



TRUMPETINGS

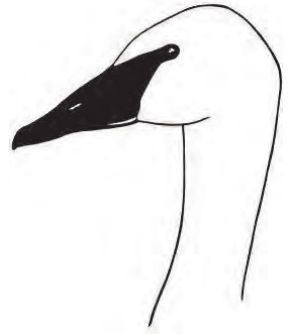
Voice of The Trumpeter Swan Society

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

VOL. XXX No. 2

SEPTEMBER 2020

Migratory Bird Treaty Act remains intact

In the April 2018 *Trumpetings* you learned the Administration made changes to the interpretation of the 1918 Migratory Bird Treaty Act (MBTA). The Society signed a letter sent to all members of Congress opposing the changes and urged you to contact your Congress member as well.

The new interpretation was issued in December 2017 without the opportunity for public comment. It ended the ability to hold industries accountable for bird deaths.

This rolled back decades of bipartisan support and interpretation of the MBTA. It also removed industry incentives to prevent bird deaths and its associated penalties.

There was good news for migratory birds on August 11, 2020

U.S. District Judge Valerie E. Caproni, a federal judge in New York, “invalidated rule changes by the Trump administration that allowed individuals and corporations to kill scores of birds as long as they could prove they did not intentionally set out to do so.”

According to the Washington Post, “Caproni determined that allowing the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service police to enforce the act only if officials could prove intent was a violation of the federal Administrative Procedure Act and vacated the changes. In striking down the rule change, she admonished the Interior Department with a passage from *To Kill a Mockingbird*.”

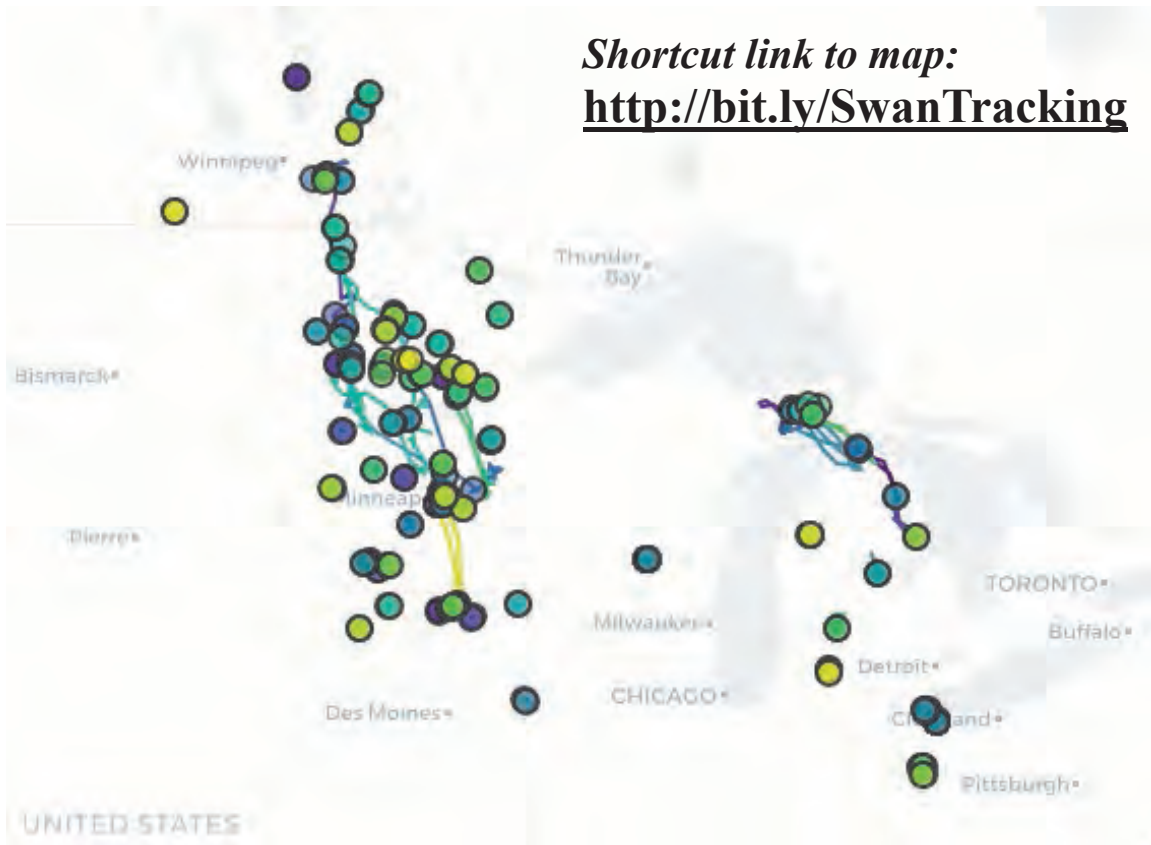
“It is not only a sin to kill a mockingbird, it is also a crime,” Caproni wrote. “That has been the letter of the law for the past century. But if the Department of the Interior has its way, many mockingbirds and other migratory birds that delight people and support ecosystems throughout the country will be killed without legal consequence.”

