



THE STILT

BRIDGERLAND AUDUBON SOCIETY

NOV/DEC '86

NOVEMBER AND DECEMBER MEETINGS AND FIELD TRIPS

Wednesday, Nov. 5 -- Audubon star gazing. Meet at the rest area on U.S. 89 south of the Logan Country Club golf course for a look at the autumn night sky. Meet at 7:15 to catch a glimpse of the crescent moon before it sets, then a general tour of the evening sky--the North Star, major constellations and visible planets. Bring binoculars and spotting scopes with tripods if available. Trip leader: Bill Lowery.

Thursday, Nov. 13 -- BAS monthly meeting at 7:30 p.m. in the Logan Library. USU Wildlife Professor Barrie Gilbert will discuss bear-human encounters in his talk titled "Bears, Biologists and Bureaucrats."

Wednesday, Nov. 19 -- BAS planning meeting at 7:30 p.m. at Chuck and Nancy Warner's home, 2045 N. 800 E., North Logan.

Saturday, Nov. 22 -- Field Trip 9 a.m. - noon. A visit to some of the more successful bird feeding stations in and about Logan to get good views of winter birds and tips on how best to attract birds. Leave at 9 a.m. from the corner of 100 East 100 North. Wear warm clothes, but most observations will be from indoors. Carpooling available.

Wednesday, Dec. 17 -- BAS planning meeting at Jillyn Smith's home, 316 N. 400 E., Logan. Meet at 6 p.m. for meeting, followed by pot luck get together.

Saturday, Dec. 20 -- Annual Christmas Bird Count - contact Keith Archibald at 752-8258 for details and information.

EDITOR'S NOTE

The Stilt will not be published again until January 1987 and for that reason, a number of December meetings are included in this issue. The reason to not publish a newsletter in December was made at the September planning meeting and it is hoped that this extra month off will allow the editor to have the next *Stilt* in everyone's mailbox early in the year.

If there were any meetings or previously scheduled events not published in this issue, please let me know so I can possibly avoid any repeat performances in future newsletters.

The deadline for publication in the January 1987 *Stilt* is Thursday, December 18.

REQUEST FOR ASSISTANCE

Trumpeter Swan winter habitat in Montana, Idaho, and Wyoming (the tri-state area) is currently being used to its capacity. It is thought that pioneering birds may be moving to or through Utah in search of new winter habitat. Trumpeter swans were collared during the summer of 1986 in the Northwest Territories, Canada, as part of a study of the migratory route and habitat utilization by this threatened species. The plastic collars are bright red with white inscriptions. If you observe one of these birds,

collared or uncollared, please note the following information:

- The number and/or letter on the collar
- Date and location of sighting
- Presence and number of other swans (uncollared Trumpeter swans or Tundra swans)
- Observer's name and address

Attached is a swan identification guide to aid in recognition. Please report observations to:

Ed Sparks
Dept. of Fisheries and Wildlife
Utah State University
Logan, UT 84322-5210

(801) 750-2588 Day
(801) 752-2242 Night

THIRTY-EIGHT AUDUBONERS ENJOYED TETON WEEKEND

The ten days of cold, rainy weather in late September made the prospects for a trip to the Tetons look dim. It took Bob Welti's cheery forecasts for return of Indian Summer to firm up my resolves to go through with the trip. It turned out clear and crisp as we made our rendezvous at Gros Vente Campground in the park Friday evening--with people as far away as Salt Lake City, Boise, and Wisconsin.

Saturday morning we spent on the ranch of world-famous wilderness proponent Mardy Murie. Highlights of the morning were watching a pine marten feeding on the feeding tray of a cabin where we could photograph it from only 20 feet away. This rather elusive member of the weasel family is rarely seen elsewhere in the Park.

