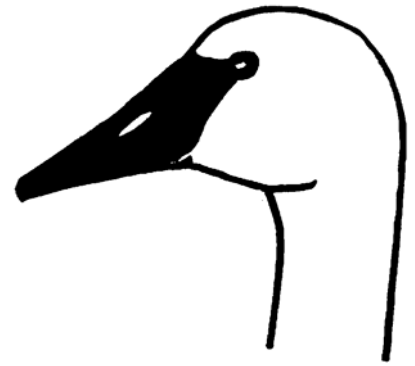




# TRUMPETINGS

Voice of The Trumpeter Swan Society  
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## FROM THE PRESIDENT -

**Welcome John Cornely** – I would like to take this opportunity to welcome TTSS' new Executive Director John Cornely and also to thank our out-going Executive Director Ruth Shea. Ruth became our Society's first part-time Executive Director in 2000 when the Board of Directors decided that the Society's programs were growing such that it was becoming too much to rely only on volunteer participation. Ruth has helped us greatly in bringing in grants, as well as developing our financial reporting and administrative policies. Ruth has continued to assist during the transition and will continue monitoring Trumpeter Swan nests and working to improve Trumpeter Swan habitat in the Greater Yellowstone area. TTSS owes much to Ruth for her tireless and dedicated work on behalf of Trumpeter Swans. Thank you, Ruth, for helping to keep us on track and up to date on a wide variety of issues!

John recently retired from the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service with 34 years of outstanding federal service including over 28 years of experience in wetland and migratory bird management. John began working with trumpeters in 1978 as the Refuge Biologist at Malheur National Wildlife Refuge, Oregon. He has been involved with Trumpeter Swan ecology and management ever since and has had an intense interest in their restoration and conservation. As a former TTSS Board member, John is very familiar with our values and objectives and with the diversity and passion of our membership.

In addition to his continent-wide perspective and knowledge of Trumpeter Swan issues, John has extensive experience in administration, program planning, and program implementation. John also has special strengths in developing partnerships with diverse groups and individuals, and is very familiar with most programs and conservation initiatives that impact Trumpeter Swans and their key habitats in North America. John is also dedicated to basing swan conservation on the best possible science and has published more than 40 journal and symposia articles, and served as a reviewer for several scientific journals.

Finally, I would also like to take this time to thank Bettina Sparrowe who recently left her position as Director-At-Large to spend time with her husband and on other projects in their retirement in Wyoming. Bettina was active on several of our Board Committees such as the Outreach and the Executive Director Search Committees. On behalf of the entire Board, we extend

our thanks and appreciation to Bettina for her many hours spent on Board efforts.

Dale Becker

## TTSS 21<sup>st</sup> CONFERENCE AND 40<sup>th</sup> ANNIVERSARY -

At its March 2007 Board meeting, the TTSS Directors voted to hold the Society's next biennial conference in Whitehorse, Yukon Territory, Canada. The dates of the meeting, April 16-19, 2008, will coincide with Whitehorse's annual celebration of swans when several thousands of swans stopover in M'Clintock Bay to feed on the rich aquatic vegetation. More details will follow in future issues of *Trumpetings* and on our Website. 2008 will be the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the founding of TTSS.

## ROCKY MOUNTAIN POPULATION NEWS

### **Revision of Management Plan for the Rocky Mountain Population (RMP) of Trumpeter Swans -**

The Pacific Flyway Council is revising the management plan for the RMP of Trumpeter Swans. John Cornely has agreed to take the lead in editing the revision. The last revision was completed in 1998. TTSS has copies of the 1998 Plan available in the main office.

**Idaho** - The Pacific Flyway Council approved the release of Trumpeter Swans raised at the Wyoming Wetland Society ([www.wyomingwetlandssociety.org](http://www.wyomingwetlandssociety.org)) facility in the Fort Hall Shoshone-Bannock Reservation in Idaho. These birds hatched from eggs salvaged at Gray's Lake National Wildlife Refuge in southeastern Idaho.

The Pacific Flyway Council also endorsed a proposal of the Wyoming Wetland Society to use Trumpeter Swan eggs from RMP swans in Alberta and British Columbia to increase the number of birds available for translocation in the Tristate area and to increase the genetic heterozygosity of swans in the Tristate area.

### **RMP Midwinter Trumpeter Swan Survey - preliminary report**

- This winter's Trumpeter Swan survey was hindered by a number of factors. The preliminary count of 4,579 swans is 17% lower than last year's final total of 5,489. Survey problems with weather, aircraft availability, and reduced water availability probably contributed to the lower count. The final report is not yet available.