Your support made it possible for TTSS to advocate against the new MBTA interpretation and for Trumpeter Swans and other migratory birds protected under the MBTA. ♦

Photo: *Trumpeter Swans continue to be protected under the Migratory Bird Treaty Act thanks to Judge Caproni's ruling and the advocacy your support made possible.* Margaret Smith photo



You can track Midwest swans right now!



As of September 2020, GPS/GSM collared swans are from Iowa, Manitoba, Michigan, Minnesota, Ohio and Wisconsin

You are helping Midwest swan research

Ninety-six Midwest Trumpeter Swans can now be tracked on a public website. Let us know if you spot one of the swans!

Your support made it possible to be a partner in this project, including the purchase of seven collars. Four collars were deployed this summer in Minnesota. Three collars will be deployed in Arkansas this winter, COVID-19 permitting.

Your help is needed to document the locations and other general information about the swan you see. Please use our Trumpeter Watch online report form (Step 2) to quickly upload your sighting and photos/video.

<http://bit.ly/SwanReport>

or: www.trumpeterswansociety.org

Your sighting will be shared with the researchers



Michigan GPS collars (photo of 2 swans by Larry Chapin) are somewhat different than collars used in the other states and Manitoba (collar upper right). However, both are white with black solar panels.

You can track Midwest swans right now!



Top left: Michigan GPS swan 7K was reported through Trumpeter Watch on September 10 at Tuttle Marsh near Tawas, Michigan. Photo by William Roth
Middle: Ohio swan 3M is ready for release.
Right: Following assessments through measurements and a blood sample, Ohio swan 0M receives its GPS collar.
Bottom left: The Minnesota Department of Natural Resources releases one of its 39 newly GPS collared swans. Photo: MN Department of Natural Resources

Ohio swan tracking gets a boost from zoos

The Ohio Department of Wildlife (ODOW) got help from zoos to track Trumpeter Swans.

Laura Kearns, leading the ODOW project, met Tiffany Mayo at TTSS' 25th Swan Conference in Alton, Illinois. Tiffany Mayo is a TTSS board member and swan staff at the Cleveland Metroparks Zoo. She rallied the Ohio zoos (Cleveland, Cincinnati, Toledo) and several chapters of AAZK (Cleveland, Cincinnati, Columbus, and Akron) to provide additional funds to purchase GPS collars.

The Toledo Zoo helped administer the purchase of collars. Staff from Cleveland Metroparks Zoo, Akron Zoo, and Columbus Zoo helped with swan captures.

Upon capture, swans were weighed. Measurements of bill length and tarsus length were taken to assess body condition. The swans were also sexed. Blood was taken for genetic analysis and to determine lead levels in each individual swan.

Swans were fitted with the GPS collars and banded with a metal USGS leg band. They were released back to their capture site.

Despite restrictions due to the COVID-19 pandemic, staff from ODOW, Winous Point Marsh Conservancy, and zoo volunteers were able to capture 12 swans throughout the state in July and August of 2020. ♦



Above: Ohio has 8 collars remaining that will be deployed on additional swans in the summer of 2021. Ohio photos courtesy of Cleveland Metroparks Zoo and ODOW.

You are tracking swans in the west

Western swans at Camas, Bear Lake and Red Rock Lakes National Wildlife Refuges (NWR) received GPS/GSM collars this summer. Four collars were purchased by TTSS, thanks to you.

