**Breeding success of Mute Swans**

Despite the Mute Swan being a familiar presence in our countryside, some aspects of its biology are poorly known.

One of these is its productivity: how many young does each pair raise in a year? I go up the Thames with the Swan-Uppers each year and we locate some 35-50 broods; these have a mean brood-size of around 3.5. However, this does not give us a good measure of productivity; because we only locate pairs with broods, we miss all those pairs which have already lost their whole brood.

This note comes with a plea for people who live close to a breeding pair to “keep-a-diary” of that pair’s breeding attempt. Information on the age at which cygnets disappear would be valuable – even more valuable if you know why!

Points to note: It is important:

1. to be able to distinguish separate pairs; often there is only one pair in one place
2. to complete sheets for pairs which fail.

Clutch-size would be a bonus, but not all nests are easily reached. If not, date of hatching still useful.

If the pair you are observing loses it clutch prior to hatch, please also record this. If the pair lays a replacement clutch please complete a form for each (with a cross-ref).

Notes to form

1. Nest location: can be brief, co-ordinates welcome, but if on your property Post Code will do
2. Habitat: keep it simple: large river, stream, gravel pit etc.
3. Rings: Information on any of the large plastic rings which the birds may be wearing would be welcome; these are usually white or orange with black lettering, but other are possible. Writing may be letters and/or numbers.

Please return to: Prof Chris Perrins, 46, Cumnor Hill, Oxford, OX2 9HB at the end of September, when all the brood is lost, or when you lose contact with the family.

chris.perrins@zoo.ox.ac.uk

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| **Mute Swan Survey 2017** |
| Name & address |  |
| Phone/e-mail |  |  |
| Nest location |  |
| Habitat |  |
| Rings? | Male |  | Female |  |
| Clutch |  |  |
| Date hatched |  |  |  |
| Number hatched |  |  |
|  |  |
| Week | Date | No. | Notes |  | Date | No. | Notes |
| 1 |  |  |  | 11 |  |  |  |
| 2 |  |  |  | 12 |  |  |  |
| 3 |  |  |  | 11 |  |  |  |
| 4 |  |  |  | 14 |  |  |  |
| 5 |  |  |  | 15 |  |  |  |
| 6 |  |  |  | 16 |  |  |  |
| 7 |  |  |  | 17 |  |  |  |
| 8 |  |  |  | 18 |  |  |  |
| 9 |  |  |  | 19 |  |  |  |
| 10 |  |  |  | 20 |  |  |  |
|  | Notes |
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