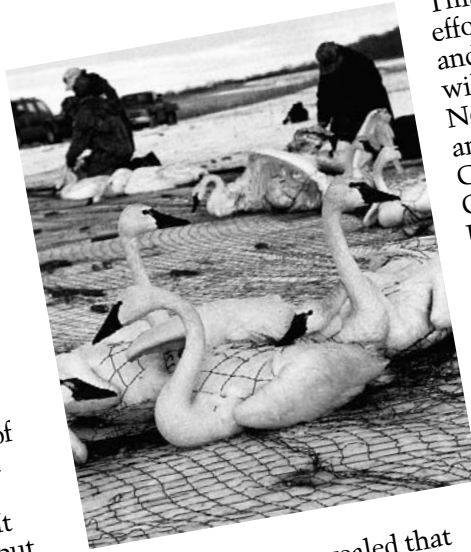


Making a Difference for Wildlife

Hundreds of local conservation projects are undertaken annually by SCI Chapters. They are reinforced by many notable conservation initiatives funded by the SCI Foundation.



Tundra Swan Migration Satellite Study Southeastern Pennsylvania, USA



THE TUNDRA SWAN is one of North America's largest migrating birds, with a wingspan of up to 85 inches. It breeds in the western arctic, but winters in more southerly locations, including in the Atlantic flyway states of Pennsylvania, New Jersey, Delaware, Maryland, Virginia and North Carolina. This 3,000-mile migration is one of the longest of any waterfowl, with the birds spending up to half their lives on the trail. As such, understanding when swans are in various North American locations is an important factor in swan conservation.

With research headed by wildlife biologist John Dunn and with financial and volunteer labor support by SCI's *Blue Mountain, Susquehannock* and *Lehigh Valley Chapters*, the Pennsylvania Game Commission is seeking to uncover the breeding range and migration stopover points of swans wintering in the Keystone State. Swans are baited daily near water areas where they flock. They are then captured using 100-by-70-foot rocket nets and fitted with GPS collars.

This research is part of a larger effort that includes the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and state wildlife agencies in Maryland, North Carolina, and Virginia, and is being coordinated by Cornell University's New York Cooperative Fish and Wildlife Unit.

During the last three winters, more than 1,800 swans have been marked by researchers, 1,500 with coded neck bands, 280 with radio collars and 40 with GPS collars. These marked swans will continue to provide biologists the information they need to ensure proper management of the swans and their habitat.

This research has revealed that swans wintering together in southeastern Pennsylvania aren't necessarily arctic neighbors. Four adult females captured at the same winter location dispersed across 1,000 miles of arctic tundra, from the Northwest Territories' Mackenzie River to Nunavut's western shore on Hudson Bay. Important migration stopovers occurred in Ontario, Manitoba, and Alberta.