This is part of a larger study of western swan annual movements. There is no public website available to watch the swan travels at this time.

Tracking will identify specific areas used by swans during migrations, where they winter, and where they feed, rest and stage. Researchers hope to identify important wetland areas used outside the refuges. Tracking may also identify if swans are moving into hunt areas or foraging in areas with contaminants. ♦



Photos: Bottom left: *Newly collared GPS swan at Bear Lake NWR.* Middle and right: *Two swans received collars at Lima Reservoir near Red Rock Lakes NWR.* Photos by US Fish and Wildlife Service. Upper right: *Newly GPS collared swan in display at Camas NWR.* Evan Nelson photo

You are keeping Trumpeter Watch strong during COVID-19



You made it possible to learn about and share this new nesting area in eastern South Dakota.
Christian Begeman photo

Your support has been keeping Trumpeter Watch strong since the pandemic hit in early March.

It is because of you, more than 440 Trumpeter Watch reports submitted since March 1, 2020 have been reviewed and shared where needed most.

Trumpeter Watch reports came from 22 states and six provinces.

You helped a wing-injured, lead-poisoned swan in Pennsylvania be rescued for rehabilitation. You made sure sightings of GPS swans in both the Midwest and West were shared with the project leaders. You ensure new swan nesting areas were reported to the appropriate people tracking state or provincial swans.

You made it possible to share information about swans, their behavior and new sightings with the general public through TTSS' Facebook page and to swan *Enewsletter* subscribers. Thank you! ♦

2019 Annual Report

Thank you for your commitment to Trumpeter Swans!

Your generous support made a big impact helping Trumpeter Swans in 2019

Thank you so much for your 2019 support. You are assuring the vitality and welfare of wild Trumpeter Swans.

Your support made these highlights happen in 2019:

- ◆ The **three day 25th Swan Conference** was a success in the number of participants, the quality and quantity of presentations, and engagement with swan managers, researchers, biologists, birders and the regional West Alton, Missouri and Alton, Illinois communities.
- ◆ A new male mate was found for our **Oregon Restoration Project** Sunriver Nature Center breeding pair. 2019 was a bumper year for Oregon cygnets that will be released into the wild in 2020.
- ◆ You made it possible for TTSS representatives to participate in **Flyway meetings** where decisions about swan restoration and management are made, including working on an updated Interior Population Trumpeter Swan Management Plan.
- ◆ **Swan research** expanded in 2019 to include what will be the largest Midwest swan tracking project; GPS swan tracking in the west; and continuing research at Yellowstone National Park. 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 2019 Guidestar Gold Seal.

You made progress possible in major program areas of Restoration and Management, Swan Health, Education and Research, and Outreach and Advocacy.

Restoration and Management

Oregon Restoration Project: 2019 was another year of progress in the Oregon Restoration Project, a partnership since 2009 between TTSS, the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife and the United States Fish and Wildlife Service.

Captive breeding pairs and cygnet success:

Sunriver Nature Center: Thanks to Kellogg Bird Sanctuary, a rehabilitated wing-injured Michigan male swan became the new mate for “Grace”, the female swan at Sunriver Nature Center in Bend, Oregon. Her previous mate was illegally shot in 2017 and euthanized. The female swan and new male mated within a week of meeting in May.



A new male mate, “Gus” and female “Grace” hatched 4 cygnets at Sunriver Nature Center in 2019. Margaret Smith photo

2019 Annual Report

Four cygnets hatched on July 4, 2019. Three Sunriver cygnets survived into late 2019 for release at Summer Lake Wildlife Area in 2020.

