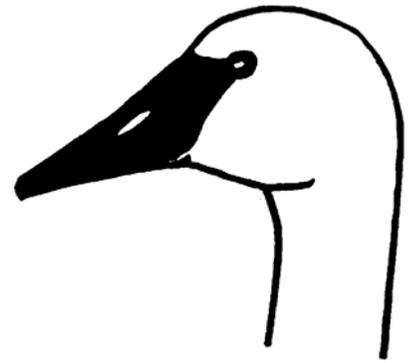




TRUMPETINGS

Voice of The Trumpeter Swan Society
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FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR –

It is exciting to greet all of you in my first column as Executive Director! I am grateful to the Board for giving me the opportunity to help continue to advance the cause of Trumpeter Swan conservation. My friend and first ever TTSS Executive Director, Ruth Shea, has done a great job of getting me oriented and continues to provide excellent guidance and assistance. TTSS has a strong foundation largely due to Ruth's work over the last 7+ years. I am very pleased to announce that Ruth has been appointed to the TTSS Board of Directors as a Director-at-Large. Please join me in thanking her for her dedication to swan conservation and congratulate her on her new role. I also thank Rick McKelvey who recently left the Board. Rick spent many years working on behalf of Trumpeter Swans as a former TTSS President, Board member, and Canadian Wildlife Service Biologist.

We need your help! This is old news, but it is important for TTSS to grow and become more of a force in conservation. Do you realize that we have less than 800 members? That is very small for an organization that strives to implement continent-wide programs. There are only three States that have more than 20 TTSS members and there are only about 30 members in all of Canada. I wasn't a math major, but I know that if each one of you recruits one new member this year, the size of TTSS will double. We operate with part-time staff and a small Board of Directors. The Board and I pledge to increase our outreach and education, but we will be much more successful with your help. I will be shocked if each of you doesn't know at least one person who loves swans, but is not a member.

We can't be complacent! I am thrilled that there are about 35,000 Trumpeter Swans in North America. When I first worked with trumpeters back in 1978, I would have never predicted that. However, wetlands continue to disappear, human population and development continue to destroy and fragment swan habitats, lead poisoning is still a serious concern, and swans continue to be killed by collisions with power lines. Some great restoration projects have reached or exceeded their objectives, but our mission is far from complete.

Plan on joining us in the Yukon! Planning is progressing for our 21st Conference and 40th Anniversary Celebration in Whitehorse, Yukon Territory, next April 16-19, 2008. Take this opportunity to join us in this unique setting to celebrate our history and to plan for the future. At the same time you will be able view thousands

of Tundra and Trumpeter Swans and other waterfowl as they return to the far North. You will find more information in future *Trumpetings* and on the Society's website. Air Canada is registered as the official airline for the conference and will offer the possibility of a 10% discount if a minimum sign-up is reached. To view the Call for Papers and instructions for authors, visit the TTSS website or contact the TTSS office for materials.

Finally, I encourage you to contact me and share your ideas about TTSS and Trumpeter Swan conservation. For all of us, but most of all for the swans, I want us to have a larger, more active Society with a greatly enhanced ability to fund and facilitate wetland conservation. Thank you for your support.

John Cornely
johncornely@msn.com

U.S. FISH AND WILDLIFE PERSONNEL CHANGES –

Dr. Jim Dubovsky was recently named as new Migratory Bird Chief for U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS), Region 6, Denver. Russ Oates is the new Migratory Bird Chief in Anchorage, Alaska. Steve Wilds, Region 3, Fort Snelling, Minnesota, retired in April. Tim Moser, FWS National Goose Coordinator has moved to Minneapolis and will be coordinating the 2010 Trumpeter Swan Survey. The Mississippi Flyway office has moved to Fort Snelling, co-located with the FWS Regional office. There are new Flyway Representatives in the Mississippi (Jim Kelley) and Atlantic (Paul Padding) Flyways.

ROCKY MOUNTAIN POPULATION NEWS

Trumpeter Swan translocation, Fort Hall, Idaho - The following report was forwarded from Carl Mitchell, Wildlife Biologist, FWS, Southeast Idaho Refuge Complex. On 15 June 2007, Dan Christopherson, Brett Haskett, and Ladale LeClaire (Shoshone-Bannock Tribes Fish and Wildlife Department), joined Mike Fisher and Carl Mitchell (FWS) at one of Bill Long's (Wyoming Wetland Society) swan ponds in Jackson, Wyoming. They joined with staff, local veterinarians, and individuals from Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks, FWS, and private landowners to assist in the capture and marking of approximately 55 yearling Trumpeter Swans. These swans were examined, blood tested, and marked prior to translocation to Idaho (N=10) or Montana (Blackfoot

Valley and Flathead Valley). The Shoshone-Bannock Tribal staff brought a horse trailer and transported the swans to Fort Hall in southeast Idaho. All of the trumpeters sent to Idaho were yearling birds. All received USGS stainless steel lock-on leg bands and yellow and black collars. The swans were released 15 June on the Portneuf River, on the south end of the Shoshone-Bannock Reservation. The swans were observed on the Portneuf River on 19 June 2007. Band and collar numbers are as follows: Collar alphanumeric: 1M1 – 2M0 and USGS tarsus bands: 1949-01635 - 01645.

