



SWANS

KEY INFORMATION

Swans can be found in North America, South America, the United Kingdom and Australia (black swans are native to Australia). You may see a swan swimming in wetland places like lakes, rivers and ponds and they can often be found swimming in pairs (usually male and female).



Swans are the largest water and flying bird; their average length is 59 inches and they weigh between 14-16 kilograms. Swans normally live between 9 - 12 years although some can live for up to 30 years. A male swan is called a Cob and a female is called a Pen with a baby being called a Cygnet.

APPEARANCE

Swans are graceful and elegant creatures which have approximately 25 thousand white feathers. Their beaks are black and orange and have strong, webbed feet that help them to swim, run across the water and launch into flight. Swans have long necks that are flexible enough to help them reach down to grab shoots when swimming in shallow water.

Swans can fly and glide with a very fast speed of 30 miles per hour. Some swans can fly up to 620 miles in 12 hours at around 55 miles per hour. Depending on the species, they can fly around 2000 to 4000 feet high. Swans may also flap their wings and hiss when they get aggressive.

DIET

Swans are omnivores, they typically eat pondweed and grassy fields, however, they can also eat tadpoles, small fish, frogs and worms.

Many people like to feed bread to swans, however when it's fed in large quantities, it can cause dietary problems and is not part of the proper diet that they need to survive.

FUN FACTS

Queen Elizabeth II owns most of the swans in England, which was law created because swans were eaten as a prized food at banquets and feasts. The swan population in the UK is about 32,000 swans, which is 7th in the world.

The UK is home to 3 types of swans: mute, Bewick's and whooper. The largest species of swan is the trumpeter swan; however, it weighs less than the mute swan.



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EXAMPLE QUESTIONS:

1. What is the name of a male swan?
2. What is a swan's lifespan?
3. How high can a swan fly?
4. Name two things a swan can eat.
5. The UK is home to which type of swans?