



TRUMPETINGS

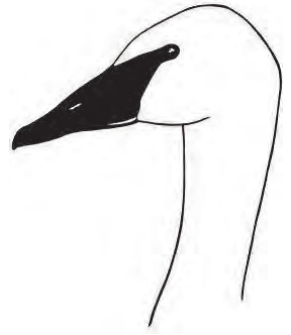
Voice of The Trumpeter Swan Society

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

VOL. XXXI No. 2

SEPTEMBER 2021

You kept Trumpeter Watch strong. Thank you!

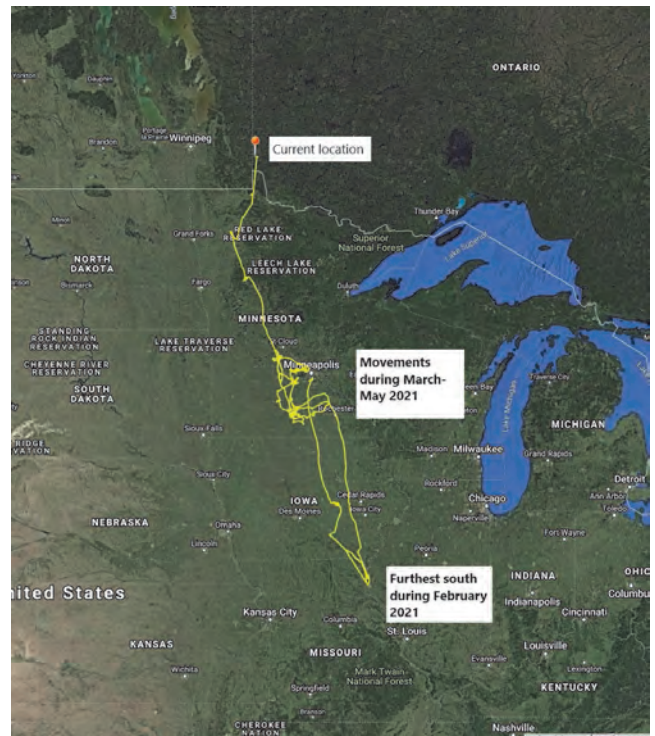


Thanks to you, Trumpeter Watch reports kept swan managers and researchers updated about Trumpeter Swan locations, nesting success, behaviors, and in some cases, health issues. Since January, more than 750 reports from 31 states and 5 provinces have been reviewed and shared where needed most.

One goal of the Midwest swan tracking project is tracking “molt migrations” to learn how far a swan may travel for molt and how long it may stay in that location.

Swans in the project were captured and collared during summer molt, a time when they are flightless.

In this issue you can learn more about molt (pages 4-5) as well as how you helped track Midwest swans. ♦

