TRUMPETINGS

Voice of The Trumpeter Swan Society

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Since 1968: Assuring the vitality and welfare of wild Trumpeter Swans

VOL. XXV I No. 2 **SEPTEMBER 2016**

How you helped Trumpeter Swans—2015 Annual Report inside

Photo: *Four cygnets hatched in June at Summer Lake.* Photo by Martin St. Louis, Wildlife Area Manager, Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife, Summer Lake Wildlife Area

A cause for celebration in the Oregon Restoration Project! Cygnets hatch at Summer Lake!

Nearly seven years ago, The Trumpeter Swan Society began working with the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to restore Trumpeter Swans to central and eastern Oregon. Summer Lake Wildlife Management Area was chosen as the site with the most suitable habitat to focus restoration efforts.

Since 2009, a total of 94 swans have been released at Summer Lake. Not all swans make it to adulthood. There is more than 50% mortality of young swans due to predation, diseases, and other causes.

In the Oregon Restoration Project, we release cygnets that are just about ready to fledge- about three months after hatching. Swans tend to imprint on the area they fledge and come back to that particular wetland. The swans have green collars with white lettering for identification and tracking.

A milestone was reached in early June. Four cygnets hatched to a pair of first-time parents that had been released at Summer Lake as three month old cygnets themselves. The female is six years old and the male is five years old. As of late August all four cygnets are doing well and should make it to flight stage by late September. Before now, only one other cygnet had hatched, back in 2014, and it is still at Summer Lake. Slow but steady progress is being made to bring Trumpeter Swans back to Oregon.

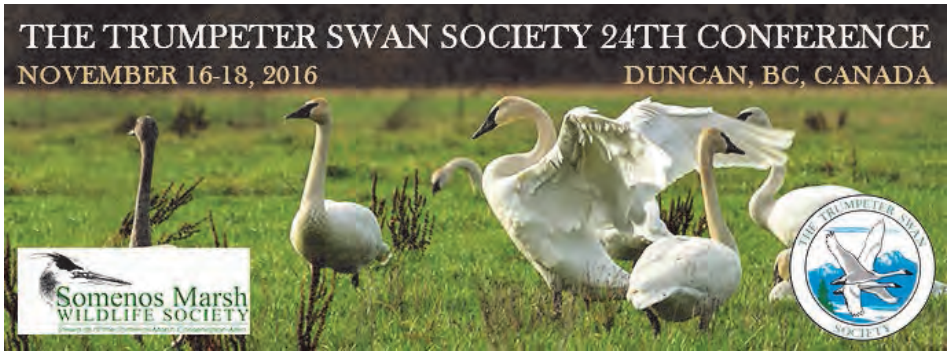
Your support makes all this possible. ♦

24th Swan Conference Update

Plan on attending the 24th Swan Conference on British Columbia's Vancouver Island in Duncan!

"Swans and Agriculture. Working Together"

Registration is now open!



Learn more and register at www.trumpeterswansociety.org

Declining winter habitat is becoming a critical issue for Pacific Coast Population Trumpeter Swans. The three-day conference will feature two days (Wednesday and Friday) of contributed scientific papers, posters, and a panel discussion. Papers will cover all aspects of swan ecology. A panel discussion Wednesday evening will offer insights into issues related to rapid loss of important wintering habitat in agricultural areas for swans in the Pacific Northwest. Conference proceedings are anticipated to be published.

A field trip (Thursday) will visit local swan wintering sites and explore Cowichan Valley agriculture and wildlife issues and initiatives highlighting how local farmers are addressing winter field feeding.

The conference will be held in Duncan, British Columbia at the Aboriginal Quw'utsun' Cultural Centre honoring the ancient roots of the Coast Salish in the valley. World famous wildlife artist Robert Bateman will be the Friday night Gala Banquet keynote speaker. Come early for the WildWings Festival as Trumpeter Swans and other birds return for winter.