## PACIFIC COAST POPULATION NEWS

**Swan lead poisoning update** – Last winter's efforts (see November 2006 *Trumpetings* for background) to reduce swan mortality along the Washington/British Columbia border were successful in reducing mortality from lead poisoning to about ½ that of the winter of 2005-06. Hazing activities led by Dr. Chris Grue and Mike Smith, University of Washington, kept swans from roosting at Judson Lake on the U.S. – Canadian border. Judson Lake was found to be one of several significant sources of lead shot. The Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife will be conducting liver lead analysis. However, there was more mortality from power line collisions. Multiple snow storms, floods, and frequent fog contributed to early redistribution of the swans. Sincere thanks to Puget Sound Energy for responding quickly to swan-line collisions by installing hundreds of FireFly Bird Diverters in Whatcom and Skagit counties, Washington. Thank you also to all the volunteers who drove many miles to radio track collared swans.

**Midwinter waterfowl survey** - During the 2007 Midwinter Waterfowl Survey, 9,099 Trumpeter Swans were recorded in State of Washington. That is up from 7,930 counted during the previous year. In addition, the Canadian Wildlife Service reported 620 trumpeters from the Fraser River Delta in British Columbia.

**Malheur National Wildlife Refuge will be 100 years old in 2008** - The site of one of the first Trumpeter Swan transplant programs, Malheur National Wildlife Refuge was established by President Teddy Roosevelt in 1908. The Refuge protects 320 bird species and is known for its vast complex of wetlands in southeastern Oregon's region called the Northern Great Basin. The Refuge staff is planning a reunion for the fall of 2008. Visit their web site at [www.fws.gov/malheur](http://www.fws.gov/malheur) to learn more about the Refuge and upcoming events.

## INTERIOR POPULATION NEWS

**Ontario update** - Harry Lumsden recently reported that, after 24 years, southern Ontario now has a self-sustaining population of Trumpeter Swans with 131 breeding-age pairs and an estimated 776 swans. In 2006, only seven out of 11 captive pairs nested, but cygnets will no longer be moved to new release sites. The restoration program will be putting more emphasis on banding wild birds (Ontario bands with yellow wing tags). Banding will be done on the wintering grounds on Lake Ontario and at Wye Marsh in Midland, Ontario. Lead poisoning was the leading known cause of death of trumpeters 1982-2006. Aerial surveys by Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources Districts of Fort Frances, Kenora, and Dryden have found a population of over 150 trumpeters in western Ontario. This population likely originated from birds banded in Minnesota and Wisconsin. Nine nests in Fort Frances and eight in Kenora were confirmed in 2006. Harry Lumsden has written a 10-page summary, *The Trumpeter Swans in*

*Ontario 1982-2006*, that TTSS will include in full in its next issue of *North American Swans*.

**Request for partners in Midwest migration experiment** – Although extirpated by the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the Interior Population of Trumpeter Swans has now been successfully restored to the Midwest as a breeding species. However, the restoration of historic wintering areas has not been as successful and suitable wintering sites are a limited resource. Most of the swans stay in northern areas during the winter where many rely on supplemental food. TTSS has been reluctant to recommend termination of feeding in the North to try to force migration until safe migration sites have been identified in the South and until ways have been tested to attract the swans to such locations. In the past, trumpeters that wander to search for wintering areas suffer high mortality. Trumpeters that are already familiar with wintering sites migrate successfully. Currently, only a few significant sites in Illinois, Indiana, and Arkansas have been established. TTSS will seek several partners in the South in the Mississippi Flyway to participate in an experiment to expand migration, beginning in the winter of 2007-08. Partners can be Federal, state or private. State and Federal permits are required before the experiment can begin. Partners should be located in agricultural areas where field feeding can be an option or where wetlands (minimum of 20 acres) with suitable aquatic vegetation occur. Release strategies and management of the sites would be customized to the sites. All released birds would be marked. The Iowa Trumpeter Swan restoration program has offered to make captive-reared birds available for release. TTSS would pay for the experiment, provide technical advice, and coordinate the transport of birds. Interested parties should contact TTSS at 763-694-7851.