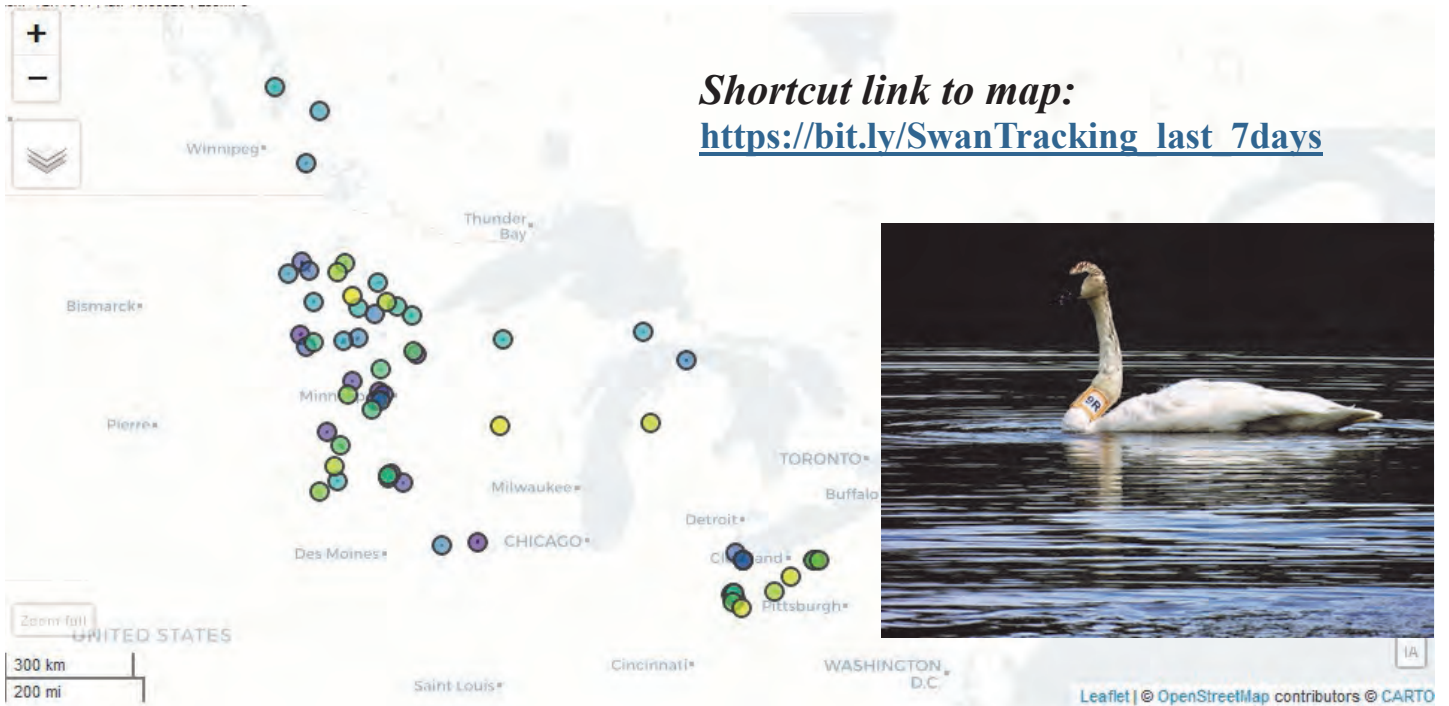


Thanks to you, the Midwest swan tracking project received confirmation of a long distance molt migration, one of the project's goals.

Above left: Minnesota female swan 8A, in molt, was reported and photographed by Darren Willems at Ontario's remote Darkwater Lake in August 2021.

Above right: Minnesota researcher David Wolfson tracked the movements of 8A from capture in June 2020 near Minneapolis, Minnesota; wintering in February near Quincy, Illinois; north this spring to areas around Minneapolis, Minnesota; and making a 2021 summer molt migration to Ontario.

You tracked Midwest swans



Shortcut link to map:

<https://bit.ly/SwanTracking> last 7days

Above: Map as of September 2021. GPS/GSM collared swans are from Iowa, Manitoba, Michigan, Minnesota, Ohio and Wisconsin. As of September 2021, the swans had not yet begun fall migration and were at, or near, their summer locations (circles). The website map shows swan locations over the last 7 days. Locations are uploaded every few days. Swans need to be within range of cell towers for data to download.

Photo map inset right: **Minnesota 9R** was on a wetland in northern Minnesota in mid-June. Thanks to you, we know this swan now has a potential mate which it did not have when it was collared in 2020.

Photo and report by Jane Cullen.

You helped Midwest swan research

Your support made it possible to be a partner in this project, including the purchase of seven collars. Thank you!

Since the project began in 2019 and through your support of Trumpeter Watch, we shared reports, photos and stories of 46 swans in the GPS/GSM project with the researchers and team leaders in the states and Manitoba.

As of mid-September 2021, 77 GPS/GSM collared Midwest Trumpeter Swans are transmitting data for public tracking.

