



TRUMPETINGS

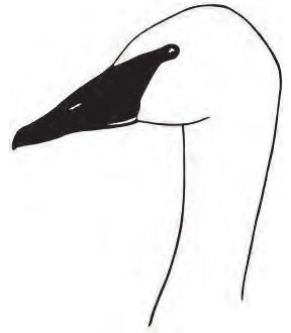
Voice of The Trumpeter Swan Society

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

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Telling the story. Investing in the future.



Photo: *Two Trumpeter Swan families at Michigan's Seney National Wildlife Refuge provide the background story of the "Return of the Trumpeters" film, a project by Steve Harryman for The Trumpeter Swan Society.* Photo by Steve Harryman

Gifts from donors like you make a big impact to assure the vitality and welfare of wild Trumpeter Swans. In this issue, you will learn about a documentary film project, "Return of the Trumpeters" that was made possible through a bequest to The Trumpeter Swan Society from the Patricia and James Bigley Trust.

Filmmaker Steve Harryman shares his personal journey of hope, loss and inspiration in the making this film. He writes, "The focus of this film is not only documenting the story of the Trumpeter Swan, but even more so documenting the story of the people behind its restoration across North America."

The Society's North American Swan Fund, our permanent endowed fund, began with the generosity of our early Alaskan members and has grown through the years through the generosity of many members like you. The Fund provides vital funding for swan research, habitat conservation and education that isn't funded through our general funds. We need your help to continue funding these valuable projects. You can direct your gift to the North American Swan Fund and invest today in helping future swan projects. Page 7 tells you how. ♦

“Return of the Trumpeters” Film Project



Above: A year in the life of two swan families is part of the film project

Right: The late Joe Johnson led Michigan's Trumpeter Swan restoration efforts. He was instrumental in creating the 1998 Interior Population Management Plan for Trumpeter Swans.



“Return of the Trumpeters” - a personal journey by Steve Harryman

Back in 2008, I called Joe Johnson at Kellogg Bird Sanctuary near Battle Creek, Michigan, to find out more about Trumpeter Swans. I knew very little about the bird and knew Joe had worked with them. I asked him a simple question, “Joe, what’s so special about these birds?” Joe chuckled and said, “You’ll find out.”

It was those three simple words that led me and my wife Char on a mission: a wildlife documentary on Trumpeter Swans.



Above/below: Iowa's Department of Natural Resources public outreach and education programs use Trumpeter Swans to “Trumpet the cause for wetlands” and reaches people of all ages.

In 2010 we embarked on a trip to Michigan's Upper Peninsula to begin filming this wildlife documentary. My original plan was a basic, year-in-the-life of Trumpeter Swans, but the more we learned, the more we realized this story had a *much* broader range.

It was amazing and daunting to learn of all the states and provinces involved in the restoration of this magnificent bird. Our scope changed dramatically, leading to traveling not only within Michigan but to several locations across North America. Those travels continue.

The focus of this film is not only documenting the story of the Trumpeter Swan, but even more so documenting the story of the people behind its restoration across North America.

“Return of the Trumpeters” will present the past, present and future of the Trumpeter Swan. The story of the Trumpeter Swan will be told with both scientific accuracy and with heart through the stories of people's involvement in the return of this magnificent bird.



“Return of the Trumpeters” Film Project



Above: Iowa's spring swan releases include cygnets from zoos. Hundreds of local students participate each year

Our original goal was to have a completed film by 2016. However, life goes on while we're busy trying to plan it.

A medical diagnosis

Nine years into our marriage, my wife, Char experienced a series of Grand Mal seizures in 1995 caused by a malignant brain tumor. She required immediate surgery, followed by radiation therapy. Doctors gave her no more than five years to live.

Char, however, fared far better than that prediction and with no deficits from the surgery. We moved forward with our lives writing feature nature articles for local and national publications. Life was good.

