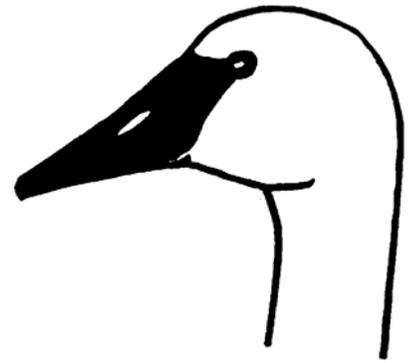




TRUMPETINGS

Voice of The Trumpeter Swan Society
12615 County Road 9 – Suite 100
Plymouth, Minnesota 55441-1248
763-694-7851; ttss@threeriversparkdistrict.org
www.trumpeterswansociety.org.



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FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR –

Year 2007 is winding down, cygnets have fledged and we are looking ahead to projects in 2008. This is the time of year when we ask you to renew your membership and consider additional support through our annual appeal. We are renewing our Trumpeter Swan Conservation Campaign, a matching program by our dedicated partner Earth Friends of Jackson, Wyoming. Their special flyer is here along with the holiday gift list and 2008 renewal/donation card. Your mailing label indicates your membership status. You may now join, renew, or donate online through our Website with your Visa, Master, or Discover Card. We pay a 4.75% transaction fee, so we appreciate checks, money orders, or a small additional donation to cover the fee. **I have signed up 7 new members this year, how many have you signed up?** Please consider TTSS gift memberships for friends and family for the holidays!

We look forward to seeing you at our 21st Conference in the Yukon which will focus on swans in western Canada and Alaska. Presentations will be held on Thursday, 17th April and Saturday 19th April, with an all-day field trip to view swans south of Whitehorse on Friday. The conference will end Saturday evening with our banquet keynoted by former Director Dave Weaver, highlighting TTSS' 40 years of accomplishments. Join us to celebrate our history and to plan for the future while viewing thousands of Tundra and Trumpeter Swans. 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 (promotion code: CQPTVBW1). Visit the TTSS website or contact the TTSS office for the Call for Papers.

You will soon be able to register online with your credit card. Check our web site for news on availability. The conference registration brochure and TTSS Board voting ballots will be mailed out early in 2008. The conference will be held at the High Country Inn (1-800-554-4471; www.highcountryinn.yk.ca). Rooms are \$99 (Canadian) per night (single or double), plus a 6% tax. The block number is 24870 to reserve rooms at this rate. More details follow below.

John Cornely

Take some extra time and make your 21st Conference visit to Whitehorse truly memorable! - When landscape architect legend Ian McHarg viewed the interspersions of Trumpeter Swan habitat and

mountains while flying from Anchorage to Juneau, he commented how nice it was to see "a place where God is still in charge". TTSS members accustomed to the suburban/agricultural landscape where most trumpeters are getting established in the lower 48, may get the same impression when they visit Whitehorse for the 2008 conference.

Whitehorse in April is a great experience. Nice paths on the bank of the mighty Yukon River a few steps from hotels, with flocks of migrating trumpeters and tundras overhead during the rapidly-increasing hours of daylight, will provide an unforgettable experience.

Saving some time to drive or fly out for a closer view can greatly enhance your trip. Thousands of tourists visit this region each summer without the inducement of witnessing the swan migration and the good fellowship of a TTSS conference. Don't miss this wonderful opportunity. There are many possibilities for excursions both before and after the conference -- including Skagway, Haines, Kluane National Park, dog-mushing, cross-country skiing and more! For more information, check out Yukon Tourism at www.travelyukon.com or the City of Whitehorse visitor information at www.visitwhitehorse.com. For those interested in wildlife viewing, visit www.environmentyukon.gov.yk.ca/viewing.

The Juneau/Skagway/Whitehorse connection - For those with a bit of extra time, one alternative to reaching Whitehorse via Air Canada or Air North is flying to Juneau, Alaska, followed by a ferry ride to Skagway, Alaska, and driving over the coast range which was such a challenge for the 1898 gold rush hordes.

We can make it easy for you to enjoy this "Trail of '98" option. You would arrange your own travel to and from Juneau. If desired, TTSS Board member Jim King can provide advice on accommodations and activities in Juneau. Traveling from Juneau to Whitehorse is most economical and scenic via the Alaska Marine Highway ferry from Juneau to Skagway followed by a 160 km (2-hour) drive over the spectacular Coast Mountains to Whitehorse. For a small fee, the drive to and from Whitehorse for conference participants can be arranged by your Whitehorse hosts via a rented van – complete with local commentary and photo stops along the way.

