



# TRUMPETINGS

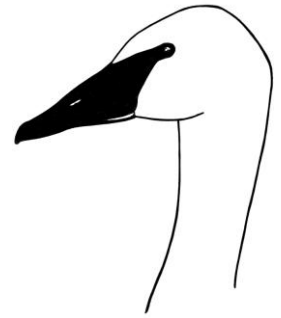
*Voice of The Trumpeter Swan Society*

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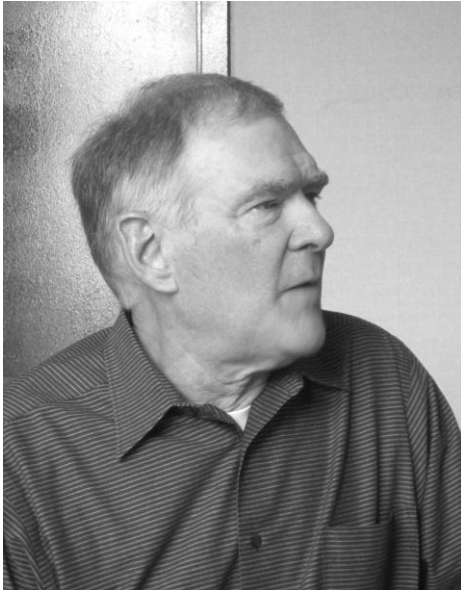
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*Since 1968: Assuring the Vitality and Welfare of Wild  
Trumpeter Swans*



Vol. XX1 No. 3

November 2011



## GREETINGS FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

**TTSS 22<sup>nd</sup> Conference a Rousing Success** – Over 80 folks from the US and Canada joined us for a very productive conference in Polson, Montana, hosted by the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes on the shore of beautiful Flathead Lake. A good deal of time was spent discussing the development of a new restoration vision for Trumpeters for the Greater Yellowstone area. While Trumpeters nesting elsewhere in North America continue to increase, they are nearly gone from Yellowstone National Park, and there are only about 70 nesting pairs in the western US outside of Alaska. Elsewhere in this issue of *Trumpetings* we feature a few highlights from the conference, such as the results of the 2010 rangewide Trumpeter Swan survey and tribute to George Melendez Wright.

**Gary Ivey Named TTSS President** – At the conference, Gary Ivey, who has served as TTSS Vice President for a number of years, was elected President. Join me in wishing Gary success and thanking Past President Dale Becker for his

6 years of service and wonderful job of hosting the 22<sup>nd</sup> Conference. In addition, a new Board member, Bob Blohm from Bowie, Maryland, was elected. Jim King, Harry Lumsden, and Sumner Matteson rotated off the Board, but have agreed to continue in an advisory capacity.

**TTSS Board Takes a Bold Step and Hires an Associate Director** – The Directors and staff of TTSS have long been frustrated at our limited ability to do outreach, increase swan conservation awareness, increase membership, and raise funds to achieve the important mission of the Society. To help lead us out of the wilderness (or more likely to help preserve the wilderness), we have hired Becky Abel to be our Associate Director. Becky has years of experience in managing and developing nonprofit conservation organizations. We believe she will help us grow and improve. Her addition doubles the executive staffing from ½ to 1 as each of us works ½ time. Becky has a proven record of membership development and fundraising that we badly need. On top of all that, she completed graduate research on Trumpeter restoration in Wisconsin and has a passion for swans like us other swaniacs. She has been a valued member of TTSS Board of Directors for the past 3 years. Please welcome Becky as she rises to this new challenge with us!

