

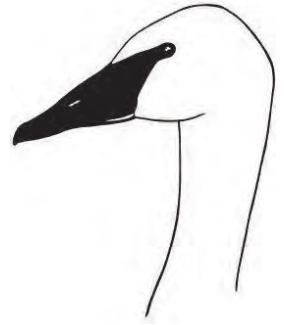


TRUMPETINGS

Voice of The Trumpeter Swan Society

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

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Lead lawsuit update



(far left) A Trumpeter Swan, circled in black, has lead poisoning. It has self isolated from the group - a symptom of illness.

(left) A symptom of lead poisoning is drooping wings. The swan died shortly after the photos were taken.
Photos by Margaret Smith

Lead ammunition lawsuit appeal denied on a technicality

In December 2014, the US Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit rejected an appeal by 101 conservation groups including The Trumpeter Swan Society to force EPA to regulate lead in hunting ammunition, because used lead bullets and shot ingested by wildlife can lead to illness and death.

The three-judge panel disagreed with a lower-court ruling that EPA could dismiss the groups' petition because it was similar to one filed 2 years earlier.

However, they ruled that a provision in the Toxic Substances Control Act prohibits EPA from regulating cartridges and shells. The conservation groups argued that once the cartridges and shells are fired, the bullets and shot are no longer part of them. The judges disagreed.

There is no question that swans, condors, eagles, and countless other birds continue to get sick and die after consuming lead bullets and shot. This is a preventable tragedy, because there are nontoxic bullets and shot available for hunters to purchase and use. Because of the technicality cited as the basis of the appeal's rejection, more lead will continue to be deposited into the environment and more birds will die.

TTSS is not against hunting. However, our mission is to “*assure the vitality and welfare of wild Trumpeter Swans.*” We will continue to advocate “Get the Lead Out” of ammunition and fishing tackle. Hundreds of Trumpeter Swans continue to die each year from lead poisoning. Lead bullets and shot can remain in fields and marshes for decades and continue to kill birds of many species through lead poisoning.

TTSS creates a vision for the future

TTSS Board sets three goals for new strategic plan

In late November 2014, the beautiful Minnesota Valley National Wildlife Refuge was the setting for The Trumpeter Swan Society (TTSS) to begin strategic planning to guide our operations and advance our mission for the next 5 years.

We received input from a number of our agency partners, TTSS members, and the public as we started the process. Thank you for sharing your thoughts. At the workshop, three goals were developed:

- ♦ **Goal 1:** We will build a movement of people who advocate on behalf of Trumpeter Swans.
- ♦ **Goal 2:** We will influence decision makers by advancing science-based research and information that support Trumpeter Swan management/restoration.
- ♦ **Goal 3:** We will invest in our organization's infrastructure to sustain our success.

The next steps are to develop benchmarks and strategies to assist in achieving the goals.

One of the frequent comments from our stakeholders was that TTSS should continue its partnership and increase our level of participation with the Flyways. Recommendations are made for Trumpeter Swan management actions at the four Flyway meetings held twice each year.

We are deeply grateful to the Summerlee Foundation, which funded our strategic planning process.

Many thanks, also, to the staff of the Minnesota Valley National Wildlife Refuge for their warm hospitality.



Minnesota Council of Non Profits MAP consultants facilitated the 3-day Board retreat.



Your membership donations ensure TTSS will be an active participant at Flyway meetings where important regional decisions about Trumpeter Swans are made.

*(left to right) Board members Gary Ivey, Ruth Shea, Jerry Serie, Jim Hawkings, and Jeff Nelson pause to consider potential strategic goals.
Photos by Margaret Smith*

“Live long and prosper”

The story of Wisconsin’s oldest Trumpeter Swan



Wisconsin’s oldest known wild Trumpeter Swan, 82K, turned 25 in 2014. She was sighted in Hudson, Wisconsin, on New Year’s Day, 2015. Photo by Barry Wallace

Twenty-five years ago, Sumner Matteson of the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, flew to Alaska to collect Trumpeter Swan eggs for the state’s restoration program. The eggs were taken to the Milwaukee Zoo for hatching.

