

THE TRUMPETER SWAN SOCIETY

Twenty-Forth Conference

“Waterfowl and Agriculture, Working Together”

Quw’ utsun’ Cultural and Conference Centre

Duncan, British Columbia

November 16-18, 2016



24th CONFERENCE of THE TRUMPETER SWAN SOCIETY

WEDNESDAY, 16 NOVEMBER 2016

Quw' utsun' Cultural and Conference Centre

200 Cowichan Way, Duncan, BC

7:30 REGISTRATION

9:00 **OPENING—First Nations Blessing and Welcome**

9:30 ANNOUNCEMENTS

CELEBRATE TRUMPETER SWANS Moderator: Carey Smith

9:45 The Somenos Marsh Wildlife Society from the Friends of Somenos Marsh to Today

Presenter: Paul Fletcher, Somenos Marsh Wildlife Society, Duncan, BC

10:05 Overview and Status of a Documentary on Trumpeter Swan Restoration across North America

Presenter: Steve Harryman, Wildlife America Films LLC, Fruitport, MI

10:35 A Celebration of Swans: Yukon's Premier Birding Festival

Author: Scott Cameron, Yukon Department of Environment, Whitehorse, YT

Presenter: Jim Hawkings, Canadian Wildlife Service (Retired), Whitehorse, YT

10:55 Break

11:10 Trumpeting the Cause for Wetlands: Iowa's Public Outreach Effort

Presenter: David Hoffman, Iowa Department of Natural Resources, Clear Lake, IA

11:30 Migratory Bird Treaty Centennial and Trumpeter Swans

Authors: John Cornely, The Trumpeter Swan Society, Littleton, CO, and David Sharp, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Retired), Littleton, CO

Presenter: John Cornely

11:50 Tribute to the Trumpeter

Presenter: Pamela Roberson, ClearLight/Photography, Bellevue, WA

12:10 LUNCH

TRUMPETER SWAN STATUS

Moderator: Gary Ivey

- 1:00 The 2015 North American Trumpeter Swan Survey
Presenter: Deborah Groves, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Juneau, AK
- 1:20 Delivery of the 2015 North American Trumpeter Swan Survey in Western Canada
Authors: Andre Breault, et al., Canadian Wildlife Service, Delta, BC
Presenter: Andre Breault
- 1:40 Differentiating Sources of Variance in the 2015 North American Trumpeter Swan Survey in Yukon and Northern British Columbia
Authors: Margaret Campbell, et al., Canadian Wildlife Service, Whitehorse, YT
Presenter: Margaret Campbell
- 2:00 Ontario Trumpeter Swan (*Cygnus buccinator*) Status Update and Results of the 2015 North American Trumpeter Swan Survey
Authors: Kyna Intini, et al., Ontario Trumpeter Swan Restoration Team, Dundas, ON
Presenter: Kyna Intini
- 2:20 BREAK**
- 2:40 Status on the Abundance Levels and Trends of the Rocky Mountain Population U.S. Breeding Segment in Relation to the Pacific Flyway Management Plan: Mission Accomplished??
Presenter: David Olson, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Denver, CO
- 3:00 Swan Surveys in the Western United States: Their Crucial Role in Management and Habitat Conservation
Authors: Martha Jordan, Northwest Swan Conservation Association, Mill Creek, WA, and Ruth Shea, Northern Rockies Trumpeter Swan Stewards, Jackson, WY.
Presenter: Martha Jordan
- 3:20 Trumpeter Watch: What Have We Learned and What do we Need to do?
Authors: Jim Dubovsky, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Denver, CO, and John Cornely, The Trumpeter Swan Society, Littleton, CO
Presenter: Jim Dubovsky

SWANS AND AGRICULTURE IN BRITISH COLUMBIA AND WASHINGTON STATE

3:40 Swans Habitat and Dairy Farms in Washington State

Presenter: Jay Gordon, Washington Dairy Association, Elma, WA

4:00 Announcements and end of day 1 presentations

6:00pm Doors Open for Evening Panel

Waterfowl and Agriculture, Working Together: Public Forum & Panel Discussion

Wednesday November 16, 7pm to 10pm

Quw' utsun' Cultural and Conference Centre

Fee: Conference registrants--no charge, General public--by donation, \$5 recommended

Bar service available

Declining winter habitat is becoming a critical issue for the Pacific Coast Population of Trumpeter Swans. The majority of the swan population has become dependent on private farmland where swan-compatible agriculture is rapidly declining. If this trend continues, the swan population could decline. As more and more waterfowl, including swans, graze in farm fields, farmers are being impacted. This forum/panel discussion brings together both Swan experts and waterfowl management experts to discuss these issues with the intent of establishing a process here in the Cowichan Valley to explore solutions to this critical issue for farmers. It promises to be a lively evening with opportunities for points and questions from the floor.