**MATCHING GRANT DOUBLES THE VALUE OF THIS YEAR'S ANNUAL APPEAL and MEMBERSHIP RENEWALS** – We are going to send a separate mailing this fall, as we did last year, rather than enclose a renewal/annual appeal card in this issue of *Trumpetings*. **A generous benefactor has pledged to match your annual appeal donations and new memberships dollar for dollar up to \$10,000. We hope you will respond to this challenge!** We need to boost our annual renewal rate and reduce the need and expense of sending out second or third renewal notices. We not only want to keep you as a member, we encourage you to help recruit others who care about Trumpeter Swans, Tundra Swans, and wetlands to join us. We know the economy has been poor, but we also know that TTSS has done an outstanding job in spite of tough times. Please watch for the mailing and respond as soon as you can to make the most of a match for your funds. TTSS continues to make a difference across the varied regions of Trumpeter terrain in North America. Thank you for your continued support.

- John Cornely

## 22<sup>ND</sup> CONFERENCE SILENT AUCTION

*A Report from Martha Jordan, event organizer*

Donations were abundant this year for our silent auction fund-raising event. We had more than 90 items from bird prints from the early 1900s, a Pale Ale Trumpeter Swan beer sign, framed art donated by Ducks Unlimited, to items handmade by talented members. Of special note were Trumpeter-Swan-themed quilts – one full size and two smaller wall hangings from three different people. There was a lot of friendly bidding competition, which contributed to the evening total of more than \$3,500. A special thank-you goes to those who donated items and who volunteered to help sort out the items, set up the auction, and help with the process. It takes a flock to make this enjoyable part of the conference happen, and thanks to many, it was a great success.



### WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

**Alaska:** Geoffrey Haskett - Anchorage; **Idaho:** Edward O. Garton - Moscow; **Indiana:** Sonya Underwood - Ft. Wayne; **Maryland:** Marilyn Abato - Reistertown; **Minnesota:** Brian Behm - White Bear Lake, Mark Paulson\* ([www.mpaulsonphotography.com](http://www.mpaulsonphotography.com)) - Mound, Wayne Brininger - Rochert; **Missouri:** Charlie Deutsch - West Alton; **Montana:** Sheila McKay - Billings, Jim Roscoe - Dillon; **Tennessee:** Brian O'Connor - Lebanon; **Washington:** Stu Davidson\* ([www.studavidsonphotography.com](http://www.studavidsonphotography.com)) - Snohomish, Melanie Crandon - Bellingham, Carey Smith - Vancouver; **Wisconsin:** Richard Eyre\* ([www.rickeyrephoto.com](http://www.rickeyrephoto.com)) - Wausau; **Wyoming:** John Andrikopoulos - Daniel, Drew Reed - Jackson.

*\* indicates photographers who donated images for our use with publications, thank you!*

### PHOTO CREDITS

**Mailer/Cover:** Trumpeters Bond before Fight with Another Pair by Mark Paulson ([www.markpaulsonphotography.com](http://www.markpaulsonphotography.com)). See the full series of this event in a future issue of *ENEWS* (Free, sign-up on our website).

**Back Cover:** Photos from 22<sup>nd</sup> Conference by Peg Abbott.

**Executive Director Letter Page 1:** John Cornely by Peg Abbott.

**Society Page 2:** Martha Jordan (Silent Auction event organizer) and Lynn Lovett (quilt maker), Harry Lumsden and Jim King by Peg Abbott.

**2010 Survey Page 3:** Swans in Flight by Stu Davidson ([www.studavidsonphotography.com](http://www.studavidsonphotography.com)), Winter Swans Resting by Janice Petko, Trumpeter Watch by Peg Abbott.

**Photo Scrapbook Pages 4 and 5:** photos by Peg Abbott.

**George Melendez Wright Page 6:** Portrait courtesy of the family, other photos by Peg Abbott.

**1% for the Planet Page 7:** Trumpeter Swans, two images by Gail Miller [www.pbase.com/gnmimiller](http://www.pbase.com/gnmimiller).