Later we discovered the remains of a carcass that I thought was that of a moose, but more alert member Cindy Krebs and others spotted the elk's famous canine teeth (coveted by members of The Elk's Lodge). Within 40 feet of the carcass were at least 20 piles of black bear scat. The ground had been turned over. I learned later that bears will cover their kill with dirt and branches. And black bears often stay right with the kill to prevent coyotes from stealing the food. Along the Snake River we spotted tracks of moose, elk, deer, otter, mink and muskrat in the mud and sand left by the dropping water level.

Saturday evening we drove to a vast open meadow where we heard a constant chorus of elk bugling, each with its own distinctive form of bugle. We saw a large bull with 8 cows be displaced by a stronger bull. The latter ran across the meadow without hesitation as though it knew already what the outcome would be.

Sunday morning we hiked through the year-old Taggart Lake burn area and saw the remarkable recovery of both trees and wildflowers in that short time.

As much as anything the group enjoyed the fellowship around the fire and at meals. You missed a great experience. Put this on your calendar for 1987--the first weekend in October.

Allen Stokes

REPORT ON MY LAST MEETING AS BOARD MEMBER AT NATIONAL AUDUBON SOCIETY, WINNIPEG, CANADA, September 18-21

The National Audubon Society's board and staff like to hold their meetings in places with pressing environmental problems or issues. We chose Winnipeg to foster ties with Ducks Unlimited, the organization that is doing so much to purchase critical waterfowl nesting grounds throughout the Prairie Provinces of Canada. In addition we felt it critical to build stronger ties with our counterpart environmental groups in Canada. We achieved both these goals through meetings and field trips.

We learned of the plans for mammoth development of hydroelectric dams on the rivers draining into James Bay. In addition plans call for a 100-mile long dike across the mouth of James Bay to separate it from Hudson's Bay. This great fresh water lake would then be used to drain water southward and also to build a shipping canal linking Hudson's Bay with the St. Lawrence Seaway. These projects would have tremendous impact upon the countless water birds using James Bay for feeding and nesting. The ticklish question was how the United States could enter into a look at the environmental impacts. This is of course what Canada has faced vis-a-vis acid rain production in the United States, and the threat of discharging Missouri River waters into Canada's Red River, thus introducing many new plant and animal species that could be inimical to Canada's endemic plant and animal life.

Probably the most exciting presentation was Audubon's very strong resolution to do something to preserve water in the Platte River in Nebraska to preserve the critical staging and feeding areas for a quarter million sandhill cranes in spring.

With 70% of the water of Platte River already spoken for it will be a tremendous job to see that the remaining water be allowed to remain in the river itself. It will take this much water to maintain the many gravel bars in the Platte River as places for the cranes to roost safely. If Audubon decided to undertake this, it will involve staff from our legal, scientific, regional, education, and president's offices. President Peter Berle said this project would unite the entire Audubon staff in a way that has been lacking recently. The NAS Board was solidly behind this proposal provided we can handle the cost. That will be decided at the November board meeting.

This was my final meeting after six years. I have met

many fine people, yet I confess that I have always gotten more satisfaction from involvement with Bridgerland Audubon with the more frequent contacts and being able to work on projects in a hands-on way.

The National Audubon Society needs the endorsement of its work from its chapters. Peter Berle will be sending every chapter president periodic reports on the activities of the Society as one way to keep chapters and members aware of what is happening.

Allen Stokes

BEGINNING BIRDERS

On October 11, about 15 of us braved the wind and early morning hour to learn about how to get started birding. We talked about which field guides were best, which binoculars were best, which birds live here, and how to get birds to come to bird feeders. Then we trekked over to my house to see what kind of cooperative dicky birds might be available for viewing. The winter feeding season is not in full swing yet, but we did find dark-eyed juncos, house finches, black-capped chickadees, cedar waxwings, and a white-crowned sparrow.

Are you a fledgling birder? You may want some pointers on how to keep up with the pack on field trips or want to figure out how to identify birds that show up at your feeder. If so, give me a call and we'll do another session. (Alice Lindahl - 753-7744)

SPEAK UP FOR TREES

If you are like me, you like trees and take them for granted. They provide habitat for birds, protection from summer sun, soften our landscape, and seem eternal on a human time scale.