Early Bird (EB) Registration runs through October 15, 2016. Register today!
EB Registration: $76 (Wednesday and Friday presentations and Panel Discussion. Includes lunches and snacks) After October 15, Registration: $90. The Field Trip and Gala Banquet are not included in the Registration fee. See website for Single Day and Student Registration prices. **Registration is online and in U.S. dollars.**
Field Trip: **$30** (includes lunch). **Gala**: **$35** (dinner; Keynote speaker Robert Bateman; silent auction; jazz band) ⬧

TTSS welcomes Becky Abel to the Board of Directors

Becky Abel returns as a Director on the Board of Directors. Becky has been very involved in Trumpeter Swans for many years. She received her Bachelor of Science and Masters of Science in Wildlife Ecology at the University of Wisconsin-Madison.

Becky developed an innovative and successful technique for restoring Trumpeter Swans to Wisconsin for her graduate degree and has been working on bird and wetland conservation projects ever since. In addition to numerous grassland and wetland bird survey positions, she worked for seven years at The Nature Conservancy as a Conservation Planner for their Migratory Bird Program and served as Executive Director for the Wisconsin Wetlands Association for eight years. She served on the board of TTSS before stepping down to become TTSS Associate Director in 2011. In 2014, she began her position as Grants Director at the International Crane Foundation. Welcome back Becky! ⬧

Yellowstone National Park

TTSS to work with Yellowstone National Park to safeguard swan nesting habitat

In the April 2016 *Trumpetings* you learned Yellowstone National Park (YNP) currently has two swan nesting sites. One of the swan nesting areas is also being managed for fish habitat. YNP is planning various fisheries activities in the next few years on the lake to replace non native fish with native grayling and westslope cutthroat trout.

In June, TTSS sent a letter to the Superintendent of YNP to offer TTSS swan biology expertise to assist with the project to minimize disturbance and impact on the nesting Trumpeter Swans.

In our letter to YNP we asked that "... actions be taken to safeguard this valuable Trumpeter Swan nesting habitat, one of only two in the Park. We want all measures to protect the Trumpeter Swans to be taken and we will be following the project closely."

The Park Superintendent warmly accepted our offer to help and we will be working with the Park on this project. We will keep you informed about the project and its impact on Trumpeter Swans. ⬨

Yellowstone National Park has two nesting swan sites. One will be undergoing fisheries management activities. TTSS will provide assistance to minimize swan disturbance. Photo courtesy of Yellowstone National Park.

Trumpeter Swans in the Ozarks

More than 200 Trumpeter Swans winter in beautiful Heber Springs, Arkansas. Thanks to TTSS member, Perry Linder (left), Trumpeter Swans began using Magness Lake as a wintering site in the early 1990s. It was a delight for E.D. Margaret Smith to meet the Linder family in late June to thank them for all they have done for swans.

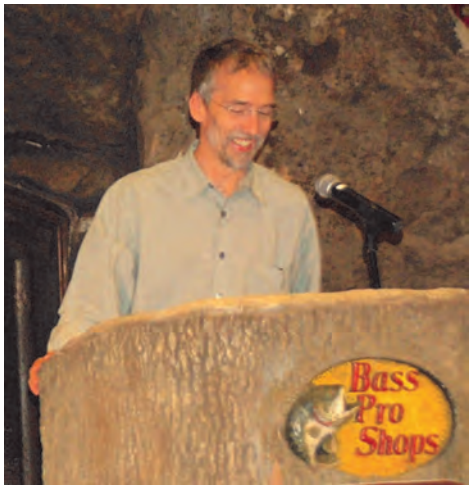
Arkansas tourism now uses the swans to attract visitors to the area (right).

In addition to Magness Lake, swans winter on the nearby ponds of TTSS member Verlon Abram. Swans also field-feed in nearby farm fields.