## TTSS RECOGNIZES LIFETIME TRUMPETER SWAN CONSERVATION ACHIEVEMENT

This summer, TTSS established the *George Melendez Wright Trumpeter Swan Conservation Award* to recognize individuals who have made outstanding lifetime contributions to Trumpeter Swan conservation. Our intent is to occasionally honor those pillars of swan conservation whose accomplishments, often over decades, helped to significantly improve the status and welfare of Trumpeter Swans. This fall, we are very proud to present the first George Melendez Wright Trumpeter Swan Conservation Awards to:

**Harold Burgess** – Longtime advocate and supporter of mid-continent Trumpeter restoration throughout the species' historic range from nesting in Elk Island National Park, Alberta, to wintering on the Gulf Coast in Texas and Tamaulipas. TTSS Director, 1976-89 and two-term President, 1981-82 and 1984-86.



**James King** – Pioneer Alaskan Biologist-Pilot and Trumpeter Swan expert. Designed and flew the initial Alaska Trumpeter survey in 1968. TTSS Director, 1989-2011 and President, 1989-93 (photo, right).

**Harry Lumsden** – Architect of the Ontario Trumpeter Swan restoration program and longtime advocate for Trumpeter restoration in the Mississippi and Atlantic Flyways. TTSS Director, 1982-2011 (photo, left).

Award plaques were presented to Jim King and Harry Lumsden at our 22<sup>nd</sup> Conference. Harold Burgess could not be present but was in our fondest thoughts. We thank you all for your many decades of efforts to benefit Trumpeter Swans and are very proud of your achievements. In the near future, we will create a page about this award on our website that will explain the pioneering contributions of George Melendez Wright and honor each of the recipients with their photo and a more detailed summary of their contributions. We hope this will help document the history of Trumpeter Swan conservation and recognize those who worked, often behind the scenes, to help make it happen.

## 2010 RANGEWIDE SURVEY INDICATES TRUMPETER SWAN NUMBERS INCREASE AGAIN

*Article by Debbie Groves and John Cornely*

The North American Trumpeter Swan Survey has been conducted approximately every 5 years since 1968 to assess the abundance and productivity of Trumpeter Swans in North America. The 2010 survey was conducted May 2010-January 2011 by numerous cooperators over vast areas of Canada and the northern United States. Methods in 2010 varied among regions, although within a given region the methods were similar to those used in previous surveys. Notable exceptions include a change from complete censuses to stratified random samples in Alaska and parts of Canada. Most cooperators performed aerial cruise surveys, ground counts, or some combination of the two. The continental estimate of Trumpeter Swan abundance in 2010 is 46,225, an increase of 33% since 2005 and the highest recorded since the survey began in 1968. The estimated average annual growth rate in 2005-10 is +5.8%, and in 1968-2010 is +6.2%. Each of North America's three recognized Trumpeter Swan populations also reached record-high abundance levels in 2010. The 2010 abundance estimates (and percent changes from 2005) for the Pacific Coast (PCP), Rocky Mountain (RMP), and Interior (IP) Populations, respectively, are 26,790 swans (+7%), 9,626 swans (+84%), and 9,809 swans (+111%). The PCP, RMP, and IP comprised 58%, 21%, and 21% of the continental population in 2010, respectively. The percentage of the population as cygnets is 22% in the PCP, 34% in the RMP, 27% in the IP, and 26% overall. Results indicate a significant long-term trend in the percentage of cygnets only in the RMP (+0.32% per year).



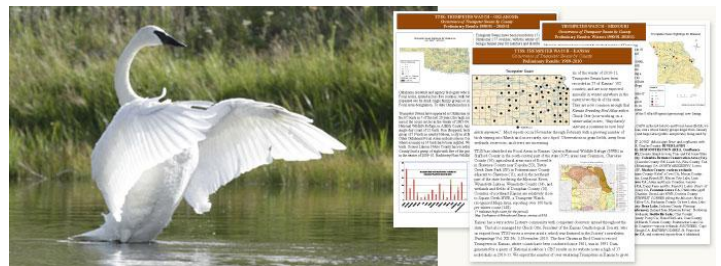
Despite the overall positive results, Trumpeters in the western US outside of Alaska continue to be a serious concern. Yellowstone National Park nesting is nearly absent. The only bright spot in US segment of the Rocky Mountain Population is a restoration at Seedskaadee National Wildlife Refuge, Wyoming.

