



TRUMPETINGS

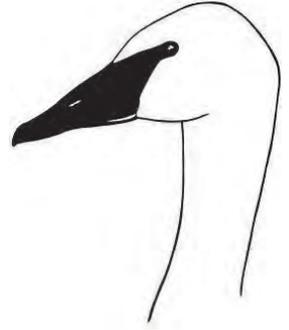
Voice of The Trumpeter Swan Society

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

VOL. XXVII No. 2

SEPTEMBER 2017

Swans need your help— Senate Bill S1514 and toxic tackle

Please call your U.S. Senators and ask them to remove Section 9 of Senate Bill S1514

Call the Capital Switchboard today to contact your state's senators.

202-224-3124

Or mail/email your Senators!

The HELP for Wildlife Act, S.1514, recently passed by committee in the United States Senate, soon will move on to the Senate floor for a vote. The Trumpeter Swan Society applauds many of the bill's provisions including, for example, reauthorization of the North American Wetlands Conservation Act (NAWCA), the Neotropical Migratory Bird Conservation Act, and the Chesapeake Bay Program and Chesapeake Bay Initiative.

However, Section 9, which excludes sport fishing equipment from regulation under the 1976 Toxic Substances Control Act, could result in several species of wildlife being unnecessarily exposed to lead, including Trumpeter Swans, loons and eagles. **Urge your senators to remove Section 9 from the bill.** Removal of Section 9 means wildlife has a chance to be safeguarded in the future through responsible regulation in favor of non-toxic fishing tackle.

Swans, loons, eagles and at least 25 other bird species are impacted by lead poisoning through fishing tackle or ammunition. Swans, geese, and dabbling ducks ingest lead in the shallow waters where they feed. Loons and diving ducks ingest tackle lost in the deeper waters of lakes. Eagles ingest lead through lead tackle in fish, or in scavenged carcasses of animals killed with lead ammunition.

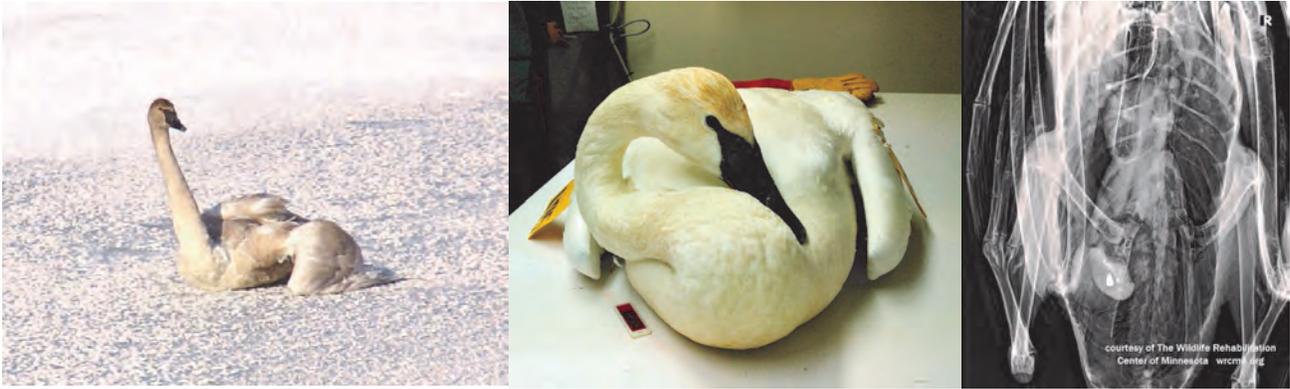
Just one ingested lead fishing split shot can kill a 30 pound swan through lead poisoning. The lead tackle remains in the bird's gizzard with other grit, and as the grit rubs together to break down food, the lead tackle begins to break down and is absorbed into the bloodstream. Death can result after prolonged suffering and decline over the course of two or three weeks as the body's systems break down --- muscle weakening and paralysis, neurological damage, and starvation through paralysis of the smooth muscles of the digestive system.

Anglers are often unaware that fishing tackle ingested by wildlife causes lead poisoning. While a single angler may lose only a few pieces of lead tackle and weights in a season, the impact is cumulative. Minnesota released a study of



TTSS lead poisoning awareness project partner Loon Watch handed out 300 "Please use non-toxic fishing tackle" decals at their Kid Fishing Day event in May. Photo courtesy of Loon Watch.