Moderator

Tamara Leigh is a communications consultant, writer and facilitator who specializes in Canadian agriculture. Bringing insights and experience from policy to programs and primary production, Tamara seeks to break down polarities and enrich the understanding and conversation about this industry that feeds us all.

Panel members

Christine Terpsma is the Program Manager for the Delta Farmland & Wildlife Trust, a non-profit based out of Delta, BC. Christine grew up on a local dairy farm, obtained a BSc. in Natural Resource Conservation from UBC, and studied Conservation and Sustainable Agriculture at Bangor University, Wales, UK. She is a Professional Agrologist with the BC Institute of Agrologists.

Graeme Fowler graduated from Sault College, Ont. in the mid 80's with diplomas in Forestry and Fish & Wildlife Technology. Graeme worked for the Great Lake Fisheries Commission in the Sea Lamprey Control unit surveying lamprey populations in the Great Lakes and their tributaries. Graeme relocated to Vancouver Island in 1990 where he began working in the BC forest industry. In 1991 the Canadian Wildlife Service and Ducks Unlimited Canada, under the auspices of the Pacific Coast Joint Venture, offered Graeme a challenge he could not refuse. Local farmers had reached the limit of their tolerance regarding winter waterfowl damage to their forage crops. The primary culprit was ten percent of the World's population of Trumpeter Swans. At that time, the Comox Valley was host to a winter population of 1,000 Trumpeters. Graeme has been working with trumpeter swans in this capacity through the Comox Valley Waterfowl Management Project, a project he has coordinated for over 25 years. The local swan population has tripled over this period of time, yet the Comox Valley remains an attractive and prosperous area to farm. Livestock and forage based farming remain the backbone of large-scale agriculture in the area. Graeme utilizes numerous and diverse agriculture/wildlife management techniques to minimize waterfowl impacts to forage crops. These techniques include the use of trained dogs, pyrotechnics, specialized cropping methods and equipment, preferred crop species selection and modified planting schedules. This list is just a select few of the arsenal of techniques he utilizes but is usually enough to get the barnyard conversation started. Over the past decade Graeme has expanded the scope of his wildlife/agriculture consulting business to address other wildlife species that negatively impact farms on Vancouver Island. In addition, Graeme administers and delivers the BC Provincial Agriculture Wildlife Compensation Program to Vancouver Island farmers on behalf of the BC Ministry of Agriculture. This program compensates farmers for wildlife damage to harvestable yields of forages grown as livestock feed. The 75 island farms participating in the program have registered approximately 10,000 acres of crops eligible for compensation spanning from Victoria to Sayward. Graeme will be happy to discuss agricultural wildlife damage, conflicts, and management techniques with you. He has acquired a unique perspective from *"both sides of the fence"*!

Oliver Balme was born in the Cowichan Valley, raised on and is now running the family dairy farm in Cobble Hill with wife Michele and teenage children Katie and Colin. Milking 115 purebred Ayrshire Dairy Cattle with another 150 young stock on the farm. The farm grows all its own grass and corn feed. Oliver has a degree in Agricultural Production from Olds College and is a past board member of Ayrshire Canada and presently a director for the Cowichan Agricultural Society.

Tom Reid is the manager of the Vancouver Island Conservation Land Management Program which is an innovative partnership program which involves the management of over 110 conservation areas on Vancouver Island, the central coast and Haida Gwaii. These lands are mostly coastal wetlands and estuaries owned by The Nature Trust of British Columbia, Ducks Unlimited Canada and /or managed by the Ministry of Forests, Lands, and Natural Resource Operations. Environment Canada – Canadian Wildlife Service is also a partner of the program.

