

Illinois' first breeding Trumpeter Swans in modern times, with comments on national and Midwestern reintroduction programs

By Sheryl DeVore and Eric Walters

The magnificent Trumpeter Swan, "the largest of all North American wildfowl, belongs to a vanishing race; though once common throughout all of the central and northern portions of the continent, it has been gradually receding before the advance of civilization and agriculture. . ."

Arthur Cleveland Bent, 1925



Before sunrise 29 May 2006, Eric Walters was moments away from stepping into the dawning of a new day for Trumpeter Swans (*Cygnus buccinator*) in Illinois. As he slowly drove over the Route 84 railroad bridge at Savanna in Carroll County, he noted two Trumpeter Swans with one sitting on top of an abandoned muskrat lodge. There were four eggs on the nest, confirming that the first Illinois Trumpeter Swan nesting in modern times was under way.

A Trumpeter Swan at its nest, at Savanna in Carroll County. 29 May 2006. This swan and its mate produced the first cygnets in the wild in Illinois in modern time.

Photos by Eric Walters.