Imagine my shock last spring when I found out that Logan City was planning to remove all 30 Norway Maples on my street (Hillcrest Avenue) in order to fix the sidewalk. Give me a break! It takes one day to repair a sidewalk crack and half a lifetime to grow a big beautiful tree. The city insists that this is a cost-saving measure. It's cheaper to destroy the trees and make the sidewalks last longer, a questionable assertion at best.

Some towns in Cache Valley, notably Wellsville, have a strong commitment to street shade trees. Unhappily, Logan is not in this group, despite winning a "Tree City U.S.A." award from the Arbor Day Foundation in 1983. You may have noticed the "Tree City USA" sign as you enter Logan from the south, and the flag that is proudly flown at the new Logan City office building. The Arbor Day Foundation requires that its Tree Cities have a Shade Tree Commission made up of persons whose sole interest is the advocacy of trees: their planting, replacement, and arbitration of disputes concerning their removal. No tree board exist, and Logan fails to meet the three other requirements stipulated by the Arbor Day Foundation.

Had such a board been in place this summer, the

Hillcrest would have had a fair hearing. Today they are gone, with a low probability that they will ever be replaced.

Current policy places all city-owned trees (on parking strips in parks) under the control of the street department, whose mission is to get repair jobs done as cheaply as possible, with no citizen input. It is obviously that trees will always be the losers under this arrangement. Sixty to eighty trees are removed every year at taxpayer expense. They are not replaced. If the street department met the requirement of the city ordinance: that homeowners pay for the removal of trees in front of their homes, you can bet that far fewer would see the bulldozers' teeth.

If you would like to do something to help trees in Logan, now is the time. You can write to the state forester, who awarded Logan the "Tree City" status, and ask that Logan's application be reviewed. He has agreed to take action if he gets letters from citizens.

You can also call or write Logan City councilmen and the mayor to say that you would like to see an independent tree board set up to act as an advocate for trees. Be sure to stress that citizens should be on this board, not just employees of the street department and city. Let them know that you think trees are important, and should not be sacrificed for the saving of a few pennies. Logan City is in dire straits financially now, but it isn't for squandering money on beautification of the town!

Your voice/letter really can make a difference. If you would like some more information or encouragement to talk to these folks, please call me. Here are the names mentioned in this article:

Steve Hansen, Utah State Forester
3100 State Office Building
Salt Lake City, Utah 84111
(801) 538-5508

LOGAN CITY COUNCIL

Loye Martindale, chairman 752-1979
Thad Carlson 752-1680
Lynn Bracken 752-4858
Fred Duersch 752-7618
Claude Burtenshaw 752-6891

LOGAN CITY MAYOR

Newel Daines 752-3060

Your Conservation Committee is interested in preserving and improving our urban environment. If you have ideas of how to improve our local surroundings, or have a problem in your neighborhood, let's get together to work on solutions. As a group we have a much better chance to get things done.

Alice Lindahl

LETTER FROM BAS PRESIDENT

Activities at Bridgerland Audubon Society are back

into full swing after a summer break. Publication of the *Still* has once again commenced, the first monthly meeting was well-attended, and the first planning meeting was held in September.

Despite the lack of regularly scheduled activities this summer, BAS members were very active during this period. In fact, for several members, the summer was not much of a break. The Conservation Committee was active in planning and finally co-hosting a workshop on land use planning, following the developments concerning proposed dams on the Bear River, construction in Logan Canyon, and urging members to meet the deadline to submit comments to the BLM on wilderness.

The Education Committee was developing a trail guide for the Riverside Trail in Logan Canyon. An Ad hoc Committee planned and successfully hosted the fall Utah Audubon Council meeting, and field trips too numerous to mention here, were conducted with their usual excellence and were generally well attended.