Tracking website:

[https://trumpeterswan.netlify.app/last 7days locations.html](https://trumpeterswan.netlify.app/last%207days%20locations.html)



Above: Through your support of Trumpeter Watch, researchers learned **Minnesota 7A** had a new family in 2021. Photo and report by Nancy Jo Jensen

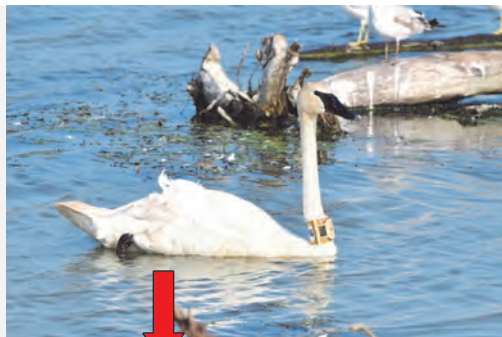
You tracked Midwest swans



Photos: Top left: **Michigan 7K** and his mate hatched six cygnets in June. Thanks to you, we learned by August, three cygnets survived. Photo and report by Nicole Foster.

Top right: Two Trumpeter Watch reporters spotted a damaged collar on **Manitoba 0H** after its return from wintering in Missouri. The swan received a new collar **5H** in late summer 2021. Photo and report by Michelle Porter.

Above: (bottom left) **Minnesota 3E**, a male, collared in July 2020, was spotted with his family in Carver Park near Minneapolis, Minnesota. Last winter he migrated to Missouri spending time near the Missouri River. August 2021 photo and report by Dave Ches. Photo bottom right: **Minnesota 1E**, a female, collared in June 2020, stayed year round near Waconia, Minnesota. August 2021 photo and report by Chris Pelton



Ohio added eight more collars in 2021

Ohio collared eight additional swans in July and now has 20 swans with GPS/GSM collars in the project. This year TTSS received reports of four Ohio GPS/GSM collared swans including recently collared swan 8N.

Photos: Left August 2021 photo and report by Caleb Short of **Ohio 1N**, collared July 2020. Below August 2021 photo and report by Larry Imhoff of **Ohio 8N**, collared July 2021. ♦



The importance of molting

No, your swan didn't explode!

By: Kyna Intini, Ontario Trumpeter Swan Restoration, TTSS Board member

Photos by: Kim Stevenson



Being involved in the Ontario Trumpeter Swan Restoration program, as well as a wildlife rehabilitator for Trumpeter Swans, I receive numerous anxious calls each summer when people haven't seen their usual swans but see a pile of feathers scattered on the shoreline.

They are worried that something has attacked the bird and are sure that there is an injured bird that needs immediate help. But this is actually a normal process called a molt and is something which all waterfowl do during the summer.

Waterfowl are slightly different from most other birds in that they molt all their wing feathers at one time, rendering them flightless for several weeks while they regrow them. Before they start the molt, swans will find a place that provides ample food as well as protection for the time they cannot fly. During the molt the birds will often spend a lot of time hidden from view.

Another interesting adaptation we see is that a mated pair of swans with cygnets will molt at different times so that one parent can always fly to defend the family and territory.

The molt process can be very startling for someone not familiar with it. Kim Stevenson has illustrated the dramatic difference through these two pictures (below) of P68 during (left) and after (right) his molt.





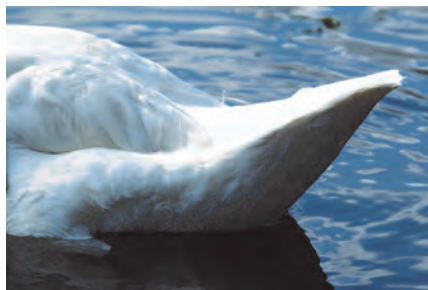
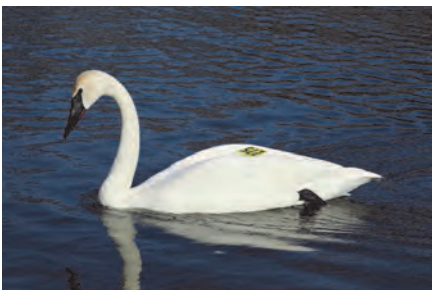
Left: *Worn and broken feathers.* Right: *Close-up of growing pin feathers with a visible blood supply.*

