

## Remember to view wildlife at a respectful distance!

It is important to remember that the trumpeter swan is a wild species and should not be disturbed. By getting too close we can unknowingly disturb a nesting site or cause a bird to abandon a location. We are excited that you are excited about these birds, so help us keep them safe!

### Trumpeter Swan Facts

- Males (cobs) - 21-34 pounds
- Females (pens) - 20-25 pounds
- Wingspan – 84-96 inches
- Long-lived - wild swan record 24 years  
- captive record 32 years
- Feed primarily upon wetland vegetation
- Generally believed to mate for life
- Clutch size - 3-8 eggs
- Young swans are called cygnets



Photo by John Jarvis, Montana Waterfowl Foundation

“The programmatic mission of the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes Wildlife Management Program is to protect, enhance and manage wildlife resources and wildlife habitats to provide for viable populations of all wildlife species present on the Flathead Indian Reservation.”

### For more information or to report a dead trumpeter swan contact:

CSKT Wildlife Management  
[wildlife@cskt.org](mailto:wildlife@cskt.org)  
(406) 675-2700

#### Project Partners

Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes  
Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks  
U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service  
Wyoming Wetland Society  
Montana Waterfowl Foundation  
Glacier National Park  
Mission Valley Power  
Summerlee Foundation  
Canadian Wildlife Service  
Friends of Elk Island Society  
National Fish and Wildlife Foundation  
Liz Claiborne-Art Ortenburg Foundation  
Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife  
Lower Flathead Valley Community  
Foundation  
Local Landowners and Citizens

Confederated Salish & Kootenai  
Tribes  
Tribal Wildlife Management Program

P.O. Box 278  
Pablo, MT 59855  
(406) 883-2888



A People of Vision



DIVISION OF FISH, WILDLIFE,  
RECREATION & CONSERVATION

## Trumpeter Swan Reintroduction on the Flathead Indian Reservation



Photo by CSKT Wildlife Management Program

### History

Trumpeter Swans (*Cygnus-buccinator*) were likely a common bird in the pre-settlement wetlands of western Montana. Several early observations documented them here during the summer breeding season. Trumpeters were extirpated in much of the northern United States, including the Flathead Valley, by the late 1800's due to habitat and land use changes, subsistence hunting, and market hunting.

Conservation and restoration efforts are now helping them to return to northwestern Montana.

# Trumpeter Swan



The trumpeter swan (*Cygnus buccinator*) is the largest species of migratory waterfowl in the world. At the time of European arrival in North America, the species existed throughout much of the northern half of the United States, across most of Canada, and in Alaska.

Trumpeter Swans from northern Canada migrate south through the Flathead River drainage each year in November and then back northward in March and April. Local swans migrate from northwestern Montana and primarily over-winter on the lower Flathead River, although local swans have migrated as far as southern Idaho and northwestern Colorado. In 2017, 140 Trumpeter Swans wintered on the Reservation, and that number has been increasing.

## Restoration and Nesting



The Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes, along with Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks and the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service and other partners, began to reintroduce captive-raised Trumpeter Swans on the Flathead Indian Reservation in the mid-1990s. Since then, the Tribal Wildlife Management Program has released 268 swans at the Flathead Indian Reservation. Nesting Trumpeter Swans were documented in 2004 after an absence of perhaps more than 100 years. The local population on the Reservation and elsewhere in northwestern Montana has grown steadily since then. At least 155 nesting attempts have produced a minimum of 421 fledged Trumpeter Swan cygnets in the area.



Photo by John Jarvis, Montana Waterfowl Foundation



Photo by John Jarvis, Montana Waterfowl Foundation

## Problem-Solving

Local Trumpeter swans are sometimes killed by colliding with overhead power lines. The Tribal Wildlife Management Program works cooperatively with Mission Valley Power to mark lines in areas often used by Trumpeter Swans.



To date, these efforts have helped to reduce collisions with lines in some areas. Illegal killing of swans and lead poisoning are causes of mortality elsewhere, but they don't seem to be significant issues locally.