Out of egg U-2 hatched a female, now known as “82K.” (Sumner reports he feels a personal bond with 82K - the egg hatched on his birthday!) She was collared four times between 1991 and 1995, mainly due to collar loss. 82K was released in northwest Wisconsin in 1991, soon mated, and had many families over the years.

Sadly, in November 1994, her mate and three of her cygnets were shot and killed in Illinois. She was also shot at, but not hit. She flew back to her home nesting grounds. She was chased out by other swans. 82K found a new home and a new mate in another area at Crex Meadows Wildlife Area in northwest Wisconsin. She is likely Wisconsin’s most prolific breeder, fledging 52 cygnets!

She continues to be spotted in Wisconsin, and was even seen on New Year’s Day in Hudson, Wisconsin. Congratulations, 82K! It’s a thrill to see you!

Buy a Duck Stamp!

You can make more money available for habitat and wildlife

Buy a Duck Stamp! You will be supporting Trumpeter Swan habitat.

Recently, Congress and the President increased the price of the Duck Stamp from \$15 to \$25 -- a small price to pay annually (1 July - 30 June) in support of habitat acquisition.

All of the money from the sale of the stamps goes directly into the Migratory Bird Conservation Fund (MBCF). **Ninety-eight cents out of each dollar goes to buy breeding, migration, and wintering habitat for the National Wildlife Refuge System.**

Did you know Trumpeter Swans depend on habitat in nearly 60 National Wildlife Refuges at some point during the year?

Much of the land in these refuges was bought with MBCF funds. For example, nearly 100 percent of Tamarac National Wildlife Refuge in Minnesota was acquired with MBCF funds. In good years, Tamarac NWR produces about 100 Trumpeter cygnets!

You can purchase a stamp at the Post Office, sporting goods stores, other locations, and online. Buying one is an easy and meaningful way to contribute to conservation of Trumpeters and all wildlife.



Jennifer Miller of Olean, New York, acrylic painting image of a Ruddy Duck, this year’s Federal Duck Stamp Contest winner. Duck Stamps are formally known as the Migratory Bird Hunting and Conservation Stamp.

Sick swans capture media attention

Stories from three Flyways

Trumpeter Swans with lead poisoning, or suspected lead poisoning, recently made headlines and captured media attention in the Atlantic, Mississippi, and Pacific Flyways.

The Atlantic Flyway - A car accident that “saved a swan’s life”

The story of Ontario Trumpeter Swan L95, hit local media recently in Lemont, Pennsylvania. The story of a “car accident that saved a swan’s life,” was told on a local TV segment called “Wildlife Wednesday.” L95 is the second Trumpeter Swan sighted in Centre County, Pennsylvania, in decades!

After being hit by a car, L95 was taken to the local wildlife rehabilitation center. Besides a broken foot, she was found to be suffering from a toxic level of lead poisoning. It is unknown where or how L95 ingested lead.

“It would be such a shame to lose a pioneering bird like her...”

Kyna Intini, Ontario TS Restoration group

Kyna Intini, of the Ontario Trumpeter Swan Restoration group, shared this about L95’s life:

“L95, female, was hatched in 2012, to first time parents I44 & E34. She was banded at LaSalle Park, Burlington, Ontario in Nov 2013. This is the second winter that she has gone south of the border.

“It would be such a shame to lose a pioneering bird like her, especially since we also lost another bird like her earlier this year to hitting power lines in Maryland. The last sighting I have of her was Feb 22-23, 2015 on Bald Eagle Creek, Milesburg, PA.

“This bird is also special in that she was ‘adopted’ and named by a family in memory of a little baby girl they lost. Her name is Ava.”



Ontario Swan L95 begins lead treatment in Lemont, Pennsylvania. She is the second Trumpeter Swan sighted in Centre County, Pennsylvania, in decades. Photo courtesy of Centre Wildlife Care, Lemont, Pennsylvania

Mississippi Flyway – A cygnet rescued by a swan and humans (a photo story) Read more on TTSS Facebook (February 14, 23) or in February 2015 *Enews*. You don’t get Enews? Sign up online!