Feathers only last so long and will get worn and broken with normal use. Once the old feathers have been pushed out by the new ones coming in, you will see what are called pin or blood feathers emerging from the feather follicles. These look like a quill or spike and have a blood supply flowing through them. They are encased in a feather sheath made of a keratin coating. At the base, where the feather is developing and being nourished by blood, there is a dark bluish red color. Once the feather is fully formed the blood supply will dry up and the feather will no longer be living material, like our hair.



Left: *Preening is very important during molt as the bird removes the keratin shaft exposing the newly formed feathers.* Right: *With the sun behind the wing, you can see the blood supply at the base of the feathers.*

When you see a bird in the field, you may be able to see that it is in molt by looking at the tail. In the fully flighted bird, the tips of the primary feathers touch the tail and make a smooth rounded curve over the bird's back. In a molting bird, those feathers are not there, and the tail appears to stick up. So when you think your swan has exploded during the summer months it is probably just molting. ♦



Left: *Smooth curve of fully flighted bird*
Right: *The tail appears to stick up during molt*

Your 2020 Annual Report

Thank you for your commitment to help Trumpeter Swans!

Your generous support made a big impact helping Trumpeter Swans in 2020

Thank you so much for your 2020 support. You are assuring the vitality and welfare of wild Trumpeter Swans.

Your support made these highlights happen in 2020, a challenging year with COVID 19.

- ◆ Nine cygnets were released in the **Oregon Restoration Project**. Cygnets came from our partner captive pairs at Sunriver Nature Center and Aspen Lakes Golf Course.
- ◆ You made it possible for TTSS representatives to participate in **Flyway meetings and the Greater Yellowstone Working Group** where decisions about swan restoration and management are made, Meetings were in person prior to the pandemic shutdown and virtual following the shutdown.
- ◆ **Swan research expanded in 2020** to include more states and a provincial partner in the largest Midwest swan tracking project. Most of the tracking collars were deployed and were within pandemic restrictions; GPS/GSM swan tracking continued in the west; online citizen-science **Trumpeter Watch reports increased significantly** with new reports of wintering and nesting areas and migration stops.
- ◆ **Quality governance and transparency** were recognized through the 2020 Guidestar Gold Seal award.

Here's how you made an impact in major program areas of Restoration and Management, Swan Health, Research, Outreach and Education, and Advocacy.

Restoration and Management

Oregon Restoration Project: This project is partnership between TTSS, the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife and the United States Fish and Wildlife Service to restore swans to Oregon. As of the end of 2020, 128 swans have been released into the Project since 2009.

In 2020, nine cygnets (three from Sunriver Nature Center and six from Aspen Lakes Golf Course) were released at Summer Lake Wildlife Area. Three swan pairs fledged young in the Summer Lake area in 2020 with two pairs nesting on the Wildlife Area while the exact nesting location of the third pair was unknown, as they were observed at a nearby reservoir after fledging young.

At Malheur National Wildlife Refuge, only 2 adult females were found and the refuge flock is at a high risk of extinction. Sadly, the female of our Sunriver Nature Center pair, "Grace" was killed by a coyote in October.

Flyway meeting participation: TTSS is a member of the swan committees on all four Flyway Councils. Thanks to your support, Executive Director Margaret Smith participated in the 2020 winter (Kentucky) and summer (virtual) Mississippi Flyway meetings. She made a presentation to the National Flyway Council in March to update Flyway representatives about TTSS priorities and projects. Dr. Gary Ivey represented TTSS

Your 2020 Annual Report

at the Greater Yellowstone Working Group meeting. He gave updates about the Oregon swan program.

Swan Health

Pacific Northwest region swan mortality: You made it possible to continue partnerships with the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife and the Canadian Wildlife Service to monitor swan deaths. Through collection of swan carcasses, swan deaths were analyzed to determine the cause of death in northern Puget Sound (Washington) and Sumas Prairie (British Columbia).