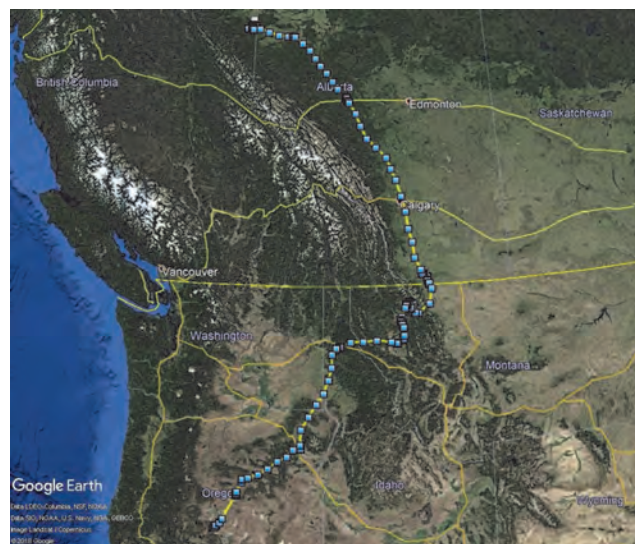
Aspen Lakes Golf Course: The project's other breeding swan pair at Aspen Lakes hatched eight cygnets. Six cygnets survived into early 2020 for release at Summer Lake Wildlife Area in 2020.

Oregon GPS/GSM collared wintering swan: Summer Lake Wildlife Area is an important winter site for Trumpeter Swans from Canada. In early 2019, one wintering swan was collared with a GPS/GSM collar.

Soon after, the swan travelled through Washington, Montana, Alberta and settled for the summer in British Columbia. It returned to Summer Lake, Oregon in the early winter in 2019, at one point flying 12 hours nonstop.



Eight cygnets hatched at Aspen Lakes Golf Course in Sisters, Oregon in 2019. Cygnets from the Aspen Lakes swan pair are released into the wild through the Oregon Restoration Program.
Margaret Smith photo



Left: *In March 2019, a Canadian swan wintering at Summer Lake Wildlife Area received a GPS collar.* Right: *By early April, it had returned to British Columbia in the Rocky Mountain Population region.* Photo left by Gary Ivey. Google Earth image from U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

Swan releases: In 2019 three yearling swans were released at Summer Lake Wildlife Area. As of the end of 2019, 119 swans have been released into the Project since 2009.

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 both the 2019 winter (Alabama) and summer (Minnesota) Mississippi Flyway meetings. Work began on a draft Interior Population Management Plan. The Swan Plan Committee also met at the 25th Swan Conference in November in Alton, Illinois.

2019 Annual Report

Dr. Gary Ivey represented TTSS at the Greater Yellowstone Working Group meeting. He gave updates about the Oregon swan program, and genetic testing of Trumpeter Swans in zoos. He continued to advocate for TTSS' RMP Connectivity Project to reduce isolation of western swans.

Swan Health

Pacific Northwest region swan mortality: Thanks to you, we continued partnerships with the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife, University of Washington, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service 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).

Of 389 swans collected and analyzed in winter 2018-2019, 81% of the swan deaths were from suspected lead poisoning (66%) and powerline collisions (15%). The remainder (19%) were from "other trauma" and "undetermined."

Through your support, Trumpeter Watch sightings of released rehabbed swans were reported to the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife. The sightings of successfully rehabilitated swans were appreciated by the partners and wildlife rehab facility.



Through your support, Trumpeter Watch sightings of released rehabbed swans were reported to the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife and wildlife rehabbers. K13, released February 2019 in Washington after treatment for injuries, was spotted in Quesnel, British Columbia in late March by Suzy Wright

Education and Research

25th Swan Conference: The three day conference was held in Alton, Illinois. The conference theme was "Swans, Confluences and Rivers... Connecting People."

It was co-hosted by TTSS, Riverlands Migratory Bird Sanctuary (U.S. Army Corps of Engineers) and the Audubon Center at Riverlands. One hundred nineteen people participated. There were 36 presentations and six poster presentations. The all-day field trip was sold out. Your support made the 25th Swan Conference a success.



Yellowstone National Park: You are a partner in a three year Trumpeter Swan Research Project at Yellowstone National Park. 2019 was the second year of the study. The project is exploring the reasons behind the decline of Trumpeter Swan numbers in the Park since the 1960s. Yellowstone's swans peaked at 85 birds in 1954, dropping to single digits in 2010. By 2012, the Park put a management plan in action to increase swan numbers the Park.