This valuable survey at 5-year intervals to monitor the status of the recovering North American Trumpeter population must be continued. Because periodic surveys do not fit the annual or biennial budget cycles of federal, state, provincial, and territorial agencies, securing funding on a consistent basis is difficult. The 2010 survey was nearly canceled in

important Trumpeter areas in Canada. We need to start work now to insure the viability of the survey in 2015! TTSS has pledged to work with the agencies and other partners to develop a more reliable funding process.

## TRUMPETER WATCH KICKS OFF THIRD WINTER SEASON

We recently posted preliminary results on our website from the first seasons of Trumpeter Watch, a TTSS Citizen Science program. Observers are needed to track expanding Interior Population flocks, primarily in states south of the 40<sup>th</sup> parallel to chart winter distribution. You can help! To date, the largest wintering concentration south of the 40<sup>th</sup> parallel occurs in and around Riverlands Migratory Bird Sanctuary in Missouri (along with adjacent southern Illinois) close to the confluence of the Missouri and Mississippi Rivers. At the winter peak, over 500 Trumpeter Swans may be present. Of note is that marked Trumpeters from several northern states have been sighted here, indicating degree of mixing during winter. We are starting to look at winter distribution in the western states as well. Please visit our website for more details.







## FIELD TRIP

The spirit of trust and cooperation that empowers ranchers, agency wildlife managers, and landowners of Montana's Blackfoot Valley to work together, as part of the highly successful Blackfoot Challenge, carried through to all aspects of our 22<sup>nd</sup> Conference field trip to the Flathead and Blackfoot Valleys. We covered some miles to see this landscape; indeed the remote Blackfoot Valley feels tucked away, a place from another time. Absent are urban sprawl and the 20-acre hobby ranches so common in other Montana valleys. Surrounded by towering peaks and defined by a clear flowing river, the Blackfoot has remained open for wildlife, wetlands, and a rural way of life. We met several committed members of the Blackfoot Challenge, school teachers and students, ranchers, landowners, and Kevin Ertl and Greg Neudecker, both affiliated with US Fish and Wildlife Service. With pride, in cooperative presentations, diverse members of the community detailed how they brought back the Trumpeter Swan, and how just last summer, a local ranch hand hired on as seasonal biologist came back with photos to prove the first successful nesting attempt in nearly a century. Restoration work on wetlands has been extensive, but results are impressive and swans are responding. Obvious to the 60 or so TTSS members was the dedication of this group to their land, and to their returning Trumpeters. We thank Dale Becker and Janene Lichtenberg for sharing the tribe's work in the Flathead, and Greg Neudecker, Jim Stone (rancher and Chairman, Blackfoot Challenge), Louie Bouma (landowner), Kevin Ertl, Elaine Caton, and Leigh Ann Valiton (school teacher) with her students for their fine presentations in the Blackfoot.

