners.ca)



Photo by TTSS member Arnie Fredrickson.

Ontario's Trumpeter restoration program's focus will be on banding and color marking swans over the next few months. Banding enables biologists to learn about swan movements and to produce a more effective annual inventory. The Ontario population of Trumpeter Swans numbers approximately 400 free-flying birds.

**UPDATE FROM WISCONSIN** – Sumner Matteson of Wisconsin's Bureau of Endangered Resources reports that 2003 has been the best year to date for the Wisconsin Trumpeter Swan restoration program. Sixty-one nesting pairs have been documented so far in 13 counties with a total of 142 cygnets. Unfortunately, with the start of waterfowl season, there has been the loss of two breeding adult swans due to shootings.

**LARGE BROOD IN MINNESOTA** – Below is a pair of Trumpeters with their eight cygnets on a wetland at Shamrock Golf Course in Hennepin County, Minnesota. This pair began nesting at the golf course 5 years ago, and their brood has increased by one each year. The adult pair is unmarked, but is assumed to have originated from releases by nearby Three Rivers Park District (formerly Hennepin Parks). In general, however, most broods within the Park District this season were smaller, perhaps due to a very wet and cold mid June.

### **MONTICELLO, MINNESOTA, SWAN VIEWING –**

For hardy souls who might want to brave a Minnesota winter to watch the sights and hear the amazing sounds of ~ 500 Trumpeter Swans on the Mississippi River, Madeleine Linck will be hosting an afternoon of swan watching. If there is enough interest, we will meet Saturday afternoon February 7, 2004, in Monticello which is about 35 miles northwest of Minneapolis. We will view the swans from a city park and plan to have lunch at a local restaurant on the river. It should be an enjoyable time viewing the flock and talking about swans. For those Trumpeter enthusiasts who would be coming from afar, names of local motels can be provided. If you are interested, please contact Madeleine at [ttss@threeriversparkdistrict.org](mailto:ttss@threeriversparkdistrict.org). Typically, there are several Tundra Swans also at this site and a variety of other waterfowl along with an occasional Bald Eagle. The Monticello Chamber of Commerce is promoting winter swan viewing and more information may be found at [www.monticellochamber.com](http://www.monticellochamber.com)

### **NEW FIREFLY BIRD FLAPPER/DIVERTER –**

Collisions with powerlines continue to be a major source of mortality for Trumpeter Swans as the human population continues to develop rural landscapes inhabited by swans and other waterfowl. Over the last several years, there have been several types of devices designed to mitigate bird collisions. TTSS was recently sent a sample of a newly designed flapper that has a clamp that will not vibrate out of place and is relatively easy to install. It is made of a tri-colored reflective material that glows in the dark and rotates in the wind at 3-5 mph to greatly increase visibility.

To view the product on line, go to <http://www.prt-tech.com/products/birds/pdf/frefly.pdf> For a product brochure and or digital photos, please contact Tim Chervick at Swift Creek Consulting, at (801) 652-7212 or [timothychervick@comcast.net](mailto:timothychervick@comcast.net)

Most power companies are concerned about the taking of migratory birds and should be interested in pursuing preventative options. If you are aware of power line swan issues in your area, you might want to contact your local utility company and educate them about marking options.

An Avian Powerline Interaction Committee short course will be held November 13-14, 2003, in Pierre, South Dakota, to discuss avian interactions with power lines. For further information, check out [www.eei.org/meetings/nonav\\_meeting\\_files/2003-11-13-tj.htm](http://www.eei.org/meetings/nonav_meeting_files/2003-11-13-tj.htm)

### **Y2Y CONSERVATION SCIENCE GRANTS WEB SITE -**

If you would like to learn more about the migration data gathered by satellite telemetry of Trumpeters nesting in the Yukon Territory and British Columbia, visit the Yellowstone to Yukon Conservation Science Grants Program's new web site. Go to [www.y2y.net/science/sciencegrants-overview.asp](http://www.y2y.net/science/sciencegrants-overview.asp). Click on project summaries and then go to avian projects. You will find an excellent summary of research done by wildlife biologists Rod Drewien and Ruth Shea.

