

Mute Swan

Cygnus olor



The Mute Swan needs little introduction and is found from the UK to Central and Northern Europe, Central Asia and Eastern China, North America, Japan, South Africa, Australia and New Zealand.

The Mute Swan has established feral populations in North America, Japan, South Africa, Australia and New Zealand due to escaped birds from parks and private collections. There are estimated to be around 500 000 in the world. Lead poisoning caused a major decline in the numbers in Britain until the use of lead in fishing weights was banned.

They live in a variety of Lowland Freshwater Marshes, Lagoons, Rivers, Estuaries and Sheltered coastal sites. They are highly territorial and defend their nest sites aggressively. The nest is a large mound of vegetation, often floating on the water or among reeds. The young are independent at around 120 – 150 days but do not reach maturity until 3 years of age.



Lifespan: 30 Years

Weight: 6600 – 15 000 g

Size: 125 - 160 cm

Breeding Season: Spring

Incubation Period: 35 - 36 Days

Number of Chicks: 5 - 7

Diet: Primarily leafy parts of Aquatic Vegetation and Grain, Minor quantities of Grasses, Insects and Amphibians.

Problems They Face: Lead Poisoning and Collisions with Power-lines

Conservation Status: Not Globally Threatened