As president of BAS, it is heartening to see so much diverse activity. It continues to amaze me the energy and enthusiasm with which members conduct these activities and the wide scope of involvement.

Within any volunteer organization there is rarely a surplus of people contributing their time and energy. With BAS, this axiom unfortunately holds true despite all the activities conducted by the group.

I am urging all BAS members who have an inkling of interest to become involved in some of the activities of this wonderful organization. Opportunities abound in the areas of conservation, education, and field trips, and volunteers are always needed for other activities. A few hours here and there can do wonders. The sky is the limit if you want it to be.

Anyone interested can contact any of the committee members of BAS officers for more information. With a steady flow of new volunteers, we can maintain BAS as one of the premier chapters in the Rocky Mountain Region. And there is always the by-products of meeting and working with some exceptional people, the satisfaction of a job well done and the joy in helping others.

Ron Ryel

NEW MEMBER OF BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Larry Ryel is the newest member of Bridgerland Audubon's Board of Directors. He has generously volunteered to replace the departing Peter Landress who recently accepted a position at the University of Montana.

Larry is a newcomer to Cache Valley having moved here from Michigan. He is no newcomer to Audubon, however, having been active in the Michigan Audubon Society.

Larry is an avid birder having recorded about 670 species in the U.S. and Canada, and over 1600 species

in the world. He also enjoys hiking, backpacking, hunting and canoeing. Two years ago Larry retired from the Michigan Department of Natural Resources where he spent more than 30 years as a game biologist. He was also in charge of the Kirtland's warbler census for several years and a member of the recovery team for the endangered warbler.

We welcome Larry to Bridgerland Audubon.

Ron Ryel

ABOUT BOOKS

For the second year Bridgerland Audubon Society will donate six books dealing with an aspect of the natural history to the Logan Library. Last year's selections included some titles especially for children such as Terry Tempest Williams' *Between Cattails* and others primarily for adults such as *Audubon's Field Guide to the Desert* by James A. MacMahon. BAS members wanting to recommend a specific book to be donated this year may contact Charlotte Wright (750-1603) or Nancy Warner (752-7435).

HELP

The BAS Education Committee is searching for a few specific color slides for use in our slide/tape natural history programs. Below is a partial list of the slides needed:

- Indian ricegrass plant
- Hummingbird visiting red or yellow tubular flower
- mule deer running with tail up
- mule deer winter range in fall color
- deer hunters
- mountainous winter scene
- deer in urban setting
- panarama of Cache Valley
- muskrat
- Canada goose
- children collecting trash along river

Please contact Nancy Warner or Tom Cronkite if you have and are willing to donate a copy of any slides.

UTAH AUDUBON COUNCIL MEETING

On October 11, the Bridgerland Audubon Society sponsored the Utah Audubon Council meeting at Hyrum City Park. The UAC meetings are held twice each year for sharing information with other Audubon chapters in Utah, as well as getting acquainted with new officers and others with similar interests.

We are disappointed that the Utah Audubon Society from Salt Lake City (Utah's largest chapter) was unable to send any representatives, but also pleasantly surprised to meet Utah County representative John Stevens. He came to get an idea of how BAS is able to operate so successfully and to inform us of recent efforts to reinstate the defunct Audubon Chapter in Utah County. It would certainly be helpful to Audubon to have a viable chapter in that part of the state.

The keynote speaker, Mr. Paul Summers, Assistant Director for the Division of Water Resources, gave, in my opinion, a very candid presentation on the current status of five dams proposed for Cache Valley. If you are interested in these projects contact the BAS Conservation Committee.

An afternoon field trip to look at local stream ecology was led by Professor Chuck Hawkins, aquatic ecologist in the Department of Fisheries and Wildlife at USU. He explained some of the potential impacts the proposed Mill Creek Reservoir would cause to the stream below the reservoir.

