



*Mute Swans were tagged during a two-year research study on their eating habits in Fulton and Tazewell Counties, Illinois.*

*Photos submitted by Mike Eichholz.*



negatively impact the leaves of the vegetation.

We also estimated the influence of the Mute Swan's aggressive behavior on migratory waterfowl that use the wetlands during spring migration. Aggressive behavior toward other species of waterfowl during spring, prior to breeding was minimal; however, aggressive behavior increased when swans started breeding. During breeding, swans excluded other species of waterfowl from their territory. Although it is unlikely Mute Swans impact species of migratory waterfowl in spring, they likely negatively impact waterfowl attempting to breed in the region and would poten-

tially prevent native Trumpeter Swans from breeding successfully in the region.

Our study shows that Mute Swans are beginning to negatively impact the submersed aquatic vegetation at Banner Marsh and Spring Lake, and that continued grazing at the current intensity will likely reduce submersed aquatic vegetation at a level where productivity of the wetlands is reduced. Additionally, because Mute Swans will likely be the first to estab-

lish territories, it's possible the species will prevent the establishment of breeding Trumpeter Swans in areas where the Mute Swans are abundant.

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