Research

Yellowstone National Park: COVID restrictions limited access to research archives for this Trumpeter Swan Research Project at Yellowstone National Park. Completion of the research thesis was delayed to 2021. Yellowstone's swans peaked at 85 birds in 1954, dropping to single digits in 2010. The project is exploring the reasons behind the decline of Trumpeter Swan numbers in the Park since the 1960s. Findings could have swan management impacts.

Swan GPS Tracking Research:

Midwest Trumpeter Swan Tracking Project: Your support made it possible to be a partner in this project with the University of Minnesota, Minnesota Department of Natural Resources, United States Fish and Wildlife Service, and state and provincial agencies in Iowa, Manitoba, Michigan, Ohio and Wisconsin.

Through your support, in 2020 we received Trumpeter Watch reports for a dozen of the 84 summer-collared swans and shared those reports with the project partners.

Thanks to you, TTSS purchased 7 collars and is a funding partner of the project. Deployment of collars in Arkansas was delayed in late winter 2020 due to pandemic restrictions.

Western Swan Tracking: In 2020 you purchased additional GPS/GSM collars that were deployed at National Wildlife Refuges including Idaho's Bear Lake and Camas refuges, and Red Rock Lakes Refuge in Montana.

This is part of a larger western tracking study to determine the most important wetlands used by Rocky Mountain migratory birds. Your support identified specific areas used by swans in 2020 during migrations and winter for foraging and staging.



Above: You supported monitoring swan health in the Pacific Northwest: Of 334 swans collected and analyzed in winter 2019-2020, 77% of swan deaths were from suspected lead poisoning (55%) and powerline collisions (22%). The remainder (23%) were from "other trauma" and "undetermined."

Photo of swans in early March at Seward Park, Seattle, Washington reported through Trumpeter Watch by Michelle Bosewicht.



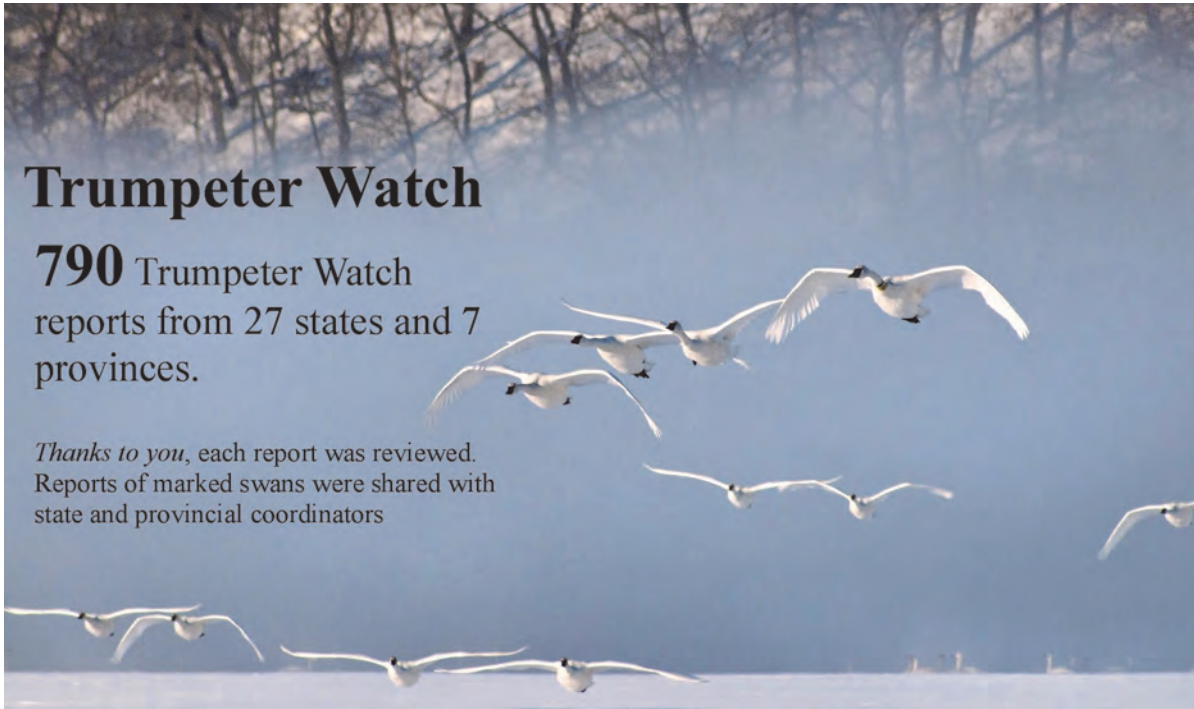
Through your generosity, two swans at Montana's Red Rock Lakes Refuge received GPS/GSM tracking collars in 2020 delivering important information about their movements. Photo by US Fish and Wildlife Service