The idea of migrating from doing magazines to a wildlife documentary was exciting for me. I felt I could take my knowledge of wildlife and nature photography and apply it to film. The idea for “Return of the Trumpeters” began.

Filming begins

In 2010 we began filming Trumpeter Swans at Seney National Wildlife Refuge in Michigan's Upper Peninsula. Char was a dedicated field researcher and writer while I did the principal filming.

A year later we presented the film project concept at our first Trumpeter Swan Society Swan Conference in 2011 in Polson, Montana. That was our first personal introduction to many of the people and programs involved in the restoration of Trumpeter Swans to North America, including the Society's members and board members.



Above: Now retired, Ron Andrews, Iowa Department of Natural Resources, began Iowa's swan restoration program in 1993, and developed the state's exceptional outreach and education programs about Trumpeter Swans.



Above: Harry Lumsden led Ontario's restoration of Trumpeter Swans, receiving Canada's highest recognition, the Order of Canada. Below: Doug Smith is responsible for Yellowstone National Park's Trumpeter Swans.



“Return of the Trumpeters” Film Project



Above: Zoos have played a key role in the return of Trumpeter Swans. Tiffany Mayo (right) is the Trumpeter Swan Species Survival Plan Coordinator and Lead Hospital Keeper at Cleveland Metroparks Zoo.



Above: Riverlands Migratory Bird Sanctuary in Missouri is one of the Midwest's important swan wintering areas.



Above: The film will share swan health issues and includes a visit and interviews at the Wildlife Rehabilitation Center of Minnesota.

On our return home Char experienced her first seizure in over 16 years. The cause of the seizure was a recurrence of her malignant brain tumor from 16 years before.

With the return of the tumor and multiple surgeries over the next several years our plans to finish this film were dramatically impacted. At one point, I wondered if the idea for doing this film was over. Yet we continued to press on towards creating a film on what we know is a truly great story.

Moving forward

In 2015 and 2016 The Trumpeter Swan Society received a bequest from the Patricia and James Bigley Trust for the film project. Some of my film footage of the Seney National Wildlife Refuge swans was used in the Hallmark Hall of Fame TV movie “Away and Back.”

Capturing the Iowa restoration story included multiple trips to Iowa in 2017, working with Dave Hoffman from the Iowa Department of Natural Resources. Filming included public awareness, citizen efforts and multiple swan releases in the spring at Viking Lake State Park, Lake Icaria State Park and Lake Anita State Park.

While in Iowa, I interviewed citizens, present and former biologists with the Iowa DNR and Iowa State University. Iowa's release program has included partnerships with numerous zoos, including Cleveland Metroparks Zoo. My later trip to Cleveland offered opportunities to film the zoo's captive swan breeding program and interview the program's Trumpeter Swan Species Survival Plan Coordinator and Lead Hospital Keeper, Tiffany Mayo. It is a fascinating program and very interesting to see how partnerships across the country are truly benefitting the swans.

“Return of the Trumpeters” Film Project

Last year, 2018, offered great opportunities and solid progress on the film project. The year started with a trip to Iowa to cover the Trumpeter Swan Soiree, organized by Iowa DNR’s Dave Hoffman. This was a great public awareness event and really showed the excitement and involvement Iowa children and adults have for Trumpeter Swans.