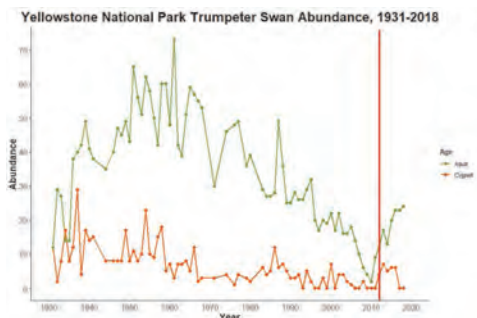


Photo middle: *The 25th Swan Conference included two days for the 36 presentations. It also included an all-day field trip.*

Graph: *You support Yellowstone National Park (YNP) research into reasons behind swan decline over the past few decades. This YNP Swan Conference slide shows YNP swan abundance and decline from 1931-2018. The top line represents adults, the bottom line represents cygnets. Increased numbers since 2012 include captive-raised swan releases to bolster the YNP swan population.*

2019 Annual Report

Swan GPS Tracking Research:

Midwest Trumpeter Swan Tracking Project: Your support made it possible to be a partner in this three year joint project with the University of Minnesota, Minnesota Department of Natural Resources, United States Fish and Wildlife Service, and Three Rivers Park District in Minnesota. New partners joined in late 2019.



Left: *Minnesota GPS swan 6A* was collared in 2019 in Aitkin County, Minnesota. She and her family spent the winter in Wisconsin. Middle: *Minnesota GPS collar 7A* was deployed in 2019 on a swan in Hubbard County, Minnesota. The collars are programmed to record a location every 15 minutes. The black panels are solar panels for recharging the battery. Right: Dr. David Anderson, University of Minnesota, presents the migration research study at the 2019 summer meeting of the Mississippi Flyway. It was at this meeting additional states and Manitoba expressed interest in participating in the research. Photos left and right by Margaret Smith. Middle photo: Minnesota Department of Natural Resources

In 2019 nineteen swans were collared in Minnesota and Michigan. Their movements were tracked on a public website through the University of Minnesota. The public website went live in late 2019 (see page 2).

In 2019, we received Trumpeter Watch reports for 5 of the 19 collared swans and shared those reports with the project partners.

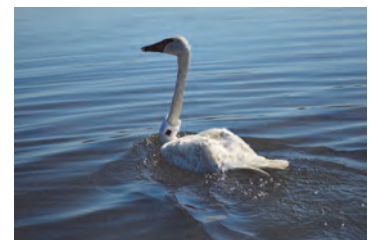
The Midwest project was presented by the researchers at the 2019 summer Mississippi Flyway meeting and 25th Swan Conference.

In 2019, more partners joined in from Wisconsin, Iowa, Ohio, and Manitoba to track their Trumpeter Swans with GPS/GSM collars starting in 2020.

Thanks to your support, TTSS committed to purchasing at least 4 collars to be deployed in 2020.

Idaho SE National Wildlife Refuge complex: In 2019 you purchased four GPS/GSM collars that were deployed in July at four National Wildlife Refuges including Bear Lake, Camas, Grays Lake in Idaho and Red Rock Lakes in Montana.

Swans at the Idaho refuges have low breeding success. Some Idaho swan parents return to nesting grounds in the spring without the cygnets hatched the year before. This is unusual. Tracking will identify specific areas used by swans during migrations, where they winter, and where they feed, rest and stage.



You purchased 4 GPS collars in 2019 for western swans. Collars record where each swan migrates, winters, rests and feeds. Photo by U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

2019 Annual Report

Trumpeter Watch: Trumpeter Watch began in 2009 as a way to track existing and emerging swan wintering, migration and nesting sites, especially in the Interior Population which had no migration traditions. In 2019 we received more than 400 Trumpeter Watch reports from across North America.

Thanks to you, each report was reviewed. Reports of marked swans were shared with state and Ontario coordinators. Thanks to your support, Trumpeter Watch information will be helpful in the drafting of the Interior Population Trumpeter Swan Management Plan.

Outreach and Advocacy

Outreach

Website: In 2019, the website had 51,000 visitors, taking 85,000 actions. The most popular pages are the Swan Identification, Swan Information and Swan Library sections. Trumpeter Watch had more than 3,400 visitors.

Facebook: In 2019, we reached a milestone of 3,000 followers.