Your 2020 Annual Report

Trumpeter Watch

790 Trumpeter Watch reports from 27 states and 7 provinces.

Thanks to you, each report was reviewed. Reports of marked swans were shared with state and provincial coordinators



Advocacy

In 2020, TTSS weighed in on a number of issues affecting Trumpeter Swans in North America, including:

- Continued opposition to changes to the Migratory Bird Treaty Act which would weaken bird protections
- Opposition to changes to the Federal Duck Stamp program mandating art with a hunting themed item
- Support of Federal Fiscal Year 2020 funding for the North American Wetlands Conservation Act (NAWCA) and Migratory Bird Ventures
- Swan Hunt Environmental Assessment issued in late 2019 affecting Trumpeter Swans in the Interior Population
- Advocated civic participation in Wisconsin's Conservation Congress spring hearings related to questions affecting lead poisoning, wetland and water protection, and conservation

Photos pages 8-9 by Richard Sonnen

Your 2020 Annual Report

Outreach and Education

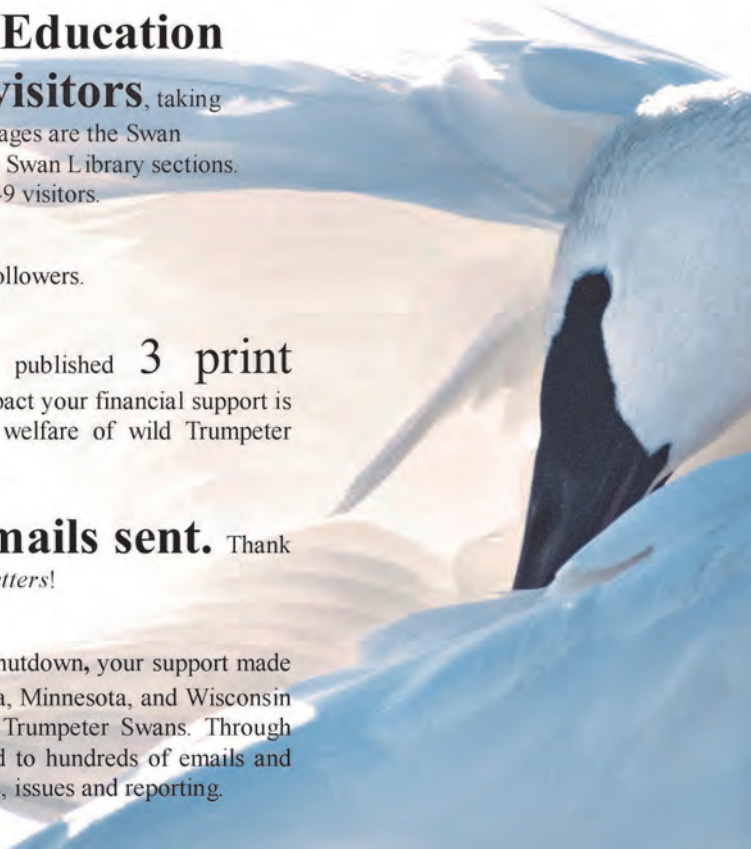
Website: 102,425 visitors, taking 164,722 actions. The most popular pages are the Swan Identification, Swan Information and Swan Library sections. Trumpeter Watch had more than 7,049 visitors.