Alaska Marine Highway Ferry schedules, fares, and other information are available at www.dot.state.ak.us/amhs. Currently, the ferry schedule

for April 2008 indicates that prior to the conference there are ferries departing Juneau at:

0630 h on 14 April 2008, arriving Skagway at 1330 h.
0700 h on 16 April 2008, arriving Skagway at 1330 h.

Following the conference, departures from Skagway at:

1215 h on 20 April 2008, arriving Juneau at 1600 h
0900 h on 22 April 2008, arriving Juneau at 1600 h

If you want to pursue the Juneau ferry option, please let us know so we can lay out the welcome mat for you!

Jim Hawkings (Whitehorse) and Jim King (Juneau)

PACIFIC COAST POPULATION NEWS

News from the Washington Swan Working Group - It has been a busy summer in Washington State and now the swans have begun to arrive for the winter.

The Hines Marsh water rights project is making good progress. Our partner, Center for Environmental Law and Policy, has done a tremendous job navigating through the challenge of water-use laws. A summer intern has created a website on the project, at <http://www.celp.org/swans/swanhome/Report.html>. We are in the process of commenting on the pending water right permit application. Our goal is to protect the water resources to insure that Hines Marsh, winter home to more than a dozen trumpeters, remains a viable wetland system far into the future. We have made significant progress in working with Washington's Department of Ecology to take a realistic look at the situation. Concessions to reduce the amount of water requested look like they are going to be made.

The winter swan lead poisoning work is entering its 9th year. While it appears that Judson Lake, along the Washington-British Columbia border, is a major source of lead shot, it is not the only area. This year, the University of Washington Wildlife Cooperative Research Unit has taken the lead on all the field work. Mike Smith will be helping again with this effort. All the agencies have contributed funding to the project, and this year the project began with full funding assured. We appreciate the support of the federal, state and Canadian agencies and the biologists working to solve this problem. An update on the lead poisoning die-off can be found on TTSS' main web page by scrolling down to Lead Poisoning and clicking on 2007-2008 Progress Report.

We continue to be active in efforts for conservation of agricultural land. TTSS received a generous grant from the Felburn Foundation of Yankeetown, Florida, that will allow us to begin mapping the agricultural lands in western Washington. The Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife is providing the GIS work through their Priority Habitat and Species program. Once we have mapped the agricultural land, we will overlay all known current swan use, providing agencies, planners, and others with data on key swan habitat.

Martha Jordan

Tundra Swans banded in western and northern Alaska - As part of an effort to learn more about the timing of migration and movements relative to breeding areas, 315 Tundra Swans were captured and marked on their breeding grounds in Alaska in 2007. The swans were marked with blue collars with 4 white alphanumeric or white collars with 4 black alphanumeric. Codes are read from bottom to top. Marking locations included the Yukon Delta (100); Alaska Peninsula, North, (52); Alaska Peninsula (63); Koyukuk Drainage (10) and Kotzebue Sound (90).

Please report observations to your local conservation officer or to Craig Ely, Alaska Science Center, Anchorage, Alaska, at 907 - 786-3526; cely@usgs.gov or John Whissel, Swan Research Program, Warrenton, Virginia, 1-888-2MIGRATE; jwhissel@airlie.com

ROCKY MOUNTAIN POPULATION NEWS

Trumpeter Swan habitat restoration in Centennial Valley - 2006-2007 Progress Report - Trumpeter Swan nesting data was compiled in 2005 and 2006 to create a single GIS map of nesting territories throughout the Centennial Valley, along the Montana-Idaho border. This effort located and named 34 different wetland sites below Red Rock Lakes National Wildlife Refuge that have supported Trumpeter Swan nesting in the past, and consolidated Refuge, Bureau of Land Management (BLM) and personal data into a single database. Five priority nesting sites with the greatest potential for improvement or protection were cooperatively identified.

Joint funding of \$11,000 in 2006 by BLM, Montana Wetland Legacy (MWL), and TTSS supported two fencing projects to protect a 5-acre wetland and ½ mile of Jones Creek, and 250 acres of wetlands adjacent to 1 mile of the Red Rock River. Both sites have supported productive historic swan territories, but were sustaining excessive, season-long livestock grazing. Fencing will provide the livestock control necessary to significantly reduce grazing and disturbance, and increase vegetation on the streams and wetlands. BLM designed both projects and provided contract administration while funds from TTSS and MWL provided fencing materials to construct 2¾ miles of fence on the two sites.

BLM and TTSS funding of \$8,500 supported the 2007 project to excavate approximately 2,300 feet of isolated oxbow channels on three sites on BLM and private lands in the Red Rock River floodplain. Excavation of approximately 24" of accumulated sediments and vegetation from these channels will provide open water and aquatic habitat on this historic and currently-occupied nesting territory. Administrative delays kept from completing the project in September, but once the pending Army Corps of Engineers 404 permit for the project is processed, excavation can proceed, either early this winter or next spring. An expanded cooperative agreement will be developed between all partners in 2008 to guide future wetland projects and funding opportunities in the Centennial Valley.