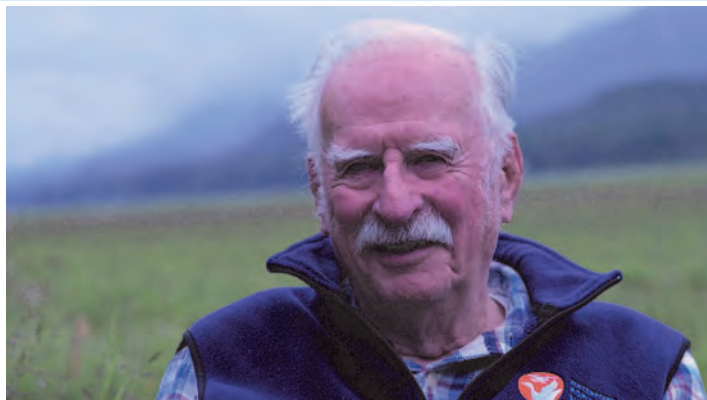
Another significant milestone for the film was a trip to Alaska to interview retired pilot/biologist Jim King. Jim is 91 years old and I met him and his wife, Mary Lou at their home in Juneau. Jim’s aerial survey in 1968 showed nearly 3,000 Trumpeter Swans in Alaska, offering a ray of hope for biologists at a time many believed Trumpeter Swans were headed towards extinction.

I traveled to Riverlands Migratory Bird Sanctuary in late 2018 in time to see the arrival of Trumpeter Swans. Riverlands is Missouri’s most important swan wintering area. The Society’s 25th Swan Conference is being held there in November.

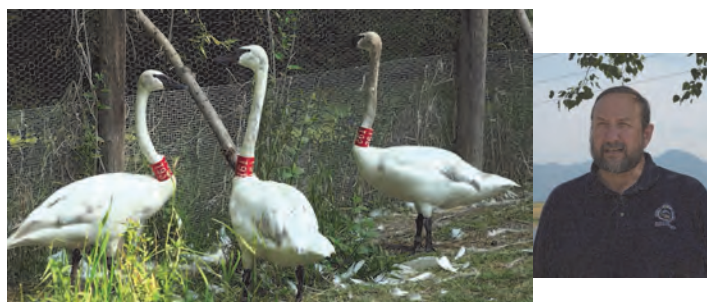
In February of this year, Char needed another surgery to remove yet another recurrence. This time it was a far more extensive surgery, with many different therapies after surgery to learn how to walk and talk all over again. We made it home at the end of March. Char had great excitement that we would be able to see “our” Trumpeter Swans again. However, that was not to be. I lost Char on May 28 this year.

Trumpeter Swans have been a significant part of our journey together and a source of inspiration for us over the years we worked together.

Now it’s even more important to me to complete the film we started together. Though the timeline is far from what we originally planned, I look forward to completing the project in the next 18-24 months. I am thankful for the help and guidance of The Trumpeter Swan Society along the way. ♦



Above: Jim King flew the first Alaskan Trumpeter Swan “census” in 1959 which counted 1,124 trumpeters, more than doubling the known population of Trumpeter Swans. He was instrumental in establishing nine national wildlife refuges protecting over 23 million acres.



Above: The Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes in northwest Montana began swan restoration in 1995 to return swans to the tribal homeland. Released swans receive a red neck collar. Dale Becker leads the program and 277 swans were released from 2002-2019.

Right: Dr. Gary Ivey (TTSS) and Martin St. Louis (Oregon Dept. of Fish & Wildlife) release Trumpeter Swans this summer at Oregon’s Summer Lake Wildlife Area.



Right: The film includes Yellowstone National Park’s first nesting pair at Swan Lake since 1966. All photos are “screen grabs” from the film.



Helping swans through the North American Swan Fund

Thanks to past and current donations to the Society's North American Swan Fund, since 2000 the Society has funded nearly \$70,000 for swan research, habitat conservation and education.

The North American Swan Fund was established in 1991 through the initiative and benevolence of Jim King (pg. 5) and Bob Ritchie. In Jim King's book, *Attending Alaska Birds*, he writes, "I provided Juneau attorney, Greg Cook, with information about geese on the Yukon Delta that helped him build a legal case about enforcement of migratory bird hunting regulations. When he won he shared a portion of the substantial fee he was awarded with me. I used this to make a \$5,000 donation to TTSS to establish an endowed fund to support swan research. Bob Ritchie of Alaska Biological Research Inc. (ABR) contributed an equal amount under his policy of matching such donations by his employees."