## 22<sup>nd</sup> TRUMPETER SWAN SOCIETY CONFERENCE

An all-star cast led off the 22<sup>nd</sup> Trumpeter Swan Society Conference in Polson. After opening remarks by TTSS President Dale Becker, participants were captivated by a welcome address from Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes Tribal Council Member Steve Lozar and an opening prayer in native language, by Tony Incashola, a Salish and Pend d'Oreille Elder. TTSS Board members chaired half-day sessions and presenters were each given 20 minutes. During two very full days of presentations, the cumulative expertise was impressive, and the geographic span was equally so. Several of the presenters were agency professionals of the US Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) and the Canadian Wildlife Service, along with speakers from various state and provincial wildlife and parks departments. These included: the Rainwater Basin Joint Venture, Lacreek National Wildlife Refuge (NWR), FWS Region 7 Division of Migratory Bird Management, Red Rock Lakes Refuge, Minnesota's Three Rivers Park District, Montana Fish Wildlife and Parks, Iowa Department of Natural Resources, Idaho Fish and Game Department, Wyoming Game and Fish Department, Tamarac NWR, Southeast Idaho NWR Complex, and Yellowstone National Park. Others were affiliated with Non-governmental organizations, including the American Bird Conservancy, The Centennial Valley Association, and The Trumpeter Swan Society; universities, including the University of Idaho, University of Michigan, and University of Washington; tribal wildlife agencies -- the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes; and private consulting firms -- Scaup and Willet, LLC. Several individuals spoke, including TTSS Board members Jim King and Harry Lumsden, and William Quirk, III; the latter reporting on research conducted from his plane in Alaska flying Palmer Hay Flats State Game Refuge and the Knik River Drainage. In addition to speakers, there were eight poster presentations and an evening showing of Trumpeter Swan film footage by Steve and Char Harryman. For many the highlights included social events, time spent with colleagues and friends. A good time was had by all!





## Honoring George Melendez Wright (1904-36)

### The Man Who Saved Greater Yellowstone's Trumpeter Swans



George Melendez Wright

Historic accounts of the destruction of Trumpeter Swans often explain that by 1932 only 69 Trumpeters remained in the lower 48 states in and near Yellowstone National Park and their extinction appeared imminent. Until our 22<sup>nd</sup> Conference, however, the efforts of a visionary young National Park Service scientist to save these last Trumpeters had never been clearly documented and

recognized.

George Melendez Wright conducted the first detailed studies of nesting Trumpeter Swans and documented that illegal shooting in areas near Yellowstone was imperiling this last remnant. Wright discovered the crucial importance of nesting habitat in the Red Rock Lakes area of Montana and laid the foundation for subsequent swan studies in the Yellowstone region.

Determined to halt the illegal shooting, Wright launched a public campaign to save the Trumpeters by creating a wildlife refuge at Red Rock Lakes. While serving as the first Chief of the Wildlife Division of the National Park Service, Wright's personal efforts culminated in the establishment of Red Rock Lakes National Wildlife Refuge in 1935 by President Franklin Delano Roosevelt. Sadly, this was one of Wright's final landmark accomplishments. He died in a tragic automobile accident in 1936 at the age of 31.



In the closing event of our conference, The Trumpeter Swan Society, U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and U.S. National Park Service presented a joint letter of tribute to George Wright's family, expressing our

recognition of his crucial role in saving these last Trumpeters. Wright's granddaughter, Jeanne Lloyd, accepted the letter on behalf of her mother, Pamela



Emory, husband of Jeanne Lloyd, who showed historic photos from Wright's early studies and provided an overview of his career.

Wright Lloyd. TTSS also presented the Wright family with an historic Trumpeter Swan conservation poster that had been part of the campaign to stop the illegal shooting. These long-overdue tributes followed a fascinating presentation by Jerry



George Melendez Wright had a profound impact on wildlife management in the National Parks, as well as on the survival of Trumpeter Swans in the lower 48 states.

To learn more about his career, visit [www.georgewright.org](http://www.georgewright.org) and read *The George Wright Forum* (Volume 17, No. 4). In the near future, we will also create a page on TTSS website to recognize his crucial role in Trumpeter Swan conservation. George Melendez Wright has truly been an "unsung hero" of Trumpeter Swan restoration. TTSS takes great pleasure in finally recognizing his tremendous contribution.

finally recognizing  
- Ruth Shea

### MONTICELLO GIVES TRIBUTE TO SHEILA LAWRENCE

*A request from Minnesota*



Jim Lawrence sends news that Sheila Lawrence has been honored with a memorial painting and plaque, unveiled this October at the Monticello City Hall. He hopes to carry on her legacy of helping

Monticello's Trumpeters. If you would like to help, contributions can be sent to

"Monticello Trumpeter Swan Fund"

c/o US Bank, 307 Pine St., Monticello, MN 55362.

