

**25<sup>th</sup> Swan Conference Field Trip**  
Wednesday, November 20, 2019

**Departs from: Best Western Premier Alton-St. Louis Area Hotel, 3559 College Avenue| Alton | IL 62002, 618.462.1220| [bwpremieralton.com](http://bwpremieralton.com)**

**Important! Please arrive at the Best Western Hotel by 7:30 a.m. Loading begins at 7:45 a.m. Buses leaves the Hotel promptly at 8:00 am, return to the hotel by 6:00 pm after a social reception with hors d'oeuvres and drinks at the Audubon Center at Riverlands. Lunch will also be provided.**

**“Trumpeter Swan Overwintering along the mid-Mississippi and Lower Illinois Rivers”**

This field trip will be a wonderful opportunity to see hundreds of trumpeter swans in overwintering areas as well as experiencing these unique floodplain habitats at federal refuges, sanctuaries and state conservation areas. We will travel along the Great River Road through the river bottoms, which will provide us with scenic views of the rivers and the unique river communities that exist along the river's banks.

Our trip will take us to the following locations:

**Two Rivers National Wildlife Refuge, Swan Lake Unit.** This refuge was established in 1958 and is located in Calhoun County, IL. We will visit the Swan Lake Unit, which consists of 2,400 acres of shallow managed wetlands, bottomland forests and backwater sloughs. This area is host to hundreds of thousands of waterfowl each year during fall and winter migration, including many trumpeter and tundra swans. The refuge manager will meet us at this location and give our group an overview of their management and a tour of the site.

[https://www.fws.gov/refuge/two\\_rivers/](https://www.fws.gov/refuge/two_rivers/)

**Great River National Wildlife Refuge, Delair Division.** This refuge unit is in Pike County, IL and is 1685 acres of natural floodplain habitat interspersed with forests, wetlands and scrub/shrub habitat. During the winter of 2018-2019 the highest daily count of trumpeter swans was over 1000 birds. The refuge manager will meet us at this location and give our group an overview of their management and a tour of the site.

[https://www.fws.gov/refuge/great\\_river/](https://www.fws.gov/refuge/great_river/)

**Clarence Canon National Wildlife Refuge.** This refuge is in Pike County, MO and consists of over 3750 acres of Mississippi River floodplain and was established to provide a feeding and resting area for migratory birds. Nearly 300 species of birds visit the refuge during their journeys. Many trumpeter swans stop over at this location in the fall. The refuge manager will meet us at this location and give our group an overview of their management and a tour of the site.

[https://www.fws.gov/refuge/clarence\\_cannon/](https://www.fws.gov/refuge/clarence_cannon/)

**Riverlands Migratory Bird Sanctuary and the Audubon Center at Riverlands.** This sanctuary is managed by the US Army Corps of Engineers and is also home to the Audubon Center at Riverlands, a National Audubon Society center. The area is in St. Charles County, MO, just across the Mississippi River from Alton, IL and consists of 3700 acres of floodplain habitat including grasslands, managed wetlands and backwater river sloughs. Riverlands has been host to over 1400 trumpeter swans recorded in a single day in 2018. The manager of the site will give the group an overview of the management and a tour of the site.

<https://www.mvs.usace.army.mil/Missions/Recreation/Rivers-Project-Office/Riverlands-Migratory-Bird-Sanctuary/>

<https://riverlands.audubon.org/>

Riverlands will be the last stop of the day and we will enjoy a great sunset at the Audubon Center at Riverlands watching trumpeter swans come back into their evening roost. Sunset is at 4:44 pm this day and swans by the hundreds return to the sanctuary from local feeding grounds every evening. A social reception will be held at the center with hors d'oeuvres and drinks provided. At approximately 6:00 pm the bus will return to the hotel. For those that would like to stay longer a local shuttle will be provided.