Facebook: 3,724 followers.

Trumpetings: TTSS published 3 print newsletters to share with you the impact your financial support is making to assure the vitality and welfare of wild Trumpeter Swans.

Enews: 33, 574 emails sent. Thank you for opening and reading *Enewsletters!*

Events: Before the Covid shutdown, your support made it possible to meet the public in Iowa, Minnesota, and Wisconsin to share the story of the return of Trumpeter Swans. Through your ongoing support, we responded to hundreds of emails and phone calls regarding swan questions, issues and reporting.



Operations and Governance

Operations:

Thanks to your generosity as well as the CARES Payroll Protection Program, critical programs remained strong in 2020 during the pandemic. Thank you!

Balance Sheet December 31, 2020

Assets:	
Current Assets	\$268,705
Other Assets	\$ 38,881
Total Assets	\$307,586

Liabilities & Equity	
Liabilities	\$ 0
Temp. Restricted Net Assets	\$114,786
Unrestricted Net Assets	\$192,800
Total Net Assets	\$307,586
Total Liabilities & Net Assets	\$307,586

Income Statement January 1-December 31, 2020

Revenue	
Contributions, gifts, grants	\$123,351
Other	\$ 253
Total	\$123,604

Expenses (functional)	
Program	\$ 79,492
Management	\$ 15,032
Fundraising	\$ 8,842
Total	\$103,366

Net Income \$ 20,238

Your 2020 Annual Report

Governance:

Gold Seal from Guidestar: TTSS fulfilled the requirements to reach the 2020 Gold Seal of Transparency level through Guidestar.

According to Guidestar, TTSS is in the top 0.5% of all nonprofit organizations on Guidestar for transparency.



1% for the Planet: TTSS is a certified member of 1% for the Planet

2020 Board of Directors:

Gary Ivey, *President, Bend, Oregon*

Michael Anderson, *VP, Winnipeg, Manitoba*

Dave Myers, *Treasurer, Salt Lake City, UT*

Dan Casey, *Billings, Montana*

Laurel Degernes, *Durham, North Carolina*

Kent Duckworth, *Ronan, Montana*

Carrol Henderson, *Blaine, Minnesota*

James Hawkings, *Whitehorse, Yukon*

Kyna Intini, *Dundas, Ontario*

Tiffany Mayo, *Cleveland, Ohio*

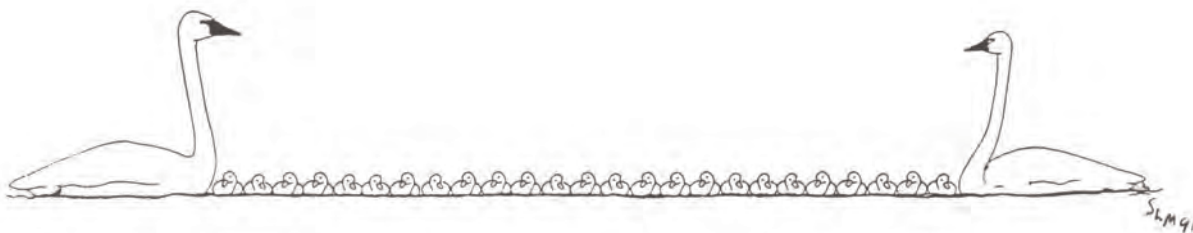
Steven Quarles, *Mt. Airy, Maryland*

Mark Vrtiska, *Lincoln, Nebraska*

Carl Woodward III, *Roseland, New Jersey*

Thank you for your 2020 support! You are amazing and wonderful!