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Did you know that TTSS is a part of a growing alliance of businesses and nonprofits building relationships that benefit one another? Since its inception in 2002, 1% FOR THE PLANET (1%) has linked 1500 companies with over 2500 nonprofit organizations around the world. Last year's combined contributions – over \$15 million – go a long way toward driving positive environmental change.



**HOW DOES THIS WORK?** One percent of \$50,000 is \$500. So, if you are a business owner or employee with influence, you can estimate your company's annual commitment. In the easy application process, you choose if you want to enroll your entire business or a portion of it (e.g., a brand, a sector). You decide what nonprofits you wish to support with your one-percent giving commitment, and your fee is paid directly to the nonprofit group(s) chosen in a given year. 1% charges a membership fee based on your annual income in support of their mission: *to build and support an alliance of businesses financially committed to creating a healthy planet.* In their words, "Becoming a 1% FTP member is not only good for the natural environment—it's also good for business. Every member company has



the opportunity to engage in a dialogue with the rest of our membership, foster new business relationships, connect with like-minded individuals, and share ideas and resources. Nowhere else will you find such a vast network of successful businesses across multiple industries, all working toward solving the environmental crisis, 1% at a time."



TTSS thanks LOLL DESIGNS for being our first 1% partner! LOLL is based in Duluth, Minnesota, and they make GREAT recycled,

exclusive



modern outdoor furniture. Browse their website ([www.lolldesigns.com](http://www.lolldesigns.com)) or request a catalog (1-877-740-3387) to see chairs, benches, tables, kid's stuff, flower containers, and more. They have several design lines, perfect for sprucing up the patio. Best of all, they are a model environmentally-aware company. LOLL outdoor furniture is made from 100-percent recycled HDPE -- a high density polyethylene: a plastic resin used in products and packaging such as milk jugs, detergent bottles, margarine tubs, and garbage containers. For every pound of weight in a LOLL chair there are an estimated eight recycled milk jugs being used, saving natural resources and reducing landfill waste. All materials originate and products are made in the United States.

LOLL Design's generous gifts to TTSS are a commitment to the environment that is good for business. Consider making the 1% commitment by enrolling your business today. 1% connects the self-worth of giving with the



net-worth of profit so that Trumpeters and other creatures on the planet can thrive. Once you enroll, please let us know – we'd love to

have you as a partner.

We think 1% FOR THE PLANET is a great fit for TTSS business members. The founders of this program, Yvon



Chouinard, founder of Patagonia, and Craig Mathews, owner of Blue Ribbon Flies, hatched this plan when they "realized they had a lot more in common than a disdain for wearing a suit to work."



Many of us are fortunate to spend a great deal of time outdoors. This is a great way to give back.



*Since 1968: Assuring the Vitality  
and Welfare of Wild Trumpeter Swans*

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## THE TRUMPETER SWAN SOCIETY

*Assuring the Vitality and Welfare Wild Trumpeter Swans*

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Becky Abel, *Associate Director*      Madeleine Linck, *Admin. Assistant*  
Lynn Lovett, *Admin. Technician*      Peg Abbott, *Outreach Coordinator*



**TRUMPETING Editors:** Peg Abbott,  
John Cornely, & David K. Weaver



FIND MONTANA's 22<sup>nd</sup> CONFERENCE HIGHLIGHTS INSIDE  
*A Scrapbook crafted by TTSS member Lin McClure*

### In This Issue:

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Awards Honor Harold Burgess, Jim King, and Harry Lumsden ♦ Trumpeter Watch Update ♦ 1% For the Planet, a  
Unique Way to Give ♦ MATCHING FUNDS for this year's Membership Drive and Annual Appeal ♦ TTSS Silent  
Auction Raises \$3500 & More!