What a remarkable gift our members are giving to their local community! ⬨

Upper left: *Perry Linder and his granddaughter, Sky, read the story of how the Linder family helped bring Trumpeter Swans to Heber Springs. Their story was told in the TTSS March 2007 North American Swan Bulletin*. Lower left: *Magness Lake in June's evening light.*

2016-2017 Federal Duck Stamp Ceremonies



The 2016-17 Federal Duck Stamp image features Joe Hautman's winning image of Trumpeter Swans flying over a peaceful wetland scene. Joe is now a five-time winner of the Federal Duck Stamp contest.

We were honored to participate in this year's 2016-2017 Federal Duck Stamp and Junior Duck Stamp First Day of Sale Ceremony held at the Bass Pro Shops headquarters in Springfield, Missouri.

Executive Director Margaret Smith was also invited to participate and speak at the Minnesota Home Ceremony held in late June in Crystal, Minnesota. It was a pleasure to share the amazing story of the Trumpeter Swan's return to North America!

Thanks to the generosity of Joe Hautman, if you order a Duck Stamp Print through TTSS, more than 60% of your purchase price will be donated back to TTSS to support our daily activities and swan programs.

Check out how you can order yours today at www.trumpeterswansociety.org/GiftShop. Or use the form on page 11. Order your Duck Stamp poster, Duck Stamp print, and Federal Duck Stamp today! ♦

Photos: Top: left : *First Day of Sale Ceremony Program*; middle: *Joe Hautman speaks to the capacity crowd at the Bass Pro Shops headquarters*; right: *2016-2017 Federal Stamp image.* Bottom left: *Junior Duck Stamp entry by Quinn Kribell from South Dakota*; right: *Welcome display for the First Day of Sale Ceremony*.

2015 Annual Report

Your generous support made a big impact on Trumpeter Swans

Your generous support in 2015 accomplished much in Trumpeter Swan conservation. We are pleased to report the positive impact your gift made to Trumpeter Swans across North America.

Education and Research

2015 North American Swan Survey: The Society was a member of the international steering committee for the 2015 North American Trumpeter Swan Survey. We were also part of the survey methodology review. In addition TTSS helped fund a portion of the Minnesota 2015 Trumpeter Swan count, which recorded the largest Interior Population of Trumpeter Swans.

Pacific Coast Population: Washington and British Columbia winter the vast majority of the Pacific Coast Population of Trumpeter Swans. This population comprises two-thirds of all Trumpeter Swans in existence. We continued our partnership with the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and the Canadian Wildlife Service to monitor swan mortalities and their causes. It was through swan mortality surveillance efforts that the first known cases of Highly Pathogenic Avian Influence (HPAI) were found in wild ducks in North America.

In the winter of 2014-2015, there were 235 dead swans collected. Nearly 51% of deaths were caused by lead and powerlines. Sources of the other 49% of deaths were "unknown, other trauma, and Aspergillosis." This information is being used to identify areas of lead poisoning and avian collisions, as well as to assess the effectiveness of reduced hazing of swans from roosting at Judson Lake, a proven source of lead, which straddles Washington and British Columbia.

Rocky Mountain Population (RMP): In 2015, we researched the habitat suitability of six lakes in Wyoming's Caribou/Targhee National Forest which had historic trumpeter swan nesting. We funded the University of Idaho's Population Viability Analysis of Trumpeters for the past 30 years in various regions of the Greater Yellowstone area to predict the habitat success of Trumpeter Swans over the next 30 years in that region. In spite of restoration efforts ongoing since the 1930s, the U.S. Flocks in the RMP contained fewer than 700 white swans (adults and subadults) in 2015.

TTSS is now planning a "RMP Connectivity Project" with decision-makers in the region to address areas where Trumpeter Swans continue to do poorly. The project has the potential to increase sources for restoration and connect isolated flocks in the region to help insure their persistence and security in the west.