(Above) A sick cygnet, third from left, is frozen to the St. Croix River ice on Valentine’s Day, in Hudson, Wisconsin. Wisconsin Trumpeter Swan 00C, not its mother, chips away at ice, freeing it.



(Above) Three days later, the cygnet was unable to fly and scoots along the ice to enter the water. It is immediately rescued by volunteers and taken to a rehabilitation center, where it is diagnosed with severe lead poisoning.

(Right) Twin Cities print, TV, and social media carry the story of the cygnet’s two rescues, bringing wide attention to the problem of lead poisoning. The cygnet died on 26 February. Photos by Margaret Smith



Sick swans capture media attention

Symptoms of Lead Poisoning:

- Green stained vent
- Emaciation/ under-weight
- Impacted crop
- Drooping wings
- Inability to fly/ impaired flight
- Isolation from group



(Above, center) Volunteers and biologists collect sick and dead swans during the recent die-off in Washington. Photo by Jan Viney.

Pacific Flyway - Trumpeter Swan die-off in Washington

Seattle TV picked up the story of a swan die-off happening in King County, Washington, in February. More than 50 swans died from what is suspected to be lead poisoning. The source of the suspected poisoning is not yet known. The sick swans were exhibiting classic lead poisoning signs. Martha Jordan, TTSS's Washington Swan Stewards Chair, worked in cooperation with the Washington Department of Fish & Wildlife to organize biologists and volunteers to collect the sick and dying swans for analysis.

All swans collected in Whatcom, Skagit, Snohomish, and King Counties are being necropsied to determine the cause of death. Liver samples and gizzards are being taken for later analysis including lead levels for each swan.

What you can do to reduce lead poisoning:

- Use lead-free shot, bullets, and fishing gear.
- Encourage your friends who hunt and fish to do the same.
- Check out your local sporting goods store, or wherever you purchase ammunition/fishing gear and request they stock nonlead products.
- Thank stores and departments that carry nonlead products.

Thank you! The difference you have made is remarkable!

Forty-five years ago, Trumpeter Swans had not been seen in decades in most of North America. Today, they have returned to many areas of the continent. You made that happen.

Leaving a gift in your will to The Trumpeter Swan Society is a once-in-a-lifetime chance to see that the living legacy you created - the comeback of the Trumpeter Swan - continues for generations to come.



For more information, please contact
Margaret Smith, 715-441-1994 or
msmith@trumpeterswansociety.org



A gift in your will ensures your living legacy of healthy, wild Trumpeter Swans continues for generations to come.

Photo by Richard Sonnen

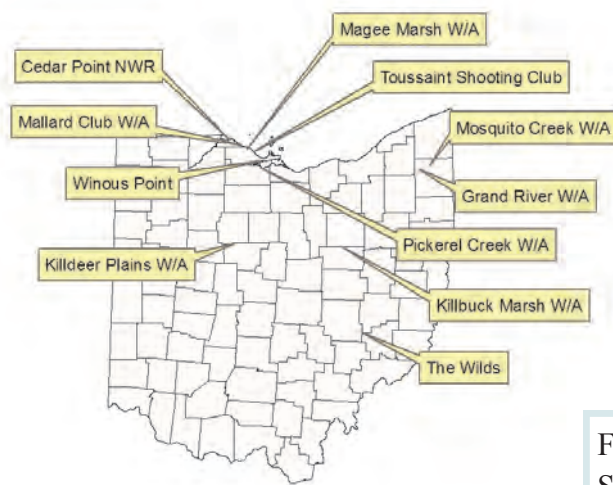
Trumpeter Swan reintroduction in Ohio

By Laura Kerns, Ph.D.

Wildlife Biologist, Ohio Department of Natural Resources– Division of Wildlife

In 1996, Ohio began a reintroduction of Trumpeter Swans (*Cygnus buccinator*) with the release of 15 birds at the Magee Marsh Wildlife Area in northwest Ohio along the shore of Lake Erie.

Historical records indicate that the Trumpeter Swan was extirpated from Ohio by the early 1700s because of hunting by early settlers.



Additional releases occurred from 1997 to 2003 at other wetland wildlife areas in six different counties throughout Ohio (Figure 1).

