



# Species

ISSUE 62

## 2022 Report of the IUCN Species Survival Commission and Secretariat



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## The IUCN Species Survival Commission (SSC)

The IUCN Species Survival Commission (SSC) is a science-based network of thousands of volunteer experts from almost every country of the world, all working together toward achieving the vision of “a just world that values and conserves nature through positive action to both prevent the loss and aid recovery of the diversity of life on earth.”

Members of SSC belong to one or more of near 200 Specialist Groups, Red List Authorities, Action Partnerships, Task Forces, and Conservation Committees that make up the Network, each focusing on a taxonomic group (plants, fungi, mammals, birds, reptiles, amphibians, fishes, and invertebrates), national species, or a disciplinary issue, such as sustainable use and livelihoods, translocation of species, wildlife health, climate change, and conservation planning.

Framed by the Species Conservation Cycle, SSC’s major role is to provide information to IUCN on biodiversity conservation, the inherent value of species, their role in ecosystem health and functioning, the provision of ecosystem services, and their support to human livelihoods. This information is fed into the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species.

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### 2021-2025 Species Strategic Plan

The IUCN Species Strategic Plan encompasses the joint work of the IUCN Species Survival Commission and a number of partnerships to achieve more than 2,700 targets proposed by the Network during the 2021-2025 quadrennium.

To accomplish those targets, the Species Conservation Cycle was established, which is the conceptual framework for the Network activities. The Species Conservation Cycle’s main purpose is to guide efforts for valuing and conserving biodiversity through three essential components that are linked to each other:

**ASSESS:** Understand and inform the world about the status and trends of biodiversity.

**PLAN:** Develop collaborative, inclusive and science-based conservation strategies, plans and policies.

**ACT:** Convene and mobilise conservation actions to improve the status of biodiversity.



Their implementation requires two transversal components:

**NETWORK:** Enhance and support our immediate network and alliances to achieve our biodiversity targets.

**COMMUNICATE:** Drive strategic and targeted communications to enhance our conservation impact.

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### SSC Species Report

Annual progress in the implementation of the 2021-2025 Species Strategic Plan is documented in the SSC *Species Report*, which consists of a comprehensive description and analysis of the activities and results generated by the members of the SSC Network each year. Each SSC Group contributes to this document by providing a yearly summarised description of their achievements, which is presented in stand-alone reports.

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## Structure of the IUCN SSC Stand-alone Report

Stand-alone reports summarize the activities conducted and results generated by each group member of the SSC. Following, is the structure of the stand-alone report and the contents under each session.

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### Title of the SSC Group

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### Photograph(s) of the Chair / Co-Chairs

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### Group information

Includes names of Chair / Co-Chairs, Vice-Chairs, Deputy Chairs, Red List Authority Coordinators and Program Officers, their institutional affiliations, number of members and social networks currently active.

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### Logo of the SSC Group

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### Mission statement

Includes the mission of the group.

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### Projected impact for the 2021-2025 quadrennium

Includes the description of the impact on species conservation resulting from the implementation of the targets formulated by the group for the 2021-2025 quadrennium.

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### Targets for the 2021-2025 quadrennium

Includes the targets planned by the SSC Group for the 2021-2025 quadrennium ordered alphabetically by component of the Species Conservation Cycle. Each target is labeled with a numerical code (e.g., T-001, T-012) that identifies it in the SSC DATA database and its status for the reported year is indicated (Not initiated, On track or Achieved).

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### Activities and results

Includes the targets for which activities were conducted and results were generated during the reported year, ordered alphabetically, first by component of the Species Conservation Cycle, and second by Activity Category. Description of activities and results includes the indicator that best describes progress, its associated quantitative or qualitative result, and the narrative description of the activity conducted or result obtained. Each activity or result reported is linked to the Key Species Result to which it is mainly associated (e.g., KSR#1, KSR#5).

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### Acknowledgements

Includes the acknowledgements to funding agencies, partners, and persons who contributed to the progress of the targets of the group.

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### Summary of achievements

Summarises information of the group's strategic plan for the quadrennium and progress achieved implementing targets for all the components of the Species Conservation Cycle during the reported year.

Animalia

Fungi

Plantae

National Species

Disciplinary

Action Partnership

Task Force

Red List Authority

Committee

Center for Species Survival

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### Example for the recommended citation:

Rees, E. and Newth, J. 2023. 2022 Report of the Swan Specialist Group. In: Nassar, JM, García, L, Mendoza, L, Andrade, ND, Bezeng, S, Birkhoff, J, Bohm, M, Canteiro, C, Geschke, J, Henriques, S, Ivande, S, Mileham, K, Ramos, M, Rodríguez, A, Rodríguez, JP, Street, B, and Yerena, E (Eds.). 2022 Report of the IUCN Species Survival Commission and Secretariat. International Union for Conservation of Nature. 6 pp.