Lead poisoning



Left: *Lead poisoning affects the muscular system, weakening and paralyzing muscles.*

Middle: *As the smooth muscles of the digestive system become paralyzed, swans are unable to digest their food, become emaciated and starve, losing up to 50% of their body weight.* Photo by Centre Wildlife Care, Lemont, Pennsylvania

Right: *Lead fishing sinker in a Trumpeter Swan brought into the Wildlife Rehabilitation Center of Minnesota.*

lead tackle on 5 favorite fishing lakes. Anglers lost a total of about 100,000 pieces of lead tackle weighing about one ton during the summer of 2004 on five lakes -- Lake of the Woods, Leech, Mille Lacs, Namakan and Rainy. At Mille Lacs alone, one of the most popular walleye lakes in the state, anglers over a 20-year period likely lost an estimated one million pieces of lead tackle weighing about 9 tons, according to Paul Radomski, the MN DNR researcher.

Lead poisoning is preventable. Lead in shot shells was removed long ago because of its impact on waterbirds. Steel shot is now widely supported by hunters. Section 9 of S1514 places obstacles in front of making progress by specifically exempting lead-based tackle from regulation.

What does it cost to treat a lead-poisoned bird? This past winter season, just one wildlife rehabilitation center in the Minneapolis/St. Paul area treated 27 Trumpeter Swans; nine (33%) were diagnosed with lead poisoning. The lead-poisoned swans were either euthanized after treatment (up to 45 days) or immediately due to severe toxicity. Treatment for these 9 swans cost nearly \$22,000. Treatment is very stressful for swans, and includes repeated chelation therapy to rid the blood of lead. Most do not survive and often have issues when released.

Your voice will make a difference. Contact your Senators today by mail, email or phone and let them know Section 9 of S1514 does not HELP wildlife, as the bill's name suggests. Ask them to remove Section 9 from S1514 and help keep wildlife safe ♦

Indiana reports first swan nesting success!

In early August, the Indiana Department of Natural Resources (DNR) reported a pair of state-endangered Trumpeter Swans successfully hatched one cygnet for the first time since modern birdwatching records have been kept! The swan family is in northeastern Indiana's Steuben County. According to the Indiana DNR's press release, "Before 2017, sightings of Trumpeter Swan families in Indiana had been limited to winter, with the birds breeding in other states."

"Trumpeter Swans have been successfully reintroduced in Iowa, Michigan, Minnesota, Ohio and Wisconsin, and in Ontario, Canada. With breeding birds in nearby states, the natural range expansion back into Indiana was expected, according to Adam Phelps, waterfowl biologist with the Indiana DNR Division of Fish & Wildlife."

"It's a great success story that we have habitat that Trumpeter Swans need to breed," Phelps said. "With any luck, this pair will return next year to successfully hatch more cygnets." ♦

Trumpeter Swans on this year's Federal Junior Duck Stamp

Congratulations to Isaac Schreiber, this year's Federal Junior Duck Stamp winner! Twelve year old Isaac is from Virginia. The name of his painting is "Lit Swans."

In his speech at the First Day of Sale Ceremony, Isaac explained, "This year I wanted to do a painting that resembled a Federal Duck Stamp...I decided to paint Trumpeter Swans, one of the most majestic birds out there, yet easier to paint than other species. I think they are a great species to be on the stamp as well because of their history. Trumpeter Swans nearly went extinct in the 1930s, but through the effort of The Trumpeter Swan Society and others, have made a comeback, and are no longer endangered thankfully. To get the Federal Duck Stamp look I was going for, I did a flying design, with the late afternoon sun shining through their wings, and some storm clouds off in the background to add some drama."

Isaac has not yet seen a live Trumpeter Swan. He used images from the internet to look at stance and light shining through the wings. He liked the black and white colors of the swan as being easier to contrast with the background, which he considered an important factor in his choice of the swan for his painting.

Nearly 23,400 students from kindergarten through 12th grade participated in the 2017 Junior Duck Stamp Contest. Each state has four age-related competitions to select the Best of the Show for the state. A four part curriculum guide can be used by teachers throughout the year. Encourage your local school to participate!

All proceeds of the sales of the Junior Duck Stamp go to support recognition and environmental education activities for students who participate in the program.