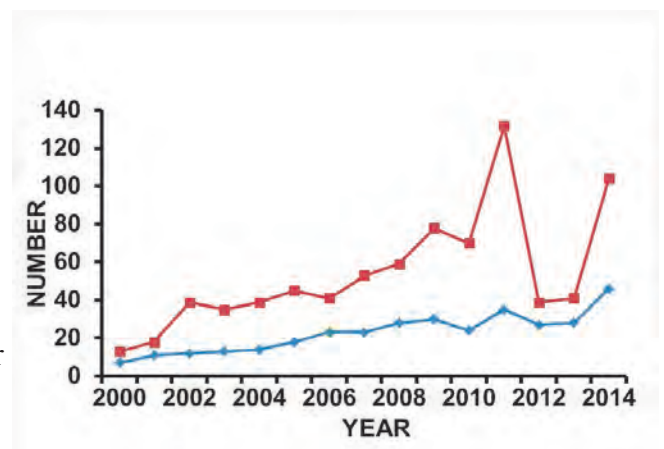
Approximately 150 birds were released using two different methods: 1) introduction of captive-raised adults (2 years old and older) from zoos and private propagators, and 2) introduction of captive-reared juveniles hatched from eggs removed from nests of wild Alaskan Trumpeter Swans.

Figure 1. Location of release sites for Trumpeter Swans (*Cygnus buccinator*) in Ohio, 1996-2003.

In 2003, the population reached 15 breeding pairs, meeting reintroduction goals. This success also signaled an end to release efforts. Ohio biologists continued monitoring the Trumpeters, which have steadily increased since 2003 and spread to other habitats and counties.

In 2013, Trumpeter Swans were changed from “state endangered” to “state threatened” as a result of multiple factors, including a peak number of 35 breeding pairs (Figure 2), production of 2.4 cygnets per nest, and presence in 12 (of 88) counties in the state in 2011.

While the number of Trumpeter Swan breeding pairs and productivity decreased in 2012 and 2013, Ohio’s Trumpeter Swan population rebounded again in 2014. Last year there was a robust productivity (2.26 cygnets per nest) and a record high 40 breeding pairs (Figure 2).



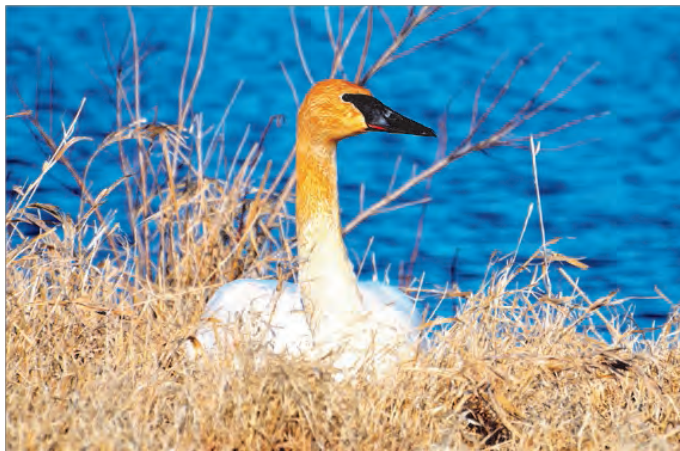
Trumpeter Swan reintroduction in Ohio (cont.)

The greatest numbers of breeding Trumpeters are found at Ottawa National Wildlife Refuge, Cedar Point National Wildlife Refuge, Magee Marsh Wildlife Area, and Big Island Wildlife Area. As of July 2014, the Ohio flock numbered 246 Trumpeters. According to Ohio's Swan Management Plan, if the number of breeding pairs of Trumpeter Swans persists at a level of 40 or above, and the birds are seen in at least 15 counties during the breeding season for three consecutive years, then they would be considered for delisting from state threatened status.

While the growth of the Trumpeter Swan population and pioneering into other parts of the state is encouraging, the Ohio Division of Wildlife is concerned regarding the threat of nonnative Mute Swans (*C. olor*) in Ohio and throughout the region. Mute Swans compete with Trumpeters for territory and food and are destructive to native ecosystems.