Page 5. top. Drawing by Paul Johnsgard, bottom: *Trumpeter Swans on Silver Lake at Harriman State Park in Idaho*. Photo by Margaret Smith

2015 Annual Report

24th Swan Conference: We began planning for the 24th Swan Conference to be held on Vancouver Island in Duncan, British Columbia in November 2016. Somenos Marsh Wildlife Society is the co-host of the Conference. The Conference continues TTSS leadership begun in 1969 to share the most current swan research and identify issues and solutions in their restoration and management.

Trumpeter Watch: We continued our citizen-science Trumpeter Watch program and in 2015 learned of new sightings in the Atlantic Flyway including Georgia, Maryland, and other areas of the Chesapeake. Sightings have come from 26 states and two provinces. Many of the swans seen have been marked so we know where they were banded and how old they were when sighted.

We reviewed our sightings data, much of which is still in paper form. In the fall 2015, we began conversation with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service for assistance to create a data base to enter and analyze the sightings from the past several years which are still in paper form. The long term trend is Trumpeters continue to expand their winter range. However significant areas that were part of their historic distribution have not yet been repopulated. Slow but steady progress is being made.

Swan Management and Restoration, and Advocacy

Oregon Restoration Project: In 2009 we began the Oregon Restoration Project, a partnership with the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to restore Trumpeter Swans to eastern Oregon. In September 2015, nine cygnets were released at Summer Lake Wildlife Area in south central Oregon. Since 2009, 94 swans have been released at Summer Lake. The 2015 cygnets came from Alaska, Washington, and Wyoming. You can read more about the Project on page 1.

Flyway Council Participation: In 2015 TTSS was invited to become an official representative on the Mississippi Flyway Swan Committee. The Interior Population of the Mississippi Flyway represents the largest population of restored North American swans. Representation on the committee ensures TTSS has input into a revised Mississippi Flyway Plan for swans. As a member of the Swan Committee we will also have input into the Mississippi Flyway's response to the Environmental Impact of a general swan hunt under consideration in the Atlantic Flyway.

At the Atlantic Flyway meeting, TTSS was able to track the progress on the general swan hunt proposal which has not yet been released for public comment. In the Pacific Flyway and Rocky Mountain Population (RMP) meetings, we participated in discussions of updates to the RMP Flyway plan as well as tracking the use and distribution of cygnets raised for restoration projects in Montana, Wyoming, Idaho and Oregon.

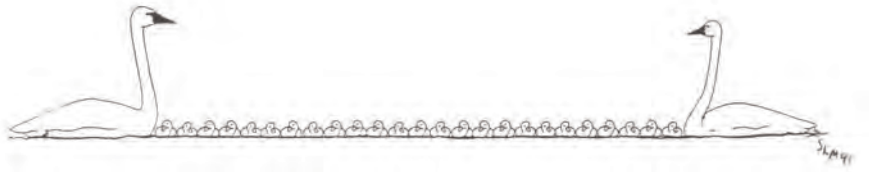
Page 6. top, *Somenos Marsh is a Globally Signficant Important Bird Area*. Bottom: *Summer Lake Wildlife Area is the release site for Oregon's swans*. Photo by Martin St. Louis. Page 7. Drawing by Sara King McDaniel.

2015 Annual Report

Advocacy for swan health and habitat issues across North America. In 2015, TTSS weighed in on a number of swan health and habitat issues, including:

- supporting a proposed lead ban in Minnesota on a portion of its state owned Wildlife Management Areas;
- supporting reauthorization of, and full permanent funding for, the Land and Water Conservation Fund in its current form, without revisions;
- a letter to the Burlington, Ontario mayor and city council opposing the building of a marina breakwall in one of the most important wintering sites for Ontario Trumpeter Swans;
- signing on to a letter by the American Bird Conservancy to oppose a rider in the Fiscal Year 2016 Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies (CJS) appropriations bill that would bar the Department of Justice from enforcing the Migratory Bird Treaty Act (MBTA), which protects over 1,000 species of migratory birds and makes it illegal to harm them except under very specific circumstances.