Thanks and congratulations are due for each of the participants in the meeting, especially for those that gave presentations. The next Audubon Council meeting will be in the spring of 1987 and will be hosted by the Wasatch Audubon Society in Ogden. I strongly encourage BAS members to plan to attend. Sometimes these joint meetings can be the best way to find out in a hurry what your own chapter is doing in addition to other chapters in Utah.

Chuck Warner

LOGAN CANYON U.S. 89 STUDY

As most of you have probably heard, the Utah Department of Transportation (UDOT) has hired the consulting firm CH₂M Hill to conduct a study on the Logan Canyon highway. A public meeting was held in late September to familiarize the public with the initial findings and to get public input. Alternatives will be selected and presented to the public.

Initial Findings:

Bridges -- According to UDOT, three of the bridges in the canyon are becoming structurally unsafe and will need to be replaced if the highway is to remain open.

Highway use -- Summer (June - August) traffic is increasing at about 2% per year. At no other time of year is there any indication of an increase in traffic; in fact, on an annual basis, there is also absolutely no indication of an increase in traffic. During the public meeting the consultants failed to make this important distinction and this resulted in confusion.

Safety -- Accident data for the past six years shows

only a few locations having significant concentrations of accidents. Again, on this issue, there was considerable confusion at the public meeting. The consultants used some data, provided by UDOT, which suggested that portions of the canyon had high accident rates. We found so many errors in this data that it had to be discarded; in fact we suspect UDOT's accident data for the entire state may be riddled with errors. Because of this, it is not possible to compare the Logan Canyon highway with other highways regarding accidents.

Clearly, the initial findings do not suggest any need for major modifications to the highway.

The Forest Plan and the Highway

The recently adopted Forest Plan governs what can be done to the highway in Logan Canyon. The plan recommends that the Logan Canyon highway receive scenic highway designation. It also contains provisions to protect the aesthetic values of the canyon and the riparian habitat. (The highway will not be permitted to infringe upon the river; road cuts into forested hillsides will be sharply restricted, and all mitigation (revegetation) must be completed within one year.)

Comments

Your comments are needed to let the consultants know how you feel about Logan Canyon. In this way your concerns can be reflected in the alternatives which are proposed.

Send your comments now to: CH₂M Hill/ P.O. Box 2218/ Salt Lake City, UT 84101/ Att: Cliff Forsgren.

You may want to support:

1. Designating the canyon as a scenic highway.
2. The provisions of the Forest Plan which protect the special scenic areas and the riparian habitat of Logan Canyon.

Be sure to include your personal feelings about the canyon, and mention the lack of data showing a need for major modifications to the highway. The necessary work - replacing bridges and correcting safety problems - can be carried out within the guidelines of the Forest Plan.

You can be sure that a vocal minority will submit comments seeking to repeal the guidelines of the Forest Plan. They will expect to see major modifications to the highway just to save a few seconds in travel time between Logan and Bear Lake.

If you have questions or would like more information (I have all the draft technical memorandums), call me at 752-9102 (evenings).

Steve Flint

National Audubon Society

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

How Do I Join?

(We thought you would never ask.) Just complete the following application and enclose a check for the amount for the appropriate type of membership. Send it to:

BRIDGERLAND AUDUBON SOCIETY
 P.O. Box 3501
 Logan, Utah 84321

Check membership category desired.

- Individual / \$30 (H)
- Family / \$38 (J)
- Student / \$18 (K)
- Senior Citizen Individual / \$21 (N)
- Senior Citizen Family / \$23 (P)
- Please bill me Check enclosed

Name _____
 Address _____
 City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Nonprofit Organization
 BULK RATE
 U.S. Postage
 PAID
 Permit No. 104
 Logan, Utah

The Bridgerland Audubon Society meets the second Thursday of each month, October through May, in the Council Room of the new Logan City Building, 255 North Main. Meetings start at 7:30 pm.