Mute Swan populations have been increasing throughout the Great Lakes region. For example, Michigan estimated its 2014 numbers of Mute Swans at approximately 9,100 (down from 17,500 in 2013, likely because of the severely cold winter of 2013-14). Ohio developed a management plan for Mute Swans because of limited wetland habitat in the state and the large number of Mute Swans in surrounding states. Ohio currently has a few hundred Mute Swans.

In the spring of 2014, Ohio began implementing its Swan Management Plan, which calls for the removal of Mute Swans from public wildlife areas. Approximately 175 Mute Swans were removed in 2014 from western Lake Erie marshes, which are important breeding areas for Trumpeter Swans. The strong increase in Trumpeter Swan numbers in 2014 may be partially in response to Mute Swan control, but monitoring will continue to determine the long-term effects of Mute Swan control on Ohio's Trumpeter Swans.



Ohio Trumpeter Swans have made a remarkable comeback in less than 20 years. As of July 2014, the Ohio flock numbered 246 Trumpeters, including this Trumpeter Swan at Big Island Wildlife Area.

Mute Swans pose a threat. Their removal from public wildlife areas is part of Ohio's Swan Management Plan. Photo courtesy of Ohio Division of Wildlife

Figure 2 (left). Ohio Trumpeter Swan (*Cygnus buccinator*) productivity, 2000-2014, based on summer surveys of public wildlife areas. The top line with squares (red) represents the number of cygnets produced, and the bottom line with diamonds (blue) represents the number of breeding pairs, both successful and unsuccessful.

Adopt A Swan Program excites students in Pennsylvania



"It made learning more exciting, as well as encouraged students to be good stewards of the environment. They were excited to be able to make a difference!"

Ms. Vance's 4th grade class sells swan cookies to raise money to "Adopt A Swan." Photo by Amber Vance

Hello Mrs. Smith,

March 16, 2015

It was such a pleasure chatting with you last week about my class's swan project.

I think I shared with you that I became interested in trumpeter swans when my family took a vacation in 2013 to Yellowstone and Grand Teton National Parks.

When I chose the book *The Trumpet of the Swan* [by E. B. White] for my 4th grade reading class, my hope was that it would get students interested in these beautiful birds!

While reading the novel, students completed research on trumpeter swans as well as an informational writing assignment. We also looked at the trumpeter habitats and dangers they face in the wild.

The Trumpeter Swan Society website was quite helpful as we were learning more about the swans.

When I told students that we could raise money to

adopt a swan, they were so excited. Instead of just learning about them, they felt like they could actually do something to help! It made learning more exciting, as well as encouraged students to be good stewards of the environment. They were excited to be able to make a difference!

I decided that we could raise money for the Adopt A Swan program through a bake sale type program.

The students made posters to hang in the school to advertise our cookies and let people know about trumpeter swans. Some had slogans on them such as "S.O.S.---Save Our Swans".

I baked swan shaped cookies, decorated to look like trumpeters with black beaks and feet. Any student who made a donation to the Trumpeter Swan Society got a cookie!

We are a small private school, but we ended up raising \$55 to adopt our swan.

Even though we finished the novel in January, it has made a lasting impression.

Students still talk about trumpeter swans and were thrilled when we received the adoption information from the Trumpeter Swan Society!

They were impressed that there was a specific swan that we were helping and are excited to give her a name!

It was also nice to learn about her history such as when she was born and banded as a cygnet. The class was happy to learn that she returned from Alaska with cygnets of her own this year!

This is a project that I would like to complete again with each 4th grade class that I teach! Have a great day.

*Amber Vance, 4th Grade Reading Teacher,
New Castle Christian Academy, New Castle, Pennsylvania*

Learn more about TTSS's Adopt a Swan program

Adopt A Swan donations help TTSS address lead issues in Washington State

Lead poisoning from lead ingestion occurs across the continent. To support TTSS's lead poisoning program in Washington State, Martha Jordan, TTSS's Washington Swan Stewards Chair, created the Adopt A Swan program several years ago.



Many schools and individuals have donated to Adopt A Swan over the years. If you would like to make an Adopt A Swan donation, please go online, or mail a check payable to TTSS, memo Adopt A Swan. **Please let us know if you want 100 percent of your donation to go to TTSS and its Adopt a Swan program**, rather than receiving any premiums other than the Adoption Certificate and your name on our website.