In addition, the April 2015 *Trumpetings* newsletter continued our member education about lead poisoning issues across North America.



Outreach

TTSS published three print *Trumpetings* newsletters with education about a variety of swan information including a first time update on swan restoration in Ohio, and updates about swan restoration efforts in northwest Montana, TTSS swan research including the grayling fish issue in the Centennial Mountain area, continuing identification of swan mortality causes in northwest Washington and southern British Columbia, and swan health and habitat issues in different regions of North America. TTSS published *Enewsletters* generally once a month. The website continued to be an important source of outreach and education.

Thanks to TTSS members, we participated in Michigan's largest birding festival held at one of the first Trumpeter Swan release sites in Michigan.

Film Project and Bequest: TTSS received a significant bequest from the Patricia and James Bigley Trust for a multi-year film project, "Return of the Trumpeters." The bequest funds the film project by Steve Harryman. Footage already filmed by Steve Harryman at Michigan's Seney National Wildlife Refuge was used in the Hallmark Hall of Fame TV movie "Away and Back."

Finalization of the 2015-2018 Strategic Plan

The board and staff finalized the goals and objectives of the Strategic Plan including three goals: To build a movement of people who advocate on behalf of Trumpeter Swans; to influence decision makers by advancing science-based research and information that support Trumpeter Swan management/restoration; and to invest in our organization's infrastructure to sustain our success.

2015 Annual Report

Operations and administration

TTSS ended the year with an unrestricted net income of $3,75. This small, but positive year end net income was a result of reducing costs to align with reduced income from grant sources. Reductions included the Executive Director voluntarily taking a pay cut in mid-year. The reduction in grant funds was offset somewhat by an increase in unrestricted income through the implementation of an unrestricted program allocation of 15% from new restricted income to cover administrative costs, and board and staff making significant personal donations. "Special Projects" had a net income of $118,110. "Special Projects" include the Oregon Restoration Project, the Washington swan partnership programs, the Greater Yellowstone programs, the Yellowstone region Population Viability Analysis, the Film project, and the North American Swan Fund used in 2015 for the 2015 North American Trumpeter Swan Survey.

Balance Sheet
December 31, 2015

Assets:	
Current Assets	$201,750
Other Assets	$ 47,015
Total Assets	**$248,765**
Liabilities & Equity	
Liabilities	**$ 0**
Temp. Restricted Net Assets	$159,537
Unrestricted Net Assets	$ 89,228
Total Net Assets	$248,765
Total Liabilities & Net Assets	**$248,765**

Income Statement (Profit and Loss)
January 1-December 31, 2015

Revenue	
Contributions, gifts, grants	$138,164
Bequest	$185,000
Other	$ 995
Total	**$324,159**
Expenses (functional)	
Program	$157,635
Fundraising	$ 14,965
Management	$ 29,698
Total	**$202,298**
Net Income	**$121,861**

The Board of Directors added new Director Deborah Groves, a wildlife biologist for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. She has been responsible for the continental North American Trumpeter Swan Survey in 2010 and in 2015.

2015 Board of Directors:

Carey Smith, *President, Vancouver, Washington and Polson, Montana*
Dave Hoffman, *Vice President, Clear Lake, Iowa*
Dave Myers, *Treasurer, Idaho Falls, Idaho*
Dale Becker, *Polson, Montana*
Bob Blohm, *Bowie, Maryland*
Laurence Gillette, *Mound, Minnesota*
Deborah Groves, *Juneau, Alaska*
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Jerry Serie, *Easton, Maryland*
Sara Street, *Victoria Harbor, Ontario*
Carl Woodward III, *Roseland, New Jersey*

2015 Annual Report

Thanks to all our donors

The Board and staff of The Trumpeter Swan Society extend our heartfelt and deep appreciation to the more than 400 members and donors whose generous support made such an important impact in 2015.

Thank you!

TTSS also thanks these agencies, foundations, businesses, and organizations for their commitment to Trumpeter Swan conservation.