# 2022 Report

# IUCN SSC Swan Specialist Group



**SOCIAL MEDIA AND WEBSITE**  
Website: <https://swansg.org>



**CO-CHAIR**  
**Eileen Rees**  
Wildfowl & Wetlands Trust, Slimbridge, Gloucester, GL2 7BT, UK (retired)



**CO-CHAIR**  
**Julia Newth**  
Ecosystem Health & Social Dimensions Manager, Honorary Lecturer at the University of Exeter

**NUMBER OF MEMBERS**  
315

### Mission statement

The Swan Specialist Group is an international network of swan specialists who undertake monitoring, research, conservation and management of swan populations. Its mission is to facilitate effective communication between members and others with an interest in swan management and conservation worldwide, in order to improve national and international links for cooperative research, identify gaps in knowledge and provide a forum for addressing swan conservation issues.

### Projected impact 2021–2025

By the end of 2025, we will have undertaken the 10-year review of the implementation of the African-Eurasian Migratory Waterbirds (AEWA) Bewick's Swan Action Plan, which will include: (1) assessment of the current conservation status of the Northwest European Bewick's Swan (*Cygnus columbianus bewickii*) population, found to be in decline in 2010; (2) evaluation of factors found to be contributing to the decline; (3) evaluation of the outcome of conservation actions; (4) identification of continued gaps in knowledge, and (5) identification of protection measures that should be maintained or initiated. The review will also indicate whether a new Action Plan

is required, with updated priorities for conservation action. For the other swan species, which are currently classed as Least Concern by IUCN, we will maintain our monitoring of population trends, or collect such information where the monitoring is being undertaken by other organisations, to identify any conservation issues that may arise for the swans.

### Targets 2021–2025

#### ASSESS

**T-002** Population monitoring: Collate and publish results of the international censuses of migratory swan populations in the Northern Hemisphere.  
Status: On track

#### PLAN

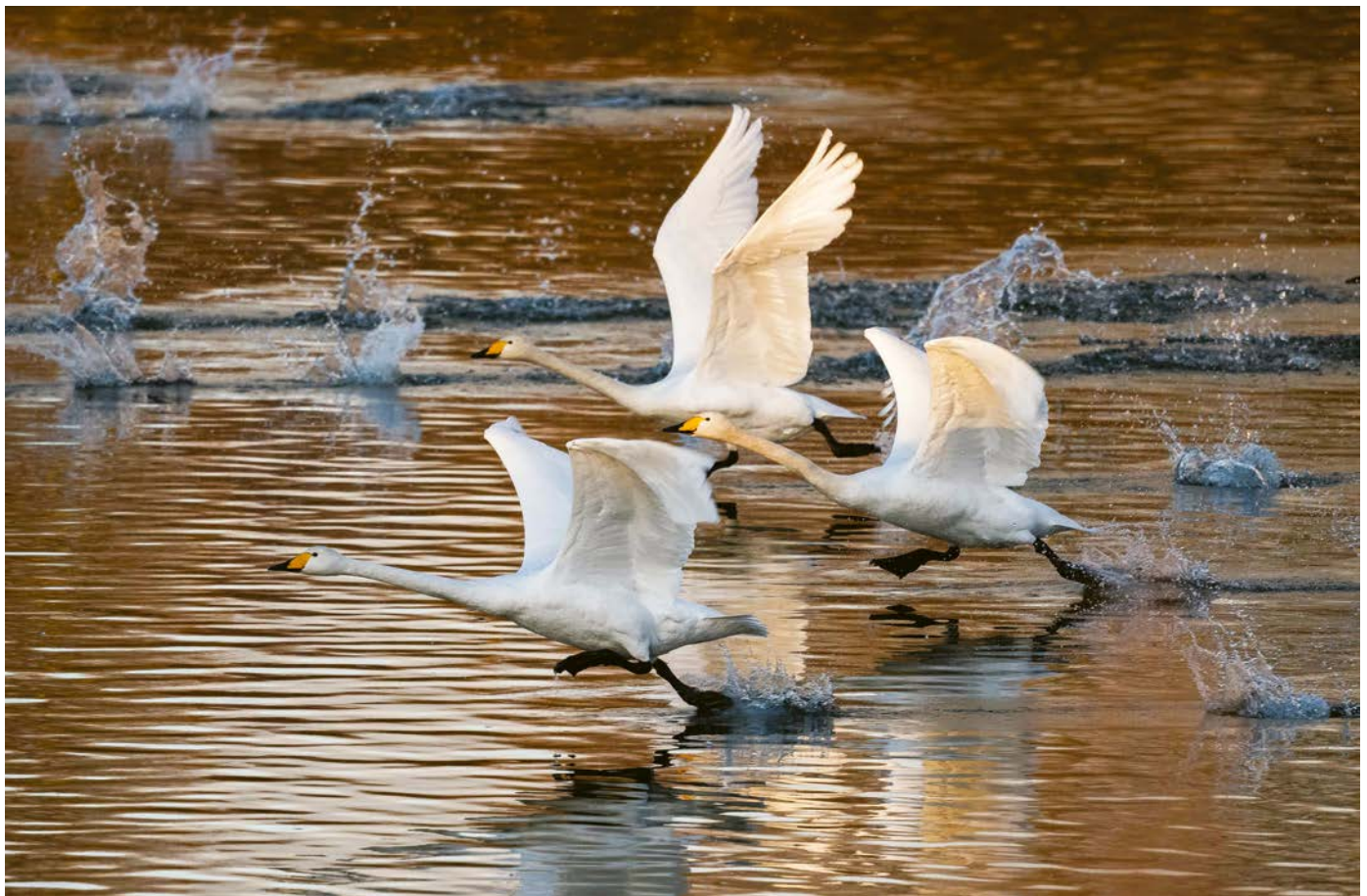
**T-003** AEWA Bewick's Swan Action Plan: Convene Bewick's Swan Expert Group workshops.  
Status: On track