We have a limited number of 2017-2018 Junior Duck Stamps signed by Isaac. Use the form on page 11 to order yours today, or visit our online gift shop www.trumpeterswansociety.org ♦

Top: *Isaac Schreiber at the First Day of Sale Ceremony in Little Rock, Arkansas*

Bottom: *First Day of Sale Ceremony brochure*



Board and staff updates

We welcome **Kyna Intini**, from Hamilton, Ontario, to the Board of Directors. Kyna is a Registered Veterinary Technician through the University of Guelph, and received her H.B.Sc in Biodiversity from McMaster University. Kyna began volunteering with the Ontario Trumpeter Swan Restoration Program in 2007 and continued to work with the program learning to catch, band and monitor the movements of the swans, keeping records of sightings and earning her banding license. She also holds Wildlife Custodian permits from both the Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry and the Canada Wildlife Service to be able to rehabilitate injured wild swans. She has done contract work with Environment Canada at the Canada Center for Inland Waters.

We bid farewell to Board members **Sara Street** (Ontario) and **Becky Abel** (Wisconsin). We are grateful for their board service and for their dedication and commitment to Trumpeter Swan conservation. We also say goodbye and thank you to **Mary Gillette** who has been our Administrative Assistant since late 2013. She now will have time to enjoy the grandchildren that have arrived in the last few years! We welcome **Rebecca Conser** as the new Administrative Assistant. ♦

William Sladen's legacy

The passing of a swan pioneer

Trumpeter Swans lost a champion with the passing of 96 year old Dr. William (Bill) Sladen in May 2017. Bill Sladen was a teacher at Johns Hopkins University Pathology Department, an Antarctic explorer researching penguins, a physician by training, and a zoologist by choice.



Courtesy of Bill Sladen obituary

In 1966, Dr. Sladen received funding from the National Geographic Society to establish the Smithsonian Institution's Chesapeake Bay Center in Edgewater, Maryland, where he conducted research on Whistling Swans (a.k.a. Tundra Swans). In the 1970s, he pioneered swan color-marking and radio-tracking techniques to define the migration routes of Tundra Swans to advise the U.S. Air Force and FAA on bird hazards to aircraft. Later, in the 1990s, he helped lead research into the migratory patterns of Canada geese by using ultralight aircraft to guide imprinted geese along a designated route.

After retiring from teaching, Dr. Sladen moved to Virginia and founded a research, education and conservation organization, Environmental Studies on the Piedmont, a 914 acre field station north of Warrenton. As its director, he continued studies of migratory patterns of Trumpeter Swans and attempts to restore these birds to their traditional East Coast wintering grounds. For many years he waged a relentless campaign to stop the legal hunting of swans in Virginia.

Throughout his long life, Dr. Sladen received many awards and was recognized for his many achievements, most notably to better understand the impacts of human activity on our native wildlife ecosystems. Dr. Bill Sladen was a TTSS member for more than 40 years and was honored its Lifetime Achievement Award in 2014. ♦

Updates from the U.S. Rocky Mountain Population

A summer update from some key areas:

Wyoming: Spring's cold, wet weather may be a factor in Yellowstone National Park's two breeding swan pairs not nesting this year. The Park has a third pair that appears to have bonded, but has not yet settled on a nesting territory.

Idaho: At Camas National Wildlife Refuge (NWR), north of Idaho Falls, only one nesting pair was observed and its 2 cygnets disappeared soon after hatch. The Southeast Idaho Refuge Complex will be looking at potential reasons behind poor cygnet survival rates in the next few years through a proposed pilot program that will look first for contaminant loading, using unhatched swan eggs. Other potential sources of low cygnet survival will be looked at in future years. Harriman State Park has two nesting pair with at least 3 cygnets on Silver Lake. Swan Lake, south of Harriman State Park, has a pair with at least 5 cygnets (6 were reported at hatch). Carl Mitchell, retired biologist, reported there was a combined total of 13 swan pairs at Gray's Lake NWR and Bear Lake NWR, with an unpaired swan at each refuge. A swan pair at Henrys Lake has at least one surviving cygnet.

Montana: The Salish-Kootenai Tribe of the Flathead Nation in northwest Montana reports slightly lower cygnet counts in 2017 with 15 confirmed nests and 51 cygnets. The Blackfoot Challenge had five active nests, down from eight last year, with 20 or more cygnets. According to Bill West, Refuge Manager at Red Rock Lakes NWR, it was "not a banner year but not catastrophic considering maybe the worst winter in Snake River Plain since 1988-89." There were 22 active nests and brood size at hatch did not appear to have been impacted by the winter; there were an estimated 35 cygnets or more by midsummer.