TTSS also thanks these foundations and organizations for their grants and donations supporting our North American swan programs and activities: AuSable Valley Audubon, Benevity Causes, Cleveland Metro Parks, Eaton Corp Charitable Fund, Fanwood Foundation, Felburn Foundation, Firespring Foundation, Foley/Frischkorn Wildlife Conservation Fund, Friends of Kansas City Zoo, Friends of Malheur National Wildlife Refuge, G.E. Foundation, Intermountain West Joint Venture, Jake Fund of Horizons Foundation, Midnight Sun AAZK Chapter, Open Door Foundation, The Ringtail Fund of Vanguard Charitable, W.K. Kellogg Bird Sanctuary. ♦



A gift to TTSS in your will or estate plan helps Trumpeter Swans for generations to come
TTSS Federal Tax ID: 23-7220654

Become a Monthly Swan Sustainer

Trumpeter Swans need your help to return to regions where they have been absent for decades. They also need your help to make sure they are in habitats that are safe, secure and known.


Monthly giving is the most effective way to make sure swan conservation programs keep working every day of the year. It's convenient for you and easy on your budget.

You can have as little as \$5 per month automatically charged to your credit card or withdrawn from your bank account, so your membership is always current. It's easier for you -- and a reliable source of monthly revenue for us so we can plan our budget more efficiently.

Your secure monthly gift will help swans through TTSS programs that:

- work with partners to restore and manage swans across North America
- safeguard swan health and protect habitat swans use throughout the year
- advocate on issues and threats affecting swans
- fund research for science-based knowledge to help swans long term

Send in the form below or sign up online at www.TrumpeterSwanSociety.org>How to Help> Membership (choose “Yes, make this a monthly payment”)

<p> <i>I want to help Trumpeter Swans!</i></p> <p>Name _____</p> <p>Address _____</p> <p>City _____ State _____ Zip _____</p> <p>Phone _____</p> <p>Email _____</p>	<p>Donate by check, credit card or ACH <u>One-Time or Monthly</u> <i>(Your monthly Swan Sustaining gift will make sure your swan programs always stay strong. Donate by credit card below; through your bank account use back page)</i></p>
<p>Mail to: The Trumpeter Swan Society 12615 Rockford Rd. Plymouth, MN 55441-1248</p> <p>OR</p> <p>Donate securely online through credit card or ACH at www.trumpeterswansociety.org</p>	<p>Your membership gift helps Trumpeter Swans</p> <p>My Gift for swans \$ _____ [] One time [] Monthly</p> <p>I prefer to give by:</p> <p>____ Check, payable to TTSS if one time or Void if for monthly</p> <p>____ Credit Card __ Visa __ MC __ Discover __ AmEx</p> <p>Card # _____</p> <p>Card Expiration date ____/____ Security Code _____</p> <p>Name on Card _____</p> <p>Signature _____</p>



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In This Issue:

- You kept Trumpeter Watch strong
- You tracked Midwest swans
- The importance of molting
- Your 2020 Annual Report– How you helped Trumpeter Swans
- Become a monthly Swan Sustainer

Become a monthly Swan Sustainer member!

Swan Sustainer Monthly Donation Authorization Form:

Yes, I want to be a monthly Swan Sustainer member. Swans can count on my support all year.

I authorize *The Trumpeter Swan Society* to electronically debit my account monthly on the *18th* of each month as follows:

Checking account Savings account

at the financial institution named below.

Bank Name _____

Routing Number: _____

Account Number: _____

Monthly Gift Amount:

\$5 \$10 \$15 Other \$ _____

Your gift will be ongoing until you change or cancel it by contacting our organization directly.

Signature: _____

Thank You! (You can directly sign up for online monthly ACH withdrawals or credit card donations on our [How to Help >Membership web page](#))

TRUMPETINGS EDITORS

John Cornely, Gary Ivey, Margaret Smith

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

Making a donation using direct withdrawal via ACH from your checking or savings is fast, easy, and secure.

It's simple, safe, and saves money. It reduces our costs so you help swans even more.