**T-004** AEWA Bewick's Swan Action Plan: Undertake the 10-year review of the AEWA Bewick's Swan Action Plan.  
Status: On track

**T-005** Technical advice: Provide information and technical advice in support of the programmes of IUCN SSC, Wetlands International, BirdLife International, Ramsar and others as necessary.  
Status: On track



Trumpeter Swan (*Cygnus buccinator*)  
Photo: Kane Brides



Whooper Swans (*Cygnus cygnus*) taking off from their roost in Schleswig-Holstein  
Photo: Hans-Joachim Augst

**T-006** Technical advice: Provide information on the population trends, distribution ecology, habitat requirements and behaviour of swan species to address conservation issues as they arise.  
Status: On track

#### NETWORK

**T-007** Listserv: Maintain the Swan Specialist Group listserv.  
Status: On track

**T-008** Gap-filling: Improve knowledge of swan species in the Southern Hemisphere, increase Swan Specialist Group membership in the region.  
Status: On track

#### COMMUNICATE

**T-001** Publish four annual Swan Specialist Group newsletters.  
Status: On track

**T-010** Website: maintain the Swan Specialist Group website.  
Status: On track

**T-011** Swan Specialist Group Symposium: Convene 7th International Swan Symposium in Jackson, Wyoming, US.  
Status: Achieved

**T-012** Swan Specialist Group Symposium: Publish proceedings of the 7th International Swan Symposium in a scientific journal.  
Status: Not initiated

## Activities and results 2022

### ASSESS

#### Research activities

**T-002** Population monitoring: Collate and publish results of the international censuses of migratory swan populations in the Northern Hemisphere. (KSR 5)

Number of scientific publications about species research that acknowledge SSC affiliation: 0

Result description: Collation of the January 2020 swan census data for the Bewick's and Whooper Swan (*Cygnus cygnus*) populations in Europe, the Black Sea, and the Caspian regions was completed in 2022, and preliminary analyses were undertaken, with a view to publication of the results in 2023.

### PLAN

#### Planning

**T-003** AEWA Bewick's Swan Action Plan: Convene Bewick's Swan Expert Group workshops. (KSR 8)

Number of annual meetings of the AEWA Bewick's Swan Expert Group: 2

Result description: An informal meeting of AEWA Bewick's Swan Expert Group (AEWA) members was held during the 7th ISS in October, followed by a fuller meeting also involving the AEWA Secretariat in December, to discuss how best to take forward the 10-year review of the International

Single Species Action Plan (ISSAP) for the NW European Bewick's Swan population.

**T-004** AEWA Bewick's Swan Action Plan: Undertake the 10-year review of the AEWA Bewick's Swan Action Plan. (KSR 8)

Number of conservation plans/strategies updated: 0

Result description: Plans were put in place during 2022 to hold a full (2-day) Bewick's Swan Action Plan Review workshop, to be hosted by NABU in Germany in March 2023.

### POLICY

**T-005** Technical advice: Provide information and technical advice in support of the programmes of IUCN SSC, Wetlands International, BirdLife International, Ramsar and others as necessary. (KSR 9)

Number of policies where SSC members provided technical input: 1

Result description: Expert opinion provided to Wetlands International regarding delineation of population boundaries for Bewick's Swans in the Western Palearctic.