Nevada: Ruby Lake NWR lost both the female swan of its confirmed 2017 nesting pair and two eggs, to a coyote. It has one remaining pair (possibly nesting in 2017, but not confirmed), plus the now-unpaired male swan.

Washington: Turnbull NWR in eastern Washington has one nesting pair with 4 cygnets this season. Their two other pairs, including its new pair, did not nest this year and there are several single swans also in the vicinity. ♦

Nearly 2,000 students are part of Iowa's spring swan releases



Left: Iowa students have an up-close and personal experience with one of the soon-to-be-released swans, held by Dave Hoffman, IA DNR.

Middle: Nursing home residents had a chance to meet and touch a swan released later in the day. Photo by Steve Harryman

Right: Five zoo staff held "their cygnets" released at Lake Icaria, Iowa in May. Photo by Holly Welch

Iowa students' excitement was palpable at the swan releases in April and May. Iowa had five swan release events and 14 swans were released into southern Iowa. This spring, nearly 2,000 students from at least 30 schools participated in the releases, field days, and school presentations. One nursing home even received a visit by a soon-to-be-released swan. Filmmaker Steve Harryman captured the experiences for the film "Return of the Trumpeter Swan" funded through a bequest to TTSS by the Patricia and James Bigley Trust.

Engaging students in these historic and exciting releases is an important way to pass on the values of conservation to a new generation. Involving seniors expands the outreach by the Iowa Department of Natural Resources (DNR) and brings the wild beauty of swans to a new group of enthusiastic Iowans.

Five zoos providing cygnets sent representatives to the releases- Kansas City Zoo, Northeast Wisconsin (NEW) Zoo, Cleveland Metropark Zoo, Kevin Drees (Blank Park Zoo of Des Moines), and the Maryland Zoo.

Kids and adults alike learned about the importance of wetland habitat for swans and other animals and plants, how most of Iowa's wetlands had disappeared but are now being restored, and how the Trumpeter Swan began to be restored to the state about 100 years after it had last been seen.

At the releases, kids and adults had a chance to see and touch the swans and ask questions. Not only was it tremendous fun, it was perfect weather! It was an honor for TTSS to participate in Iowa's public outreach. ♦

Topeka Zoo hosts TTSS swan talk



Executive Director Margaret Smith shared the story of the return of the Trumpeter Swan to North America to an appreciative Topeka Zoo audience in May. She also shared the impact of lead poisoning on wildlife health, including Trumpeter Swans. The zoo's director and staff have direct experience with lead poisoning in eagles and shared how harmful lead toxicity is in raptors as well.

After the talk, everyone had a chance to see the zoo's swan pair (left) whose cygnets have been released in the Oregon Restoration Project, sponsored by TTSS, the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. Thank you for the invitation! ♦

2016 Annual Report

Your generous support made a big impact on Trumpeter Swans

Your generous support in 2016 accomplished much in Trumpeter Swan conservation. We are pleased to report the positive impact you made to Trumpeter Swans across North America. Thank you!

Education and Research



Above: Photo by Terry Thormin

24th Swan Conference: Since 1969 TTSS has been hosting conferences to bring together swan researchers, managers, businesses and individuals to share the latest in research findings and recommendations. The theme of the three day 24th Swan Conference, held in Duncan, British Columbia in November 2016, was “Swans and Agriculture. Working Together.” We thank our co-host Somenos Marsh Wildlife Society, our sponsors, volunteers, presenters and all who made the conference a success.



A visit to a dairy farm with swan habitat

There were more than 30 presentations to participants from across North America, including Canadian Wildlife Service, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, state agencies, non-profit organizations, businesses and individuals about the challenges and successes involved in long term management of Trumpeter Swans.

Updates from across North America were featured and special attention was given to potential conflicts between wintering Trumpeter Swans and agriculture in the Pacific Flyway where declining winter habitat is becoming a critical issue. A three hour evening panel discussion was recorded by the local cable television station and has since been broadcast in several of its markets in British Columbia. We thank Graeme Fowler who led an all-day field trip to meet local farmers to learn about the waterfowl and agricultural issues they face.