Trumpeter Swan egg collecting in Canada - Earlier this year, the Pacific Flyway Council endorsed a proposal of the Wyoming Wetland Society (WWS) to collect Trumpeter Swan eggs from Alberta and British Columbia to increase the numbers of swans available for release and genetic diversity in the Tristate area of Montana, Idaho, and Wyoming. Project leader Bill Long, WWS, reported that a crew of four biologists collected 60 fertile eggs June 4-6, 2007. A total of 46 eggs was collected from 18 nests in British Columbia with the use of a helicopter and 14 from five nests in Alberta by ground collecting. Permits issued by Canadian Wildlife Service required the project to leave two eggs per nest and to collect only from nests with a minimum of four eggs. Eggs were transported in battery operated field incubators and were placed in incubators at the WWS facility in Jackson, Wyoming. Hatch success was 97% of the 60 eggs collected and all cygnets are doing fine.

Grays Lake reconnect under discussion - Preliminary discussions regarding ways to reverse the severe hydrologic damage that has occurred at Grays Lake NWR (GLNWR) in southeast Idaho are underway due to the efforts of TTSS Board Member Ruth Shea. GLNWR was the first location in Idaho where Trumpeter Swans were reported (1859) and has the potential to be the most significant nesting area for trumpeters in Idaho. It is the largest hardstem bulrush marsh in North America and could be of major importance for a myriad of waterbirds. Unfortunately, for 80 years it has been severely damaged by a trans-basin water diversion that has partially drained Grays Lake and diverted its waters into a different watershed. Currently the Refuge is in severe ecological decline. Ruth has been working with federal, state, tribal, and private conservation entities to explore ways to reconnect Grays Lake's historic hydrology and vastly improve its value for swans and other species. A solution will require strong leadership from the Department of Interior to closely coordinate its Bureau of Reclamation, Bureau of Indian Affairs, and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to improve water management. We are hopeful that a solution can be reached with the help of Secretary of Interior Dirk Kempthorne who is from Idaho and is familiar with GLNWR. If successful, this effort would result in the improvement of over 30,000 wetland and riparian acres in southeast Idaho and benefit Yellowstone Cutthroat Trout, as well as Trumpeter Swans and many other wetland species.

PACIFIC COAST POPULATION NEWS

Trumpeter Swans and water rights – Trumpeter Swans returned after 40 years to winter in Hines Marsh, located on Leadbetter Point on the northern tip of Washington State's Long Beach Peninsula. Hines Marsh is thought to be the largest interdunal freshwater wetland remaining in North America. The Center for Environmental Law & Policy (CELP) has joined with TTSS to stop water use violations that might de-water the marsh and destroy the restored swan habitat. CELP is using its water rights expertise to assist TTSS in protecting this critically important bird sanctuary. To view aerial photos of the area and to learn more about this issue, visit the Washington Working Group section of the TTSS website or go directly to www.celp.org/swans/swanhome/home.

INTERIOR POPULATION NEWS

Mississippi Flyway and Technical Session approves migration experiment – At its July meetings, the Mississippi Flyway and Technical Session approved a 3-year experiment proposed by TTSS and the Iowa DNR to expand Midwest migration beginning in winter 2007/08. Approval was granted to move 20-25 trumpeters per year from Iowa to Arkansas. See April 2007 *Trumpetings* for additional background information.

Wild Trumpeter Swan brood in North Dakota reported - The first evidence of Trumpeter Swans breeding in North Dakota since the late 1800s was observed in June 2007. A pair of adults with five small cygnets were seen and photographed in northeastern North Dakota on private land! The adults were not marked. The adults may have come from restoration efforts in Minnesota where trumpeter restoration began more than 35 years ago. According to *Breeding Birds of North Dakota* by Robert Stewart, Trumpeter Swans were last reported breeding in North Dakota in 1895.

Editors' note: for a review of North Dakota swan observations, see Harold H Burgess' North Dakota Trumpeter Swan observations in North American Swans (30)1, pages 21-24.

Swans nest in Missouri again – TTSS members Bud and Debbie Neptune from Dawn, Missouri, are excited to report a surprise late nesting of the trumpeter pair on their farm pond. The adults were banded and released in Iowa by the Iowa DNR several years back and produced three cygnets at the Neptune's pond in 2005. The pair returned in 2006, but the nest flooded out. This year, after early heavy rains, the pair persisted. Trumpeter Swan pairs are extremely faithful to their nesting territories. Named *Lazarus* by the Neptunes, the pair's one cygnet, hatched in July, is thriving and has already made headlines in newspapers and on local ABC television. Bud Neptune downloaded video footage of the swan family swimming around the pond at: www.youtube.com/watch?v=fEsTVxC7o_8.

Illinois has another wild Trumpeter Swan hatch this year – A pair of Iowa DNR-banded Trumpeter Swans that hatched 2 cygnets in 2006 in Carroll County, in

northwest Illinois, has a brood of four cygnets this year. Last year's successful nest was the first wild hatch of trumpeters in Illinois since the late 1800s.