WE NEED YOUR HELP. Funding is needed to continue our efforts in the field to monitor swans and collect sick and dead swans. With your help, we can continue our efforts to determine where swans are finding and ingesting lead. With your help, we can continue to work with local communities with outreach and education. Thank you for your support!

TTSS attends spring Flyway meetings

In February and March, TTSS participated in three spring Flyway Meetings (Atlantic, Mississippi, and Pacific), as well as the North American Wildlife & Natural Resources Conference. Prior to the meetings, TTSS sent a letter to the Flyways regarding our commitment to Trumpeter Swans. The TTSS letter was brought up at each meeting.

Atlantic Flyway: TTSS Board Directors, Jerry Serie and Bob Blohm, attended the meeting. It was noted at the meeting the Mississippi Flyway may be updating its Interior Population Trumpeter Swan Plan and the Atlantic Flyway may want to take an active role in working with the Mississippi Flyway on this plan.

Increasingly, Trumpeter Swans from the Mississippi Flyway are wintering in the Atlantic Flyway. TTSS offered assistance from our Directors and staff in updating Flyway Management Plans for Trumpeter Swans. The committee was reminded the 5-year-rangewide Trumpeter Swan survey will be conducted this year. TTSS has pledged \$5,000 to assist with funding the survey to help address highest priority funding shortfalls. In the Atlantic Flyway, New York, Pennsylvania, and Ontario are the only areas with known breeding Trumpeter Swans. Both New York and Pennsylvania plan to participate in the survey.

Mississippi Flyway: The Mississippi Flyway Council Game Technical Section welcomed TTSS as a new member of the Swan Committee. TTSS Board Director, Larry Gillette, participated in the meeting of the Swan Committee of the Game Technical Section. The committee discussed the population objective for the coming update to the Interior Population (IP) of the Trumpeter Swan Plan. Mississippi Flyway recommendations will be developed and approved with input from both the Game and Non-Game Technical Sections. Final recommendations are expected to be available at the July 2015 Flyway meeting.

It was noted TTSS pledged \$5,000 for the 2015 rangewide survey. Most of the money will be used in Minnesota and western Ontario where over half the IP Trumpeters reside.

Pacific Flyway: TTSS Board Director, Gary Ivey, attended the meeting. Issues discussed included the recent die-off of swans in Washington, the 2015 rangewide survey, a strategy for updating the Rocky Mountain Population Flyway Plan, and allocations of swans from Wyoming Wetlands Society for restoration efforts in Montana, Wyoming, Idaho, and Oregon.

Swan poem and Trumpeter Watch update

The March 2013 *Trumpetings* featured a photo (below) taken by Richard Sonnen. TTSS member, Cameron La Follette, was so moved by the photo, she wrote the following poem, which she recently shared with TTSS.



Swan Command

If I hear command
Shaking the world depth to height,
Cupping me in luminous hand,
Settling on me chrism of light
Saying that little beauty remains,
That veins of awe run dry,
Gripping the heart with pain,
And so closes the weary eye --
I shall become a swan.
I shall cleave the mist and snow,
Wings raised, whitely drawn,
Across morning moons I will go,
On cold cloud my trumpet's horn;
And thus shall I fulfill,
Snowy and fearlessly born,
The command of upper will
To offer a beauty hard won
The searching world lacked;
And command will ebb, a setting sun,
On my silver-feathered back.

Cameron La Follette
Salem, Oregon

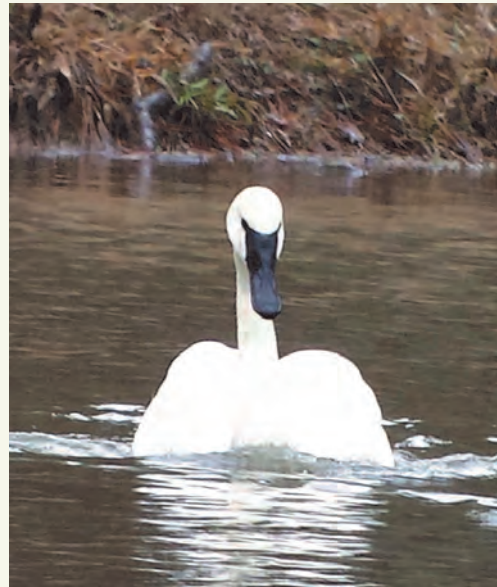
Trumpeter Watch update: new sightings of Trumpeter Swans!

