

Stop the Slaughter of Michigan's Mute Swans



OVERVIEW

Easily recognizable with their long necks and reddish-orange bills, mute swans are found up and down the Eastern seaboard and as far west as Minnesota and beyond. People still can't agree whether mute swans are native to the United States or if they were introduced in the 1800s. Either way, free-ranging swans are now a naturalized (not to mention beautiful) part of the environment. However, all over the country, **mute swans have**

been the victims of unnecessary killing just for doing what swans do—eating plants to survive, and being protective of their young.

Here in Michigan, the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) has declared mute swans to be a “dangerous” exotic species, and—without scientific proof—claims that they are environmentally destructive and aggressive. Local governments and lake associations are allowed to contract out the killing of mute swans on their property. Despite protests from citizens and wildlife advocates across the state, **more than 4,000 of these magnificent birds have already been killed as a part of the DNR's unjustifiable and irresponsible management plan**, and they plan to kill tens of thousands more over the next 18 years. Comprehensive scientific analysis shows that there are far fewer mute swans in Michigan than the DNR claims, and if the killing of mute swans continues at this appalling rate, **they may soon be extirpated from our state.**

A RECKLESS PLAN, DEVOID OF SCIENCE Since most people cringe at the idea of killing such a beautiful animal, the DNR has waged a relentless campaign to portray mute swans as nasty creatures that must be destroyed. Using words like “non-native,” “feral,” “invasive,” and “aggressive,” the DNR hopes to diminish the public's love for these majestic birds by claiming they are only eliminating them to protect “native” waterfowl.

HELP STOP THE KILLING The HSUS and Michigan wildlife advocates have submitted a proposal to the Michigan DNR that calls for a **moratorium on the killing of mute swans** and a **comprehensive humane stewardship and management plan**. **Please contact Michigan Governor Rick Snyder at (517) 373-3400** and ask him to support the moratorium and appoint a Blue Ribbon Commission to develop the management plan.