TTSS Director Joe Johnson retires from Kellogg Bird Sanctuary, Michigan State University - Joe Johnson retired July 1 from Kellogg Biological Station, Michigan State University, where he had been Chief Wildlife Biologist and manager of the Kellogg Bird Sanctuary since 1985 and where he had worked with waterfowl for 48 years. Joe is a national authority on waterfowl population management and habitat conservation issues and worked with a multi-agency team in restoring the native Trumpeter Swan to Michigan.

To honor Joe's dedication to wildlife conservation, the Kellogg Biological Station has established the Joe Johnson Fellowship Fund to support conservation programs at Kellogg Biological Station. Colleagues, friends, and former students are invited to make a donation to this fund in Joe's honor by contacting Dr. Kay Gross, Michigan State University at kgross@kbs.msu.edu or 3700 East Gull Lake Drive, Hickory Corners, MI 49060. Congratulations, Joe!

TTSS receives plaque of appreciation - At a March 2007 banquet celebrating the success of Trumpeter Swan restoration in Wisconsin, TTSS Director Joe Johnson accepted a plaque on behalf of TTSS from the Natural Resources Foundation of Wisconsin and the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources. The inscription reads "In appreciation for the major role The Trumpeter Swan Society played in the success of Wisconsin's Trumpeter Swan Recovery Program, restoring these unique and important birds to our state's wetlands". The TTSS Board greatly appreciates the recognition!



TRUMPETER SWAN CONSERVATION CAMPAIGN UPDATE - We wish to thank all members who donated above and beyond their dues to help us towards our goal of meeting Earth Friends Wildlife Foundation's Trumpeter Swan Challenge Grant. Donations since the

April issue of *Trumpetings* include Kenneth H. Dubke, Carole S. and Norman Hofley, Claudia and Roger Salquist, and Sally Shanks. On behalf of the trumpeters, thank you!

TTSS also received recent grants from the Wiancko Family Donor Advised Fund of the Community Foundation of Jackson Hole, Wyoming, and The Summerlee Foundation, Animal Protection Office, Colorado. These grants are vital to expanding our advocacy on behalf of the swans as well as keeping our main office and website up and running on a daily basis.

Xcel Energy Foundation, Minneapolis, Minnesota, donated funds to pay for a Trumpeter Swan mount that will be placed in Lake Maria State Park Visitor's Center, in western Wright County, Minnesota. This adult swan had died in a collision with a power line near the Park. An interpretative sign will educate visitors about the natural history of Trumpeter Swans, the history of restoration efforts as well as some of the challenges that trumpeters still face. This year, there are two nesting pairs of Trumpeter Swans within the Park.

TTSS IS BENEFICIARY OF THE ARTISTS FOR CONSERVATION FOUNDATION (AFC) – As of June 2007, The Trumpeter Swan Society is listed as one of the conservation organizations to which members may make pledges of financial support based on the sale of their artwork. AFC is a non-profit, international organization dedicated to supporting wildlife and habitat conservation through art that celebrates our natural heritage. Please visit their website at www.natureartists.com to see extensive write-ups about individual wildlife artists and to view an incredible selection of artwork focused on nature.

Chasing the Ghost Birds by David Sakrison – Published by the International Crane Foundation, Baraboo, Wisconsin, this just published book chronicles three conservation projects in a detailed, but very readable and occasionally humorous manner. The author describes the behind the scene, often heroic, efforts and adventures of bringing back Whooping Cranes from extinction, saving the last of Russia's wild Siberian Cranes, and restoring the Trumpeter Swan to the Interior of North America. With an introduction by George Archibald, co-founder of the International Crane Foundation, numerous color and black and white photographs, and maps, you will be introduced to many conservationists and swan biologists, including several who are current TTSS Directors. For more information, the Wisconsin author welcomes inquiries at 920-748-6124 or sakrison@charter.net.

WANT TO BE A MEMBER? NEED TO RENEW? GIVE A FRIEND A GIFT?

Student/Retired__\$15 Regular__\$25 Family__\$30 Organization__\$50 Supporting__\$100 Life Member__\$500 [to Endowment Fund]

Make check/money order payable to TTSS (Canadians please write "in US funds" on personal checks). Mail to:
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WELCOME ALL!



20th CONFERENCE PROCEEDINGS – The selected papers from the 20th TTSS conference held in Council Bluffs, Iowa, in October 2005, are still available as a special edition of *North American Swans*. As with the 19th Proceedings, copies are available to current members, but due to the costs, will only be sent upon request. Please send us an e-mail or drop a note (be sure to check the status of your membership), if you would like one either as a bound copy or as a CD Rom.

MIDWEST BIRDING SYMPOSIUM SEPTEMBER 13-16 – "Habitat Conservation – it's for the birds" will feature many topics, including a presentation on Trumpeter Swans. To be held in Moline, Illinois, on the Mississippi River. Visit www.quadcities.com for details.

Visit TTSS' World Wide Web site at www.trumpeterswansociety.org