The program is focused on land management, restoration/enhancement projects, and inventory and habitat securement activities that support the mandates of the partners of the program including goals of the Pacific Birds Habitat Joint Venture and North American Waterfowl Management Plan. Tom has extensive experience working with local agricultural producers in managing areas for waterfowl purposes including over-wintering trumpeter swan habitat. Key areas in the Cowichan Valley include: the Cowichan Estuary and Somenos Marsh.

Dr. Gary Ivey has worked with wildlife for over 35 years, concentrating his work on waterbirds, waterfowl and wetland conservation in the western U.S. He served as a biologist at several western National Wildlife Refuges for 18 years, and has worked for the International Crane Foundation since 2007, serving as their lead for sandhill crane conservation and research in western North America. He studied wintering ecology of sandhill cranes in the agricultural landscape of California for his PhD through Oregon State University. Gary has also worked on Trumpeter Swan conservation for many years. He is a past President of The Trumpeter Swan Society, currently serves on their Board and is their lead on Oregon's Trumpeter Swan Restoration project and the Rocky Mountain Population. Gary is the President of the Friends of Malheur National Wildlife Refuge.

Wayne Haddow graduated from UBC in Agricultural Economics in 1980. Farmed grain, fine seed and beef in the B.C. Peace area. Began working for the B.C Ministry of Agriculture in 1988 in Dawson Creek, moving to the Island in 1990 as a Regional Agrologist. He is currently retired and managing a small apple orchard.

****Note Wayne may be replaced by the new district agrologist- TBA**

THURSDAY, 17 NOVEMBER 2016: 8:30am—5pm

Waterfowl and Agriculture, Working Together—Field Trip

Bus departs from Quw' utsun' Cultural and Conference Centre

Leader: Graeme Fowler, Comox fish and wildlife technologist

Cost: \$30 USD, \$40 CAD includes lunch and refreshments

Bus holds 52 adults. If more sign up for the field trip they may follow in additional vehicles.

We will spend the day visiting local farms with waterfowl issues. We will hear first-hand about the impacts of grazing swans from farmers and hear suggestions from leading experts on how to mitigate these issues with proven practices and new initiatives. While touring we will detour to some of the Trumpeter Swan hot spots where swan fanciers can feast their eyes on the largest waterfowl in the world! Swan numbers will be low as swans are just beginning to arrive

for the winter, but you can be sure a few “early birds” will be settling in. Tour Leader Graeme Fowler, a Vancouver Island expert, regularly deals with waterfowl and farm issues. The tour cost includes a delicious lunch at Vimy Hall provided by the Somenos Womens Institute. Please dress appropriately for walking and for the weather.

FRIDAY, 18 NOVEMBER 2016

8:30 ANNOUNCEMENTS

RESTORATION OF TRUMPETER SWANS: History and Updates Moderator: Jeff Snyder

8:40 The Recovery of Trumpeter Swans in Ohio

Presenter: Laura Kearns, Ohio Department of Natural Resources, Delaware, OH

9:00 Status of Trumpeter Swan Restoration and the Promotion of Wetlands in Iowa

Presenter: David Hoffman, Iowa Department of Natural Resources, Clear Lake, IA

9:20 Trumpeter Swan Restoration in the Blackfoot Watershed of Montana

Authors: Elaine Caton, The Blackfoot Challenge, Ovando, MT and Greg Neudecker, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Ovando, MT.

Presenter: Elaine Caton

9:40 Restoration of Trumpeter Swans on the Flathead Indian Reservation and Adjacent Aboriginal Lands in Northwestern Montana

Authors: Dale Becker, Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes, Pablo, MT, and Jocelyn L. Ayerigg, University of Idaho, Moscow, ID

Presenter: Dale Becker, Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes, Pablo, MT

10:00 BREAK

10:20 Status of Trumpeter Swans in Oregon

Authors: Gary Ivey, The Trumpeter Swan Society, Bend, OR, et al.