Many thanks to all who are participating in TTSS's Trumpeter Watch program to help us track wintering sites.

There have been sightings of Trumpeters in new areas, including the Atlantic Flyway. We were excited to hear that Trumpeters were seen in Shady Side, Maryland, Peachtree City, Georgia, and Fulton County, Arkansas. TTSS Board member, Jim Hawkings, also reported a new wintering site in the Yukon on the Teslin River. The Yukon site may be the northernmost wintering site of Trumpeter Swans.

From Randy Kiser of Shady Side, Maryland

"I have lived at this location on the Chesapeake Bay for 19 years and have NEVER observed Trumpeter Swans before. Today, there were 7 of them, along with our regular wintering Tundra Swans. Their sound was unmistakable, so different from the Tundras."



Peachtree City, Georgia, reported its first Trumpeter Swan sighting in March 2015. Photo courtesy of Patty McLean.

TTSS Welcomes New 2014-2015 Members; Memorials & Tributes

Delaware: William Whitman— Milford

Illinois: Steve Hill — Kewanee

Minnesota: Ellen Garbo — North Oaks
Cathy & Fred King — Prior Lake
Renee Schott — Roseville
Mary Schroeder — Maplewood

Oregon: Sharon Lutero — Redmond

Pennsylvania: Stephen Hoff— Lock Haven

Washington: Jim Collins— Stanwood
Patrick Mezzulo — Bothell
Walter Weber — Seattle

Gift Memberships

For:

Ron & Martha Andrews

Tom Jahnke & Dee Daniels

Sally Humphries Leider

John Robertson

Ron Sebastian

Louise Young

North Heron Lake Game Producers

From

Tony & Laurie Andrews

Matt & Tracy Mixdorf

David & Kitty Weaver

Richard Leider

David Mitchell

David Mitchell

Jean Heflin

Rodney Sather

Memorial and Tributes

For:

Jennifer Bard

Faith Bennyhoff

John P. Oakes

Sumner Matteson

George Melendez Wright

Carey Smith

From:

Coworkers of Jocelyn
Monteith

Joan Linde

Susan Rattray

Christine Ludwig & Susan
Cygnet

Jeff & Cathy Dufault

St. Croix Valley Bird Club

Jean Lloyd

William Goldstein



By including TTSS in your will, you are leaving a legacy for Trumpeter Swans for generations.

Yes!

I support Trumpeter Swan conservation.

Enclosed is my tax-deductible gift (US).

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone _____

Email _____

Gift Levels:

_____ \$ *Surprise us!*

☐ \$35 ☐ \$50 ☐ \$100 ☐ \$250

☐ \$500 ☐ \$1000 ☐ \$25 senior/student

Thank you!

Membership \$ _____

Area of Greatest Need \$ _____

Adopt A Swan (no premiums, please) \$ _____

TOTAL \$ _____

I prefer to give by:

____ Check, payable to TTSS

____ Credit Card ☐ Visa ☐ MC ☐ Discover ☐ AmEx

Card # _____

Card Expiration date ____/____ Security Code _____

Name on Card _____

Signature _____

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12615 Country Rd. 9, Plymouth, MN 55441-1248

OR donate online at
www.trumpeterswansociety.org



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For all you do, thank you.

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



A Valentine's Day rescue story. (Left) Wisconsin Trumpeter Swan 00C approaches a cygnet frozen to the ice. The cygnet is not part of her family group. The cygnet was later diagnosed with lead poisoning. (Right) Wisconsin Trumpeter Swan 00C comes to shore shortly after freeing the sick cygnet from the ice (story on page 4). Photos by Margaret Smith

TRUMPETINGS EDITORS

John Cornely, Margaret Smith, Dave Weaver

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