Agencies, Foundations, Businesses, and Organizations:
Patricia and James Bigley [Revocable] Trust; Central Flyway Council; Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes of the Flathead Nation; Eagle Optics; East Cascades Audubon; Faith Ranch, Modesto, CA; Fanwood Foundation; Felburn Foundation; Foley-Frischkorn Wildlife Conservation Fund; Friends of Malheur National Wildlife Refuge; Glacial Lake Cranberries; Kellogg Bird Sanctuary; Midnight Sun AAZK Chapter; National Wildlife Refuge Association; Puget Sound Energy; Somenos Marsh Wildlife Society; Taltree Arboretum and Gardens; Wiancko Charitable Foundation; Windway Foundation; William J. Maeck and Shirley A. Maeck Family Foundation; U.S. Forest Service; U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service; Wye Marsh Wildlife Centre. ⬨

Thank you for your commitment to Trumpeter Swan conservation!

In 2015 TTSS helped fund Minnesota's Trumpeter Swan count for the rangewide survey. Photo by Margaret Smith

Swan Poem

The Swan God

I see the swan god face to face.
Glittering snow silk wings, beating plume-of-flame wings,
Slender white throat lifted in sweep of embrace;
Winter moon swings low in her longing.
He plunges diamond-break waters against the breast,
I plunge winged as he on the sparkling crest.

The swan god's opal wing thrashes foam and rakes the skies,
He trumpets; long snowy neck reaches for burning kiss,
Cold blue waters close, silver pinions brush my eyes;
The lake heaves and strokes me in rippling mist.
He gives away the song of feather whistling white,
I give away the drumming of silver swan light.

Once my heart was not his heart; not snow, not fire.
Now my cries are spangled, fierce as feathers of the sun, wild;
Swan pinion lifting, snowy water receding, silvery desire,
Fiery body of beauty in the god undefiled.
He glitters among great white birds at swanfall,
I glitter among the river's diamond bloods at nightfall.

Cameron La Follette
Salem, Oregon

Photo by Richard Sonnen

Yes! I want to order a 2016-17 Duck Stamp item to help Trumpeter Swans

	Each	Total
Artist signed Duck Stamp **POSTER** (16 x 20 inches), fits standard size frame (includes shipping)	$ 25	$_____
2016-17 **DUCK STAMP PRINT**, artist signed and numbered. Unframed. Collector's Edition (most popular)	$189	$_____
Medallion Edition (gold plated medallion)	$349	$_____
Print Shipping		$ 15.00
2016 –17 **FEDERAL DUCK STAMP**		
Mint Federal Duck Stamp	$25	$_____
Artist signed Mint Federal Duck Stamp	$28	$_____
Note: *If purchasing **only** Duck Stamp, please include **$5.00** for shipping/handling*		$_____
GRAND TOTAL		$_____

To see all the Editions and poster, visit our Gift Shop at www.trumpeterswansociety.org

Yes! *I support Trumpeter Swan conservation*

☐ I want to make a donation $_____

☐ I want to purchase a Duck Stamp item

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Card Expiration date _____/_____ Security Code_____

Name on Card _____

Signature_____

***OR* make your purchase securely online at**
www.trumpeterswansociety.org

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Donations are tax-deductible to the fullest extent allowed by United States law.

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For all you do for Trumpeter Swans, thank you!

Since 1968: Assuring the vitality and welfare of wild Trumpeter Swans

Look inside for these stories! How Trumpeter Swans are helping Arkansas tourism; the 24th Swan Conference will be held at Somenos Marsh, a Globally Significant Important Bird Area; the 2016-17 Federal Duck Stamp featuring Trumpeter Swans is helping Trumpeter Swan Conservation.

TRUMPETINGS EDITORS
John Cornely, Gary Ivey, Margaret Smith

Go to **www.trumpeterswansociety.org** for a listing of the Board of Directors and Staff