The North American Swan Fund has grown from an initial \$10,000 from Jim King and Bob Ritchie to \$178,000 from contributions from members since 1991. In 2000, the fund was transferred to the Minneapolis Foundation to be managed as a permanent endowment.

Under the endowment terms, the Society can withdraw interest for research, habitat and education projects.

The North American Swan Fund has helped fund graduate student swan research projects in Wyoming, Idaho, Montana, Nebraska and Washington. It also helped fund Minnesota's swan count for the 2015 North American Trumpeter Swan Population Survey (and will help fund the 2020 North American survey).

A variety of other projects funded include swan genetic research, cygnet behavior, GSM swan tracking, and habitat conservation in several states.

Funding these valuable projects is only possible through the generous support of members like you. There is so much more we can do for Trumpeter Swans through your generous gift to the North American Swan Fund today. Please consider a gift to the North American Swan Fund to invest today and assure the vitality and welfare of wild Trumpeter Swans for the next generation. ♦



Above: Two recent projects receiving funding through the Society's North American Swan Fund include Iowa's "Track a Trumpeter" project and swan habitat protection on Washington's Long Beach Peninsula. Photo left: Margaret Smith. Photo right: Columbia Land Trust

Other ways you can help swans

You make thoughtful decisions about your charitable giving. You research your options, consider your capacity to give, and chose an organization with a mission you believe in with sound governance to put your hard-earned gift to work. That’s why you and so many others have chosen to give to TTSS. Your thoughtful contributions work to assure the vitality and welfare of wild Trumpeter Swans. There are more options to give while enhancing your tax deductions.*



Drawing by Walter Breckenridge

A DONATION FROM YOUR IRA: If you are age 70½ or older, you can make a gift up to \$100,000 directly from your IRA each year. A married couple can make a gift up to \$200,000. An IRA gift will count against your Mandatory Minimum Distribution from your retirement account and won’t go toward your Adjusted Gross Income.

And it’s easy to do. Just tell your IRA plan administrator that you want to make a gift from your IRA to TTSS. They will send us a check and then report that gift as counting against your IRS required annual distribution.

APPRECIATED STOCK GIFTS: Your gift of an appreciated asset, often stock or mutual fund shares, is a valuable way to make a contribution to TTSS. By giving appreciated assets, you can reduce capital gains taxes on the appreciation and receive the current tax deduction on the full value of the gift.

CONSIDER A PLANNED GIFT: A gift through your will, trust or life insurance policy allows you to continue to protect the beauty you love. Your planned gift allows you to decide what your legacy will be and your impact on the future of what you value today.

We advise you to consult your attorney or a tax professional about how tax benefits may apply to your specific situation. **The Trumpeter Swan Society’s tax identification number is 23-7220654. Call us for more information.*

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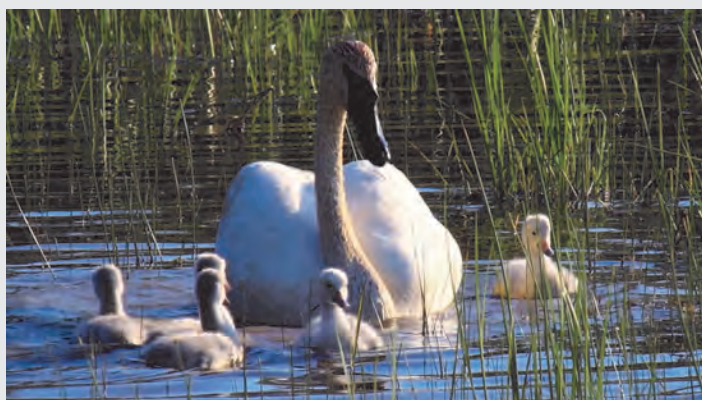
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For all you do for Trumpeter Swans, thank you!

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Please consider a gift to TTSS through your will, trust, retirement account or life insurance. Together we can protect the beauty we love.

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