2015 Trumpeter Swan Rangewide Survey: The US Fish and Wildlife Service completed the 2015 Trumpeter Swan Survey data compilation. Initial summary results were presented at the 24th Swan Conference. The survey found that the Interior Population (including the Mississippi and Central Flyways) may have exceeded the Pacific Coast Population for the first time since state and provincial restoration programs began in the 1960s. The survey also found the United States flocks in the Rocky Mountain Population number only 765 birds despite decades of restoration efforts. (TTSS helped fund the Minnesota Trumpeter Swan Survey for the 2015 rangewide survey, and TTSS was also part of the survey methodology review and recommendations).

Trumpeter Watch: Trumpeter Watch began in 2009 as a way to track existing and emerging swan wintering and nesting sites, especially in the Interior Population which had no migration traditions. In 2016, we received reports from coast to coast. Thanks to Riverlands Audubon in Missouri for their regular winter reports in 2016 of banded Trumpeter Swans wintering near the confluence of the Mississippi and Missouri Rivers. Reports of migrating

Migrating Michigan Trumpeter Swans, Photo by Phil Odum



2016 Annual Report

Trumpeter Swans in Michigan confirmed regular stopover sights along the AuSable River and nearby areas. Thank you to everyone who contacted us with their sightings of wintering Trumpeter Swans.

Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem: In 2016, TTSS completed the analysis of the viability of the Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem Trumpeter Swans over the next 50 years. The analysis was done by the University of Idaho. The results predict the potential for long term decline of Trumpeter Swan numbers in many areas of the Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem due to climate changes on hydrology, lack of sufficient numbers of critical breeding pairs in certain regions to sustain populations, and human development impacts.

Restoration and Management

Oregon Restoration Project: 2016 was a time of success and setbacks in the Oregon Restoration Project, a partnership since 2009 between TTSS, the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. In 2016 a swan pair, released at Summer Lake, Oregon several years ago, had their first brood! In September, thirteen cygnets (about 4 months old) were released at Summer Lake. In mid-October, one of the released cygnets was shot dead by a hunter who also severely wounded the first wild Trumpeter Swan hatched at Summer Lake. The two year old female swan had been a companion to the newly released cygnets.



In 2016, 4 cygnets hatched in the Oregon Restoration Project to swans released earlier as cygnets Photo by Martin St. Louis

Rocky Mountain Population (RMP) Connectivity Project: The completed 2015 North American Trumpeter Swan Survey reported only 765 Trumpeter Swans in the Rocky Mountain Population United States flocks, despite decades of restoration efforts. The average increase of swans in the U.S. RMP flock over the past three decades is six swans per year. In 2016, TTSS Board recognized the continuing isolation and lack of connectivity between RMP flocks is a serious issue and approved the TTSS RMP Connectivity Project as a strategic priority.



Yellowstone National Park's swans are part of the Rocky Mountain Population

NAWCA Partner Project: In 2016, TTSS was a funding NAWCA partner on the Flat Ranch Trumpeter Swan habitat project in Idaho, which is an historical swan nesting area. The project includes creation of several seasonally flooded wetlands on this working ranch. This ranch is in a designated Important Bird Area and close to Red Rock Lakes National Wildlife Refuge and Harriman State Park, both important nesting areas for Trumpeter Swans in the Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem (see 2017 update, page 12).

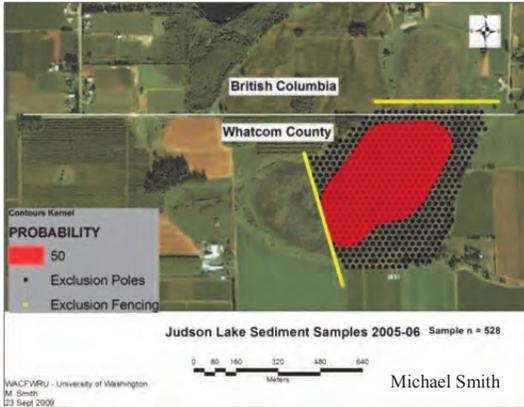
Flyway meeting participation: TTSS is a member of the swan committees on all four Flyway Councils. In 2016, we participated in the Mississippi, Central, and Pacific Flyway meetings, as well as all four flyway meetings held at the North American Wildlife and Natural Resources Conferences. In addition, TTSS participated in the Greater Yellowstone Working Group.