**NEW SOCIETY WEB SITE –** TTSS has just updated its main Society web page combining it with the site of the Washington Swan Working Group. The Society's new URL (web address) is [www.trumpeterswansociety.org](http://www.trumpeterswansociety.org) and the site will be managed by our main office in Maple Plain, Minnesota. We heartily thank Director Jim Hawkings for creating our informative site back in 1998 and for maintaining it for the past 5 years. Thanks, too, to [www.Taiga.net](http://www.Taiga.net) for hosting our site since 1998. We welcome suggestions for current links regarding swans. If there is a TTSS member out there who is computer savvy and would be interested in helping to work on our web page design, please contact Madeleine at the office.

Another change is coming late next winter with a new telephone number for the Society. Three Rivers Park District, where our main office is housed, is gradually converting to a new district wide phone system and so TTSS' number will change as well. The old number will work for several months and a forwarding number will be given. Your next *Trumpetings* will have all the latest information. Our e-mail address will remain the same.

**SWAN KEEPER'S HANDBOOK-** The TTSS office recently received a complimentary copy of a *Swan Keeper's Handbook*, A Guide to the Care of Captive Swans written by G. Gardner, F. Funk, S. Bolin, R. Wilson, and S. Bolin. Although the emphasis is on raising Mute Swans in Florida, there is a great deal of information about general swan care for private collections. The book has 259 color photos and detailed practical advice on housing, feeding, predator protection, and habitat development for captive swans. It is published in cloth and sells for \$44.50. The book is available through Krieger Publishing Company at (321) 724-9542 or [www.krieger-publishing.com](http://www.krieger-publishing.com).

Also, TTSS member Carl Mitchell alerted us to a paper that may be of interest to members who keep captive swans. "Selected topics in captive

swan medicine and surgery" is available on the web at [www.exoticdvm.com](http://www.exoticdvm.com).

**NEW GIFT SUGGESTIONS** - Please see the Society's enclosed gift list to select some swan related items for holiday gifts. Please order soon as we only have a few of the swan puppets shown below. The 19<sup>th</sup> Conference sweatshirt shows a colorful First Nation design. Several items have been discounted, too!



Trumpeter Swan puppet



**JAMES A. MEGER PRINTS STILL AVAILABLE –**  
Your Society still has a few prints of “Fanfare” available for sale. James Meger painted the simple beauty of a large Upper Midwest wetland with the grace and majesty of three Trumpeter Swans in flight. The image size is 33” X 18 ½”. We sell the print for \$150 and members receive free shipping. If you have the wall space, we promise you will be definitely be enchanted by this lovely print. Call or e-mail the office for a color brochure or see our web site (under swan gifts) to view the print. And, remember, your purchase will support TTSS projects to benefit the majestic Trumpeter Swans.

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**WANT TO BE A MEMBER? NEED TO RENEW? GIFT SUGGESTION?**

Student/Retired\_\_\$15 Regular\_\_\$25 Family\_\_\$30 Organization\_\_\$50 Supporting\_\_\$100 Life Member\_\_\$500

Make check/money order payable to TTSS (Canadians please write "in US funds" on personal checks). Mail to:  
The Trumpeter Swan Society, 3800 County Road 24, Maple Plain, Minnesota 55359

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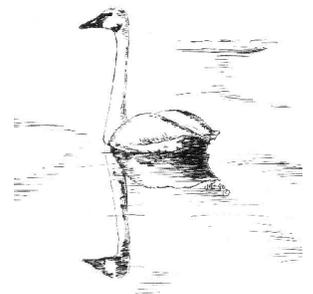
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**WELCOME ALL!**



**TRUMPETERS FOR SALE BY TTSS MEMBERS** - Del Huebner, member from Iowa, has tame, pinioned 2002-hatch Trumpeters for sale at \$600/bird and 2003 hatch for \$500/bird. Call Del at 563-243-8647. Carolyn McDowell, member from New York, has parent- raised pinioned swans available and will be considering selling a pair of her breeders. Please call 585-593-3766 for details. TTSS member Dean Johnson in Wisconsin, is looking to sell a breeding pair of Trumpeters for \$3,000. You may reach Dean at 262-537-2173. If you have Trumpeters to sell

**Visit TTSS' World Wide Web site now at [www.trumpeterswansociety.org](http://www.trumpeterswansociety.org)**