Jim Roscoe (BLM)

A good year for Trumpeter Swans on the Flathead Indian Reservation, Montana

- The Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes, with state, federal and local partners, initiated a project to reintroduce Trumpeter Swans to wetland habitats of the Flathead Indian Reservation in western Montana in 1996. The project is based upon the release of captive-bred swans. To date, 110 captive-reared trumpeters have been released.

Two pairs of trumpeters first nested in 2004 and each year since. In 2007, nesting activity took a significant leap, with seven pairs nesting. These nesting attempts resulted in the production of 21 cygnets, of which 16 survived to fledge in late September. These cygnets will significantly assist in the eventual success of the project in restoring this magnificent species as a viable component of the wildlife community of the Reservation.

Collision with overhead power lines has been the most significant mortality factor encountered by Trumpeter Swans released on the Reservation. Tribal Wildlife Biologists, with funding assistance from a hydroelectric mitigation settlement and a Tribal Wildlife Grant, have worked closely with the local utility, Mission Valley Power, to mark lines at collision and potential collision sites with Firefly Bird Diverters, marketed by Swift Creek Consulting. Marking has significantly reduced swan mortality due to collisions.

Future plans for the project include continuing release of captive-reared swans for at least 5 more years. In addition, marking of overhead power lines and other measures will continue in an effort to further reduce mortality. Monitoring of reproduction and survival of cygnets will continue to assess the success of the project. For further information, contact Dale Becker at (406) 883-2888 or daleb@cskt.org.

INTERIOR POPULATION NEWS

Trumpeter Swan experiment: cygnets to be moved to Arkansas to encourage migration of Midwest Trumpeter Swans

- At its July meetings, the Mississippi Flyway and Technical Session approved a 3-year experiment proposed by TTSS to expand Midwest migration beginning in winter 2007/08. A TTSS committee met in August via teleconference to work out details of the plan. The Iowa DNR will relocate 20-25 8-month old free-flying trumpeters from Iowa sites to two locations in northwestern Arkansas: Buffalo River National Park and Holla Bend National Wildlife Refuge. The swans will be marked with collars assigned to the Iowa Trumpeter Swan restoration program and released in sibling groups in January 2008. There is good aquatic vegetation on site as well as nearby winter wheat and grain will be available for the swans. Local staff will make frequent observations. It is hoped that, as the

swans move north in late winter, the public will report observations. Most swans restored to the Midwest have only been released on breeding wetlands in the spring which has resulted in largely nonmigratory flocks. Trumpeter Swans appear to have the instinct to move north during the spring and summer. Hopefully, they will bond to the Arkansas locations so that they can develop new wintering traditions. See the April and July 2007 issues of *Trumpetings* for more background or contact Larry Gillette at lgillette@threeriversparkdistrict.org.

Unusual swan behavior in Minnesota

- Carrol Henderson, Minnesota Department of Natural Resources, reported an unusual incident. In October 2006, a juvenile trumpeter was shot by waterfowl hunters in northern Minnesota. A local Conservation Officer went out by boat to rescue the injured bird. One of the parent swans swam over to the boat and would not leave the cygnet's side. In fact, the adult let the officer pick it up (very atypical for a wild trumpeter) and both birds were transported to a local animal hospital to be treated. The adult was found to be non injured and healthy. The juvenile was taken in for treatment and later died of its injuries. The adult was returned to the wetland the next day. The shooter of the swan was apprehended and the judge awarded full restitution for the swan and its care with fines and restitution totaling \$2,542. Fortunately, the Minnesota Trumpeter Swan population is growing and is now estimated to be 2,500 birds. While the population has grown, the number of shooting incidents has remained low, likely due to media publicity and public education, including signage at public boat accesses.

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS! Please welcome:

- | | |
|---|--|
| Bethany Adams' 4 th Grade Class
Salem, MA | Allison Arnold
Dripping Springs, TX |
| W. Reid Goforth
Port Republic, MD | James Ludwig
Peoria, IL |
| Joseph Mazzoni
Rancho Murieta, CA | Casey Stemler
Littleton, CO |
| Steve & Renee Thompson
Folsom, CA | Martha Wackenhut
Blackfoot, ID |
| Colin Wright
Elmhurst, IL | |



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:
The Trumpeter Swan Society, 12615 County Road 9 - Suite 100, Plymouth, Minnesota 55441-1248

Name _____ Address _____

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*** NOTES ***

New look to this page of *Trumpetings*: The U.S. Post Office now stipulates only address information be placed in the postage section.

Copies of past TTSS conference Proceedings are available to current members for only mailing costs. Please contact the TTSS office for more information.

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