Swan Health

In the **Pacific Northwest region**, we continued our partnerships with the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife, University of Washington, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and the Canadian Wildlife

2016 Annual Report

Service to collect swan carcasses and analyze swan deaths in northern Puget Sound (Washington) and Sumas Prairie (British Columbia). TTSS also helped fund gizzard analysis for the 2015-16 winter season. Of the 374 swans collected and analyzed in the 2015-2016 winter season, more than half of them died from suspected lead poisoning, with a fifth of deaths from suspected powerline collisions.



In spring 2016, the known lead “hot zone” (map left, red area) at Judson Lake, straddling British Columbia and Washington, was found to have deteriorating biodegradable poles in the lead exclusion zone erected in 2009. Thanks to your generosity through the “Buy a Pole” fundraising campaign, TTSS was able to purchase 500 poles of the 2,400 needed for replacement. The Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife and the Canadian Wildlife Service funded the remaining pole purchases. From November-December 2016, the renovated exclusion zone kept Trumpeter Swans out of the lake area with the highest known lead density. Thank you for helping keep swans safe at Judson lake!

Lead Poisoning education efforts included a new 2016 pilot program initiated in the St. Croix River watershed (Minnesota and Wisconsin). The project, designed in 2016 (to be implemented in 2017) includes a partnership with Loon Watch, Raptor Education Group, Inc., and Friends of Crex Meadows initiating a grassroots awareness effort targeting fishermen to switch to non-toxic fishing tackle (see page 1 photo).

Advocacy on swan issues across North America. TTSS weighed in on swan health and habitat issues affecting Trumpeter Swans in North America, including a marina break wall in Ontario’s most significant swan wintering site, lead ammunition and fishing tackle hearings in Minnesota and Wisconsin, a large windfarm in Missouri located within a mile of an important migratory bird stopover route, assessment and recommendations about habitat improvements to prevent auto-related swan deaths near Ann Arbor, Michigan, and potential swan nesting habitat disturbance through proposed fish management activities in Yellowstone National Park on one of its two swan nesting habitats.

Outreach

We continued our education and outreach about progress on swan issues and projects through *Trumpetings* and our online *Enewsletter*. Our Facebook fans reached over 2,000 in 2016, with “likes” from 45 countries. It was a delight to meet with the public at events in Wisconsin, Iowa, Minnesota, Missouri, Idaho, Utah, Michigan, and Illinois, and share the story of the return of the Trumpeter Swan your support makes possible.

Operations

Financial Report: TTSS ended the year with an unrestricted net income loss of \$3,933 for operations and a restricted projects net income loss of \$59,130 for special projects (Film Project, Oregon Restoration, Greater Yellowstone, Washington Programs, North American Swan Fund). The Return of the Trumpeter Swan Film Project expenses comprised 97% of the total net income loss for 2016, as 2016 expenses were paid for through bequest funds received the prior year. Thanks to the generosity of Joseph Hautman, winner of the 2016-2017 Federal Duck Stamp, we had a one-time opportunity to sell the 2016-2017 Federal Duck Stamp prints, featuring Trumpeter Swans, with a significant portion of print sale proceeds supporting TTSS general operations.

2016 Annual Report

Balance Sheet December 31, 2016

| | |
|---------------------|------------------|
| Assets | |
| Current Assets | \$138,512 |
| Other Assets | \$ 47,190 |
| Total Assets | \$185,702 |

Liabilities & Net Assets (Equity)

| | |
|---|------------------|
| Total Liabilities | \$ 0 |
| Temp. Restricted Net Assets | \$ 99,907 |
| Unrestricted Net Assets | \$ 85,795 |
| Total Net Assets | \$185,702 |
| Total Liabilities & Net Assets | \$185,702 |

Income Statement

January 1, 2016-December 31, 2016

| | |
|------------------------------|------------------|
| Revenue | |
| Contributions, gifts, grants | \$ 91,971 |
| Program Revenue | \$ 11,578 |
| Other | \$ 5,494 |
| Total | \$109,043 |

| | |
|------------------------------|-------------------|
| Expenses (functional) | |
| Program | \$125,771 |
| Fundraising | \$ 14,549 |
| Management | \$ 31,786 |
| Total | \$172,106 |
| Net Income | \$ -63,063 |

Governance: The Board approved a number of policies including Donor Confidentiality and Privacy, and Gift Acceptance Policy, among others. The Board of Directors added Director Becky Abel, Grants Manager at the International Crane Foundation.