President

Vice-President

Secretary

Treasurer

Conservation

Education

Membership

Field Trips

Newsletter

Circulation

Publicity

Hospitality

Board of Directors

- Ron Ryel, 753-6077 (home)
- 752-2580 (office)
- Tom Gordon, 752-6561
- Jillyn Smith, 750-1359
- Betty Boeker, 752-8092
- Bruce Pendery, 753-1628
- Tom Cronkite, 752-0518
- Al Stokes, 752-2702
- Al Stokes, 752-2702
- Charlotte Wright, 753-8072
- Liz Keller, 753-3294
- John Wise, 245-4127
- Wendell Anderson, 752-1827
- Terry Barnes, 563-3910
- John Barnes, 563-3910
- Peter Landress, 752-7692
- Jon Wrath, 752-0743

Membership in the Bridgerland Audubon Society includes a subscription to *The Still*, as well as to *Audubon* magazine.

The editor of *The Still* invites submissions of any kind, due on the 18th of each month. Send to Box 3501 / Logan, UT 84321.

PRINTED ON RECYCLED PAPER

Bridgerland Audubon Society
 P.O. Box 3501
 Logan, Utah 84321

Dated Material - Please Deliver Promptly

MAE COOVER
 OR CURRENT RESIDENT
 275 W 1050 N
 LOGAN, UT
 84321
 2/87

SWAN IDENTIFICATION

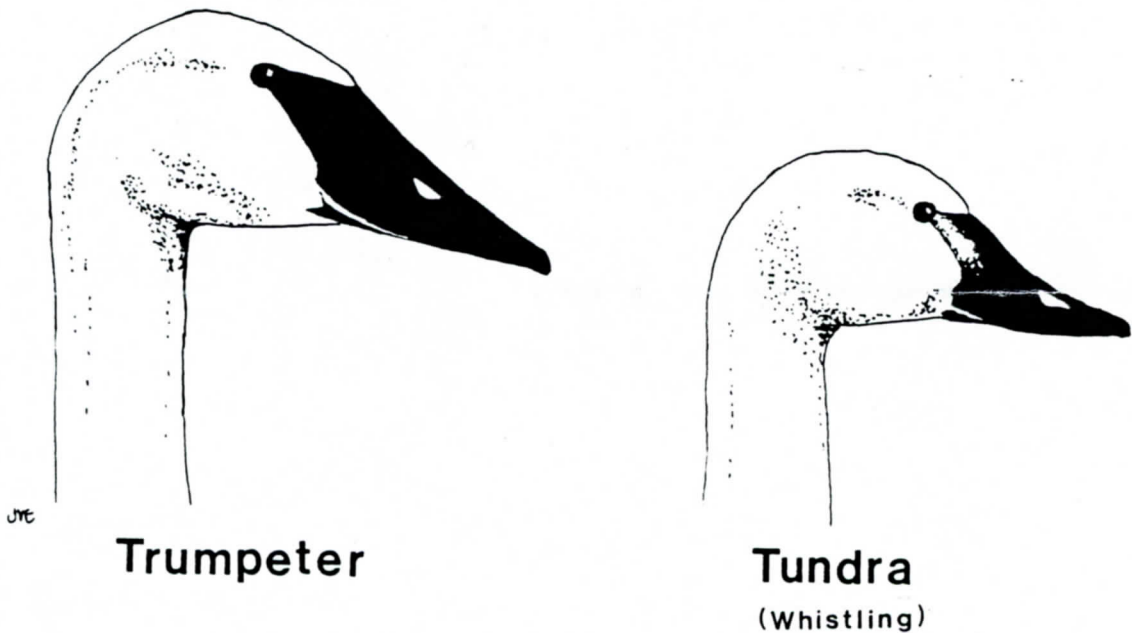
Trumpeter or Tundra (Whistler)?

--- It's important to know

Reports from wildlife observers can help biologists monitor the recovery of trumpeter swans. Positive identification is essential, as trumpeters often mix with the relatively common tundra (whistling) swans in larger flocks throughout their winter range. Distinguishing trumpeters from tundras is not easy, but it is possible by paying close attention to a few distinctive characteristics.