## IN MEMORIAM

Dave Ahlgren, long-time TTSS member from Stillwater, Minnesota, and great friend of Trumpeter Swans passed away in March 2007 after a courageous battle with cancer. Dave was a retired pilot for Northwest Airlines and an avid woodworker who designed and built hundreds of wildlife nesting boxes. He played a significant role with the Minnesota DNR's program to restore Trumpeter Swans to western Minnesota, especially Tamarac National Wildlife Refuge. He volunteered 1986-1988 to help collect trumpeter eggs in Minto Flats in central Alaska for the Minnesota program. Our condolences to Dave's wife Jan. Dave's efforts will continue to enhance wildlife for many years to come. Thank you to the many friends of Dave who made generous donations to TTSS in Dave's memory:

Jan Algren  
Patti Anderson  
Lori Ayres  
Mike & Mickey Garrison  
John Gleason  
The Gopher Campfire Conservation Club  
Philip Hallin  
Jayn & Lu Heggerness  
Dr. Bruce & Helen Kirkham

Dave & Gail Landor  
Sheila Lawrence  
Dave & Sandy McClintock  
Jene & Barry Nelson  
Scott & Mary Rollins  
Darroll & Marie Skilling

Kent & Janet Stever  
Wes & Nadine Stromberg  
Mike & Linda Sunderman

**TRUMPETER SWAN ANNUAL APPEAL/CONSERVATION CAMPAIGN** - We wish to thank everyone who donated above and beyond their dues to help us towards our goal of meeting Earth Friends Wildlife Foundation's Trumpeter Swan Challenge Grant:

Joyce Anderson  
Judith Anderson  
Lawrence Blus  
Laura Leigh Brakke  
Dan Braun  
John Burchard  
Roland Burns  
Carnation Elementary School 2<sup>nd</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup>  
graders  
Gregory Cook  
Nancy & Peter Dyson  
Fred Engelman, Jr.  
The Fanwood Foundation  
Foley/Frischkorn Wildlife Conservation  
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Sarah Hummingbird  
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Brenda & Larry Kitchen  
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William Uhl  
Floie Vane  
Sonny Wainwright  
Washington State Dairy Federation  
David & Kitty Weaver  
Jan Westwater  
Marian White  
William Whitman  
Anne Young

**20<sup>th</sup> CONFERENCE PROCEEDINGS NOW AVAILABLE** – The selected papers from the 20th TTSS conference held in Council Bluffs, Iowa, in October 2005, are now available as a special edition of *North American Swans*. Copies have been mailed to conference participants who prepaid. If you prepaid, please let us know if you have not received your copy, since some mailing addresses may have changed. As with the 19<sup>th</sup> Proceedings, limited copies are available to current members, but, due to the costs, will only be sent upon request. A copy is also available in a CD Rom format. Send an e-mail or drop the TTSS office a note.

**DONATION OF TRUMPETER SWAN IN MEMORY OF BEULAH MCMINIMEE OF CARROLL, IOWA** - Jan Rowedder, TTSS member from Lake View, Iowa, and long-time supporter of trumpeter restoration in Iowa, recently donated funds to purchase a female Trumpeter Swan in memory of her 90-year old aunt, Beulah McMinimee. The swan will be the mate of a 4-year old captive male in the Three Rivers Park District swan restoration program. It is hoped that this new pair will

produce offspring to help promote migration within the Interior Population of Trumpeter Swans. Mrs. McMinimee served as a registered nurse in the Navy and was stationed in Washington, D.C., California, and Illinois. TTSS thanks Jan for her valuable gift and appreciates her continued support in helping to restore Trumpeter Swans to the Midwest.

**SWAN SPECIALIST GROUP SEEKING NEW COORDINATOR** - Dr. Jan Beekman has stepped down as the volunteer Coordinator of the Swan Specialist Group. Although an unpaid position, it plays a key role fostering communication between international swan researchers, providing information to Wetlands International on the conservation status of swan populations, and identifying gaps in swan knowledge. For further information or to suggest yourself or another candidate, please contact Dr. Eileen Rees, Programme Manager, United Kingdom Waterbird Conservation, at Eileen.Rees@wwt.org.uk by 31 May 2007.

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

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**WELCOME ALL!**



**The Royal Canadian Mint features Trumpeter Swans on one dollar coin.** In recent years, the Royal Canadian Mint has produced an annual "Specimen Set". In the place of the traditional Common Loon on the one dollar coin, the mint has used a different bird. The 2007 Specimen Set dollar has a pair of Trumpeter Swans! For more details visit [www.mint.ca](http://www.mint.ca).

### Calling all swan artists!

If you have pen and ink or black and white drawings you have sketched of Trumpeter Swans, TTSS would love to have donated artwork to enhance *Trumpetings* and *North American Swans*. Proper credit will, of course, be given.