Painting by Earl Tappenden, TTSS member since 2009

2016 Board of Directors

Carey Smith, *President, Vancouver, Washington and Polson, Montana*

David Hoffman, *Vice President, Clear Lake, Iowa*

David Myers, *Treasurer, Idaho Falls, Idaho*

Becky Abel, *Madison, Wisconsin*

Laurence Gillette, *Mound, Minnesota*

Deborah Groves, *Juneau, Alaska*

James Hawkings, *Whitehorse, Yukon*

Gary Ivey, *Past President, Bend, Oregon*

Jeff Nelson, *Bozeman, Montana*

Sara Street, *Victoria Harbor, Ontario*

Carl Woodward III, *Roseland, New Jersey*

Thank you to all our donors

The Board and staff of the Trumpeter Swan Society extend our heartfelt and deep appreciation to you! Your generous support made it possible to continue to work to assure the vitality and welfare of wild Trumpeter Swans.

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

BC Nature, Patricia and James Bigley Trust, Buckhaven Veterinary Clinic, Central Flyway Council, Christian Photo, Inc., Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes of the Flathead Nation, Cougar Ridge Photography, Cowichan Valley Naturalists' Society, Cowichan Valley Regional District, Delta Waterfowl Foundation, East Cascades Audubon, Fanwood Foundation, Felburn Foundation, Foley-Frischkorn Wildlife Conservation Fund, Friends of Malheur National Wildlife Refuge, Glacial Lake Cranberries, Intermountain West Joint Venture, K.H. Wm. & Andrea Manson Krueger Foundation, The Dr. Jerome Katchin Waterfowl Foundation, Keller Williams Realty, Kellogg Bird Sanctuary, Kerasote Books, Inc., Klamath Basin Audubon, Mary and Terry Kohler Special Charitable Account, Midnight Sun AAZK Chapter, Midwest Floating Island, Natural Insect Control, North Iowa Nature Club, Northwest Swan Conservation Association, Open Door Foundation, Pacific Birds Habitat Joint Venture, Pacific Flyway Council, Perkins Foundation, Pheasant Farms, LLC, Ruby Lake National Wildlife Refuge, Somenos Marsh Wildlife Society, Sunriver Nature Center and Observatory, Wildlife Viewing Program Environment Yukon, Taltree Arboretum and Gardens, TeraFauna Wildlife Consulting, Inc., Thunderbird Motel, Wye Marsh Wildlife Centre ♦

“A Great Big Love”

by Lisbeth Ann Williams, TTSS member since 2006

It is difficult to say exactly when my love for swans came about. There is one moment in particular, however, that I remember very clearly. I was a single mom at the time, living in the suburbs. I did not very often read newspapers, but I recall something which caught my attention and I proceeded to read about a pair of black swans that were being adopted to live in a pond in a newly developed office park. In that moment I knew that I too, wanted a pond and swans swimming in it. This was of course not only improbable and impractical in my tiny suburban yard, but clearly impossible. I had grown up in and was still living in Colorado, where swans are very rarely seen.

[Lisbeth later moved to Warrenton, Virginia, near the Environmental Studies on the Piedmont].

Much to my surprise I discovered The Swan Research Program (SRP) at Airlie and it was only five minutes from my home. While at a class [at Airlie], another attendee informed me that they were looking for volunteers to help care for the swans. Since I had actually only seen one pair, I was astonished to learn there were close to 100 swans in the collection. This discovery made me positively ecstatic, so I sent an email first thing the next morning. I was contacted immediately, given a tour, introduced to Dr. William J. L. Sladen, and welcomed into their program.



Bill Sladen at home with his two swans, Des and YoYo. Photo by Lisbeth Ann Williams

As a volunteer I was first given the task of simply going out into the field and recording observations of the swans' behavior and interactions. I was put in charge of the feeding and later, I was given the privilege of acting as surrogate mom to cygnets that had hatched in an incubator. Nine ponds plus seven mitigation cells were within the Airlie property. While I was making my rounds and filling feeders I also witnessed many other species in their natural habitats, such as bald eagles, wild turkeys, groundhogs, muskrats, box turtles and snapping turtles, cormorants, great blue herons, and white egrets. In time I was asked to assist with processing the swans that were caught in traps to be banded and feather-clipped. I was included in regular SRP meetings with Dr. Sladen and even responded to some of the “swan emergencies.”

