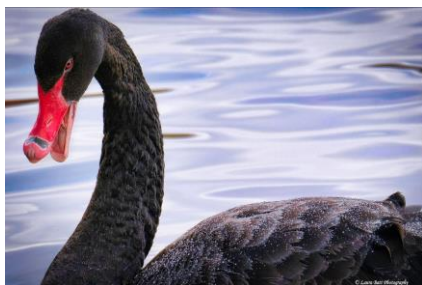




Newsletter

March 2023

An Exotic Visitor to Worcester's Swan Sanctuary



Many of you may have already seen the black swan on the river, amongst all the white ones! A local bird expert says it's female, and so far she's fitting in well. Will she mate with one of our mute swans? Watch this space...

Black swans are native to Australia. They were brought to Europe around the turn of the 18th century, being kept mainly in private collections.

Dawlish, in Devon, is famous for its black swans, which have been there since the early 19th century.

Despite their long residency here, black swans are not accepted as British birds, so if one at large is taken into care, it can't be released back into the wild. In such cases, rescue centres will look for a suitable home.



Photos: Laura Batt Photography

Volunteering Opportunity: Bag Fillers



With no external funding, we need to raise money to pay for the mixed corn that we feed daily to Worcester's swans.

An important part of our income comes from our small bags of pellets, which we sell through a number of outlets around Worcester. Our website lists them:

<https://theswanfoodproject.co.uk/swan-food-outlets/>

Would you be interested in volunteering as a bag filler? Bag filling is needed on an ad hoc basis, and can be done at a time to suit you.

All you need is a certain level of manual dexterity, attention to detail, and a willingness to fill the bags in a standard way - for outlets to be able to sell them, they need to look neat and uniform.



Birch Hill Dog Rescue outlet

You can offer your services by messaging us on Facebook, or emailing:

theswanfoodproject@gmail.com

Moving into the Nesting Season



Around this time of year, swan couples are on the look-out for a territory, if they don't already have one. Territorial fights and stand-offs are quite common, particularly around Diglis Basin. Intruders usually fly off, but clashes can be dramatic and alarming if the intruding pair refuse to be chased away, and over the years there have been a number of fatalities.

No sign of the resident pair nest building yet, but the pair at Gheluveld Park are already nesting. Please - no food on or near the nest. She'll get off if she needs to eat or drink.

Swans lay six eggs on average, but can lay up to as many as 10. Eggs take 35 days to hatch.

Watch Out, There's a Swan About!

Nesting swans can be very vulnerable to predators, but in an urban setting, swans can be exposed to man-made hazards as well.

Two swans wandered onto Worcester bridge recently. Fortunately, someone called the Police and they, together with two Project volunteers and two members of the public, gently herded them back to the riverside park. No injuries on this occasion, but swans have been killed here in the past.

There is a swan warning sign on the approaches to Worcester bridge, but not everyone sees it, and not everyone heeds it. Please drive over the bridge with care and attention, for your safety and that of the swans.

It is on our agenda to liaise with Worcester City Council to get clearer signage for other swan hazards, such as fishing within the swan sanctuary.

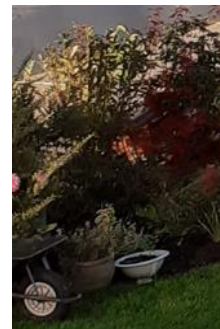


Plant Sale for May Day

We are going to hold a plant sale near the Café Afloat in Diglis Basin.

Monday 1st May, 11:00 a.m. to 3 p.m.

If you have any plants you would like to donate – flowers, fruit or vegetables – we'd be very grateful for them. And if you'd like to buy some plants, please come along and support us!



To donate, please contact the *Project Treasurer* on: 07748-224148.