

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service continent-wide survey data from 2005 indicate that all three Trumpeter populations (Pacific Coast, Rocky Mountain, and Interior) are doing well with 34,000 counted between May 2005 and January 2006 (Moser 2006). A U. S. Fish & Wildlife Service graphic shows the increase in Trumpeter Swan numbers from 1968 to 2006, with the largest increase in the Pacific Coast Population. (See Figure 1.)

Successes

Minnesota has now established at least 15 pairs of nesting swans in the western part of the state and now is working in southern Minnesota. (Matteson et al. 1995). In 1995, 11 pairs of Trumpeter Swans were nesting in Wisconsin (Matteson et al. 1995). Today the population of Trumpeter Swans in Wisconsin is estimated to include 96 breeding pairs among more than 500 individuals (Matteson, pers. comm.).

In 2000, researchers counted more than 400 individual Trumpeter Swans in Michigan. In a 2005 survey, researchers counted 728 Trumpeter Swans including 188 cygnets statewide in Michigan. (www.michigan.gov).

Until 1988, the last wild nesting trumpeter in Iowa occurred in 1883 on the Twin Lakes Wildlife Area southwest of Belmond, Iowa in Hancock County (www.iowagov). Three cygnets hatched from a wild pair in Dubuque County in 1998, with the pair hatching 5 in 1999 and again in 2000. A second pair nested on a Winnebago County Conservation Board wetland in Iowa and produced 5 eggs, none of which hatched. The Iowa DNR added a sixth viable egg to the nest, which hatched and bonded the pair to the site.

The Ohio Department of Natural Resources also began a restoration program, resulting in at least 16 breeding pairs, with nearly all hatching young. (www.dnr.state.oh.us/wildlife/resources/projects/swanup-

[date.htm](#) — Retrieved 10 June 2007) The Ohio DNR said trumpeters historically nested in marshes along the Detroit River and at the entrance to Lake Erie in Ohio, though Whan (2000) remains convinced no Trumpeters ever bred in the state.

The Illinois Department of Natural Resources has had no official Trumpeter Swan reintroduction program. However, for the first time since raising swans at Brookfield and Lincoln Park Zoos to be released in other states, a team of zoo keepers from these two zoos helped release two swans right here in the prairie state. On 30 April 2007, they placed the swans at Johnson Sauk Trail State Park, a 1,365-acre wildlife reserve 40 miles southeast of the Quad Cities. Brookfield Zoo and Lincoln Park Zoo have released 10 and 29 birds respectively into the wild in Iowa (Brookfield Zoo 2007, Gregory 2007).

The future

Though the future looks bright for the Trumpeter Swan in the Midwest and Illinois, threats continue to plague restoration efforts. Loss of wetland habitat is certainly an issue, and these breeding grounds will have to be preserved and restored if the swans are to continue thriving.

Lead poisoning, however, "looms as the single greatest threat to the reestablishment of Trumpeter Swans in the Midwest," wrote Matteson et al. (1995). A nationwide ban of lead shot occurred in 1991, but lead is still found in wetlands where swans nest. The swans eat grit to aid digestion, and in the process often swallow lead shot. As of late April 2005, the total count of documented mortality from lead poisoning to swans in Washington State, British Columbia and Canada is 1,900 swans, with 97% of the swans Trumpeters and the rest Tundra Swans, according to the Trumpeter Swan Society, founded in 1968. For more information, visit The Trumpeter Swan Society at www.trumpeterswansociety.org.

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