HERE ARE THE BEST WAYS TO SPOT DIFFERENCES BETWEEN THE TWO SPECIES.

HEAD PROFILES



BILL COLOR

TUNDRA--black bill, usually with yellow spot of varying size in front of eye, this spot may be absent on some tundras

TRUMPETER--black bill with red border on lower mandible, the red border may be present on some tundras

HEAD and BILL SHAPE

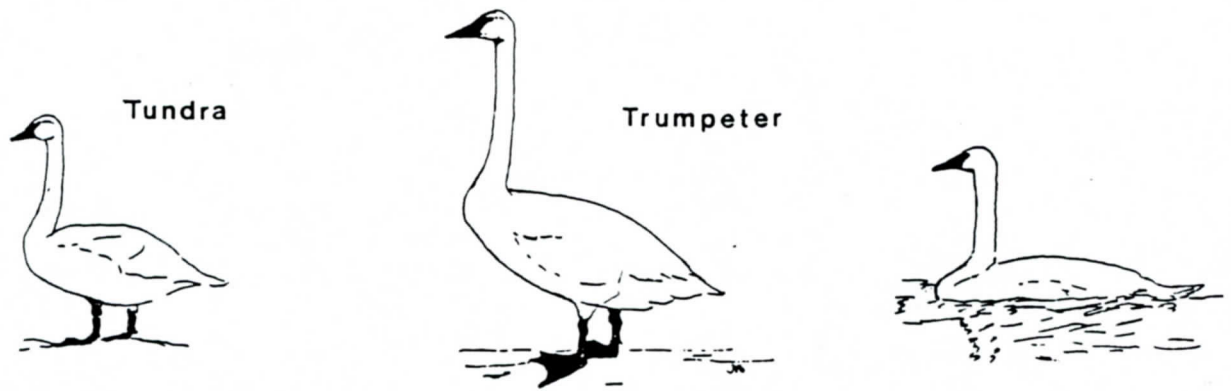
TUNDRA--bill more dish-shaped in profile, bill smaller in proportion to head compared to trumpeter. Head smoothly rounded, eye usually distinct from bill.

TRUMPETER--bill heavy in proportion to head with a straight profile. Angular head shape somewhat resembling canvasback duck. Eye not distinct from bill.

VOICE An absolute method of species identification.

TUNDRA (whistling)—high pitched, often quavering OO-OO-OO accentuated in the middle; or WHO-HO, WOO-HO; WOO-OO-WOO; or WHO-WHO.

TRUMPETER—resonant, sonorous, loud, low pitched, bugle-like call.



Trumpeters, afloat or ashore, resting or in mild state of alertness, generally have the neck kinked back at the base so that it appears to rise from the forepart of the back forming an angular C shape (swimming swan) rather than from the very front of the body as in tundra swans. When in a state of alertness, trumpeters hold their bodies at an angle as compared to tundras which are held horizontal (standing swans). In general, body postures of trumpeters are angular and tundra postures are curved or round.

JUVENILE IDENTIFICATION

Juvenile swans have a gray body coloration. Their bills are black at the tip and base with pink in the middle. From late December on juvenile trumpeters are usually much darker and duller gray than juvenile tundras. The bill color late in the season gradually fades to black in both species.

FLIGHT PROFILES



Note the differences in size and color between swans and snow geese. Swans are large all white (adult) or gray (juvenile) birds with a wing span of 6 to 8 feet. Snow geese of all ages have black wing tips and a wing span of about 3 feet.

NOTE: Swans are sensitive to human intrusion, so stay in your vehicle while observing them.

Report swan sightings to the appropriate state contact listed below:

WASHINGTON: The Trumpeter Swan Project, Martha Jordan, P.O. Box 2602, Lynnwood, WA 98036. Phone: (206) 334-7720 or 568-9369.

OREGON: Dave Paullin, P.O. Box 1041, Burns, OR 97720. Phone: (503) 573-2026 or 573-7043.