### NETWORK

#### Capacity building

**T-008** Gap-filling: Improve knowledge of swan species in the Southern Hemisphere, increase Swan Specialist Group membership in the region. (KSR 2)

Number of reports of swan species in the Southern Hemisphere in the Swan Specialist Group newsletter: 1



Whooper Swan (*Cygnus cygnus*) family  
with 3 cygnets  
Photo: Hans-Joachim Augst



Black Swan (*Cygnus atratus*) pair  
with 7 cygnets on the Gold Coast- Australia  
Photo: Jon Coleman



Swan Specialist Group members at the 7th International Swan Symposium - 26th Trumpeter Swan Society Conference, Wyoming, USA, October 2022  
Photo: Leho Luigujõe

Result description: Southern hemisphere swans are still under-represented within the Swan SG, and this needs to be addressed. Nonetheless, updates on Black-necked Swan (*Cygnus melancoryphus*) and Coscoroba Swan (*Coscoroba coscoroba*) research in Chile, and also a news item were published in the Swan SG's newsletter during 2022. Additionally, a poster on Black Swans breeding along the Gold Coast, Australia, was presented at the 7th International Swan Symposium.

**Synergy**

**T-007 Listserv: Maintain the Swan Specialist Group listserv.** (KSR 2)

Swan Specialist Group listserv operative throughout the quadrennium: 1

Result description: The Swan SG listserv was utilised throughout the year, with updates on swan research and conservation work (sadly also on the passing of Swan SG members) posted regularly, in 9 of 12 months during 2022.

**Membership**

**T-008 Gap-filling: Improve knowledge of swan species in the Southern Hemisphere, increase Swan Specialist Group membership in the region.** (KSR 2)

Number of SSC members recruited: 6

Result description: Sadly, 10 members of the Swan SG retired or passed away in 2022, but six new members were recruited. Southern hemisphere swans are still under-represented within the Swan SG and this needs to be addressed.

**COMMUNICATE**

**Communication**

**T-001 Publish four annual Swan Specialist Group newsletters.** (KSR 12)

Number of Species e-bulletin, Save Our Species newsletter, SSC Groups' newsletter editions produced: 1

Result description: The latest issue of the Swan SG newsletter - *Swan News 17* was published in December 2022. The newsletter has been posted on the Swan SG website, and is available at: <https://swansg.org/resources/newsletters/swan-specialist-group/>.

**T-010 Website: maintain the Swan Specialist Group website.** (KSR 12)

Swan Specialist Group website accessible and updated with news items: 1

Result description: Eleven News Items posted on the website during 2022.

**Scientific meetings**

**T-011 Swan Specialist Group Symposium: Convene 7th International Swan Symposium in Jackson, Wyoming, US.** (KSR 12)

Number of presentations delivered in scientific events: 52

Result description: The 7th International Swan Symposium was held in Jackson, Wyoming, USA from October 24–27 2022, in conjunction with the 26th Conference of the Trumpeter Swan Society (TTSS). Overall, 101 delegates registered, from 13 different countries, and the talks/poster presentations ranged geographically from Canada and the USA via Eurasia to Australia. Virtual conferencing was put in place, and the ability for swan researchers and conservationists to attend and/or present remotely – a first for a swan symposium – proved invaluable for extending the international component and discussions. The Swan Specialist Group is immensely grateful to the TTSS and to the Ricketts Conservation Foundation for supporting and sponsoring the meeting. More information on the symposium is available in *Swan News 17* on the Swan SG website and in the December 2022 issue of the TTSS's newsletter *Trumpetings* (vol. 32, issue 3).

**Acknowledgements**

The Swan SG is deeply grateful to the Ricketts Conservation Foundation, the Trumpeter Swan Society, the Organising Committee and the Scientific Committee for their invaluable help and support of the 7th International Swan Symposium, held in October 2022. In addition to the RCF and the TTSS, we wish to acknowledge generous donations from: the Knobloch Family Foundation, the US Geological Survey (USGS), the Mississippi Flyway Council, the Central Flyway Council, the Pacific Flyway Council, the US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) National Elk Refuge, anonymous donations in memory of Harry Lumsden and Dave Lockman, Northern Rockies Conservation Cooperative, Intermountain West Joint Venture, and Sara DePew. We also thank the Wildfowl & Wetlands Trust (WWT) for continuing to host the Swan Specialist Group website and are particularly grateful to Nathan D'Costa for uploading news items and documents as the information comes in.

**Summary of achievements**

**Total number of targets 2021–2025: 11**

**Geographic regions:** 7 Global, 2 America, 1 Asia, 3 Europe, 2 Oceania

**Actions during 2022:**

- Assess: 1 (KSR 5)
- Plan: 3 (KSR 8, 9)
- Network: 3 (KSR 2)
- Communicate: 3 (KSR 12)

**Overall achievement 2021–2025:**