I continued to learn and do more. To my unsuppressed delight, I was asked to take over and care for the entire collection. My dream had come true and, to quote Joseph Campbell, I was “living my bliss.” I feel so blessed to have had this miracle take place in my life. I was amazed to see that my love for swans blossomed into so much more, such as participating in the annual winter bird (waterfowl) counts and annual butterfly counts with Dr. Sladen. The SRP was part of a larger organization known as Environmental Studies so I had the opportunity to learn about so many more things – beavers and their importance to wetlands, vernal pools and salamanders, wetland botany, bears, woodcocks, and so much more. My passion for swans led me to what is essentially a love for all species and a deeper understanding of the ways in which all species depend upon one another.

I will always be grateful to Bill Sladen and his wife, Jocelyn, for the gifts of knowledge that they so generously shared, for their friendship and their inspiration. My only regret is that I did not discover the swans earlier in my life. When people ask me how my boundless love for this great white bird came about, I simply say, it was Divine Guidance. In my heart, I absolutely believe, that is what led me to exactly where I had always longed to be. ♦



Opportunities to support TTSS and enhance your tax deduction

You make thoughtful decisions about your charitable giving. You research your options, consider your capacity to give, and chose an organization with a mission you believe in with sound governance to put your hard-earned gift to work. That’s why you, and so many others, have chosen to give to TTSS. Your thoughtful contributions work to assure the vitality and welfare of wild Trumpeter Swans. There are more options to give while enhancing your tax deductions.*



A DONATION FROM YOUR IRA: Anyone age 70 ½ or older can make a gift up to \$100,000 directly from their IRA each year. A married couple can make a gift up to \$200,000. An IRA gift will count against your Mandatory Minimum Distribution from your retirement account and won’t go toward your Adjusted Gross Income.

And it’s easy to do. Just tell your IRA plan administrator that you want to make a gift from your IRA to TTSS. They will send us a check and then report that gift as counting against your IRS required annual distribution in 2017.

APPRECIATED STOCK GIFTS: Your gift of an appreciated asset, often stock or mutual fund shares, is a valuable way to make a contribution to TTSS. By giving appreciated assets, you can reduce capital gains taxes on the appreciation and receive the current tax deduction on the full value of the gift.

CONSIDER A PLANNED GIFT: Bequests allow individuals to make much larger gifts than they could during their lifetime. A gift in your will, trust, or life insurance policy allows you to decide what your legacy will be and the kind of impact you have on the future—just as you planned.

We advise you to consult your attorney or a tax professional about how tax benefits may apply to your specific situation. **The Trumpeter Swan Society’s tax identification number is 23-7220654. Call TTSS for more information.*

- \$ _____ Area of Greatest Need
- \$ _____ Membership
- \$ _____ Signed Jr Duck Stamp \$20/each*

*Includes \$14 donation to help Trumpeter Swan programs

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone _____

Email _____



I support Trumpeter Swan conservation!

I prefer to pay by:

____ Check, payable to TTSS
 ____ Credit Card __ Visa __ MC __ Discover __ AmEx

Card # _____

Card Expiration date ____ / ____ Security Code _____

Name on Card _____

Signature _____

Mail to: The Trumpeter Swan Society,
 12615 Rockford Rd., Plymouth, MN 55441-1248

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For all you do for Trumpeter Swans, thank you!

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



Left: **Flat Ranch, Idaho, Project Update:** *TTSS is a NAWCA project partner on the Flat Ranch Project, working to restore seasonal wetlands at this historic swan nesting area. This spring several more groundwater wells were installed. The Ranch is collecting another field season's worth of data in order to design and develop a solid project that will be successful over the long term under a variety of moisture scenarios.*

Right: **Oregon Restoration Project:** *"Chuck and Grace", the swan pair at Sunriver Nature Center in Bend, Oregon, hatched 4 cygnets this summer that will be released in September at Summer Lake Wildlife Management Area as part of our Oregon Restoration Project. Photo courtesy of Sunriver Nature Center*



Photos by Margaret Smith
except where noted.

Please consider a gift to TTSS through your will, trust, retirement account or life insurance. Together we can protect the beauty we love.

TRUMPETINGS EDITORS

John Cornely, Gary Ivey, Carey Smith, Margaret Smith

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