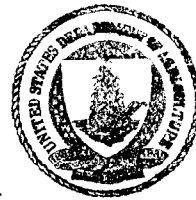


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SWANS DO NOT DAMAGE DUCK-FOOD PLANTS, INVESTIGATIONS SHOW

Charges by some sportsmen that swans in the Currituck Sound and Back Bay region of North Carolina and Virginia were damaging wild-duck food plants have recently led to an investigation of the matter by the Bureau of Biological Survey of the U. S. Department of Agriculture. Last summer, at the height of the growing season, when evidence of last year's damage by the birds to the aquatic plants would be most apparent, two representatives of the Survey visited a favorite waterfowl feeding ground of this region and found the area as well stocked with vegetation as any in the neighborhood and no evidence of destruction of the roots of wild-fowl food plants.

These findings prove conclusively that in their feeding operations swans leave enough fragments of the rootstocks of the plants or enough seeds to renew full growth the next season and reduce the damage that these birds are alleged to cause merely to the consumption of the quantity of aquatic plants required to support them during winter.

Because of their scarcity, both the trumpeter swan and the whistling swan are accorded protection in this country throughout the year. So long as it is deemed advisable to protect these birds to guard against their extermination, they should be allowed a sufficient supply of food, says the Biological Survey. In general, competition for food between other wild fowl and the swans is scarcely direct, as they feed to a large extent in different areas.

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