Presenter: Gary Ivey

10:40 Conservation of Trumpeter Swans in Eastern Idaho

Authors: Becky Abel, Idaho Department of Fish and Game, Pocatello, ID and Rob Cavallaro, Idaho Department Fish and Game, Idaho Falls, ID

11:00 History of Trumpeter Swan Restoration in Minnesota

Author: Carrol Henderson, Minnesota Department of Natural Resources, St. Paul, MN

Presenter: Larry Gillette, The Trumpeter Swan Society, Mound, MN

PUBLIC LANDS AND TRUMPETER SWANS Moderator: Jim Dubovsky

11:20 Conservation of Public Lands is Important for the Conservation of Wild Trumpeter Swans

Presenter: John Cornely, The Trumpeter Swan Society, Littleton, CO

11:40 LUNCH

1:00 Trumpeter Swan Population Response to Management on the Kenai Peninsula, Alaska

Authors: John Morton, et al., U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Kenai National Wildlife Refuge, Soldotna, AK

Presenter: John Morton

1:20 History and Status of Trumpeter Swans Nesting at Turnbull National Wildlife Refuge in Eastern Washington

Author: Mike Rule, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Turnbull National Wildlife Refuge, Cheney, WA

Presenter: John Cornely, The Trumpeter Swan Society, Littleton, CO

1:40 Trumpeter Swans Wintering in the Riverlands Migratory Bird Sanctuary in Eastern Missouri.

Author: Charles Deutsch, et al., U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, MO

Presenter: John Cornely, The Trumpeter Swan Society, Littleton, CO

2:00 BREAK

SWAN CONSERVATION ISSUES AND NEEDS Moderator: Dale Becker

2:20 Conservation Needs of Trumpeter Swans in the Western United States

Authors: Gary Ivey, The Trumpeter Swan Society, Bend, OR, and John Cornely, The Trumpeter Swan Society, Littleton, CO

Presenter: Gary Ivey

2:40 Lead Shot Poisoning of Swans within Whatcom County, Washington and Sumas Prairie, British Columbia: Sources, Management and Remediation

Authors: Mike Smith, et al., Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife, Olympia, WA

Presenter: Martha Jordan

3:00 Pacific Birds Habitat Joint Venture—Moving Forward

Presenter: Lora Leschner, Arlington, WA

3:20 Audubon's Climate Watch Program: Highlighting a New Citizen Science Initiative that can help Monitor the Trumpeter Swan in a Changing Climate

Authors: Brooke Bateman, et al., National Audubon Society, Madison, WI

Presenter: Brooke Bateman

3:40 ANNOUNCEMENTS

4:00 24TH CONFERENCE ADJOURNS

POSTERS

Evidence of a Unique Nesting Behavior in Trumpeter Swans

Authors: Heather Johnson, et al., Biology Department, University of Nebraska, Kearney, Kearney, NE

Adaptive Management Strategies to Reduce Human Impacts on Trumpeter Swans (*Cygnus buccinator*) in Yellowstone National Park.

Author: Brenna Cassidy, Yellowstone National Park

Distribution and Abundance of Swans during the Spring Light Goose Hunt in Southeast Idaho

Author: Becky Abel, Idaho Department of Fish and Game, Pocatello, ID

Nest/Egg Temperatures in Relation to Trumpeter Swan (*Cygnus buccinator*) Cygnet Survivorship in the Yellowstone Ecosystem

Authors: Victoria B. Fliehr, Department of Biology, Western Oregon University, Monmouth, OR and Jeffrey W. Snyder, Department of Biology, Western Oregon University, Monmouth, OR

Closing Gala for Wild Wings & Trumpeter Swan Society Swan Conference

Friday November 18, 6:30pm

Quw' utsun' Cultural and Conference Centre

Price: \$35 USD, \$40 CAD includes traditional buffet dinner

Bar service will be available

The WildWings Nature and Arts Festival and Swan Conference Closing Gala promises to be the highlight of the Swan Conference. The gala will be a great opportunity to introduce our guests and our locals to each other inside one of the most beautiful buildings that the 'Warm Land' has to share. The evening will include:

1. A traditional foods buffet that highlights the Cowichan people's culture
2. A performance by the Tzinquaw dancers
3. The Trumpeter Swan Society's awards ceremony
4. Music by John Wade and Friends
5. A live and silent auction of some very interesting and artistic items
6. A keynote speech by one of Canada's best-known wildlife artists, Robert Bateman.