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

Enews: The monthly swan *Enews* was recognized by Constant Contact with a 2019 All Star Award for being one of the top 10% of their clients with the highest rate of engagement by subscribers. Thank you for opening and reading *Enewsletters*!

Other: Your support made it possible to meet the public in Iowa, Minnesota, Oregon 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.

Advocacy

In 2019, TTSS weighed in on a number of swan health and habitat issues affecting Trumpeter Swans in North America, including:

- Continued opposition to changes to the Migratory Bird Treaty Act which would weaken bird protections
- Advocating civic participation in Wisconsin's Conservation Congress spring hearings related to questions affecting lead poisoning, wetland/swan habitat protection and conservation
- Continued presentations to groups advocating use of non-toxic fishing gear and ammunition



You made it possible to be a part of the Iowa January Swan Soiree education event and May swan releases. Both had hundreds of attendees excited to learn about Trumpeter Swans. Margaret Smith photos

2019 Annual Report

Operations and Governance

Operations:

Balance Sheet December 31, 2019		Income Statement January 1-December 31, 2019	
Assets:		Revenue	
Current Assets	\$248,641	Contributions, gifts, grants	\$132,925
Other Assets	\$ 38,707	Other	<u>\$ 1,439</u>
Total Assets	\$287,348	Total	\$134,364
Liabilities & Equity		Expenses (functional)	
Liabilities	\$ 0	Program	\$ 99,300
Temp. Restricted Net Assets	\$119,986	Fundraising	\$ 8,888
Unrestricted Net Assets	\$167,362	Management	<u>\$ 14,816</u>
Total Net Assets	\$287,348	Total	\$ 123,004
Total Liabilities & Net Assets	\$287,348	Net Income	\$ 11,360

Gold Seal from Guidestar: TTSS fulfilled the requirements to reach the 2019 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.



Governance:

2019 Board of Directors:

Carey Smith, *President, Vancouver, Washington and Polson, Montana*

Dave Hoffman, *Vice President, Clear Lake, Iowa*

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Steven Quarles, *Mt. Airy, Maryland*

Carl Woodward III, *Roseland, New Jersey*



Your generous support made a positive impact helping Trumpeter Swans in 2019!

2019 Annual Report

Thank you for your 2019 support!

TTSS also thanks these foundations and organizations for their grants and donations supporting our North American swan programs and activities:

AAZK Greater Cleveland Chapter; AuSable Valley Audubon; Confed. Salish-Kootenai Tribes of the Flathead Nation; East Cascades Audubon Society; Earth Concerns International; Fanwood Foundation; Felburn Foundation; Foley-Frischkorn Wildlife Conservation Fund; Friends of Malheur National Wildlife Refuge; Jake Fund of Horizons Foundation, Midnight Sun AAZK Chapter; Milwaukee County Zoo; National Wildlife Refuge Association; Open Door Foundation; Sunriver Nature Center; W.K. Kellogg Bird Sanctuary; Wye Marsh Wildlife Centre.



Drawing by Jim McEvoy

25th Swan Conference Sponsors: Alton Works; Ameren; Central Flyway Council; Confed. Salish & Kootenai Tribes of the Flathead Nation; Delta Waterfowl Foundation; Intermountain West Joint Venture; Dr. Gary Ivey; The Dr. Jerome Katchin Waterfowl Foundation; Lower Illinois River Valley Rural Prosperity Initiative; Mississippi Flyway Council; Pacific Flyway Council; Papa Murphy's; Steven Quarles; THG Advisors; Richard and Kayla Toy; Carl and Kathleen Woodward. ♦

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



I support Trumpeter Swan conservation.

Enclosed is my tax-deductible gift (in USA)

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OR

Donate securely **online** through credit card or
ACH at www.trumpeterswansociety.org

Donate by check, credit card or ACH

One time or monthly

(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)

Your membership gift helps Trumpeter Swans

My Gift for swans \$ _____ [] One time [] Monthly

I prefer to give by:

___ Check, payable to TTSS if one time or Void if for monthly

___ Credit Card ___ Visa ___ MC ___ Discover ___ AmEx

Card # _____

Card Expiration date ____/____ Security Code _____

Name on Card _____

Signature _____



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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 (select one)

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.

