

Trumpeter Swan (*Cygnus buccinator*) Conservation Status Rank Summary

March 10, 2026

For details on assessment and ranking methodology, see: [Conservation Status Assessment Definitions, Process, Rank Factors, and Calculation of State Ranks for Montana Species](#)

Rarity and Trends

Rank Factor	Date Assessed	Value	Score	Data Source	Comments
Rarity					
Range Extent	2025-01-09	Y: 127282.7 km ²	3.930	MTNHP Range Maps	None
Area of Occupancy	2025-01-09	1412 4km ² cells	4.130	MTNHP Modeling	None
Number of Occurrences	2025-01-22		1.380		None
Population Size			-		Factor not used in ranking.
# of Occurrences in Good Condition			-		Factor not used in ranking.
% of Area Occupied in Good Condition			-		Factor not used in ranking.
Environmental Specificity	2009-01-21	Very narrow	-	MTNHP Species Rank Data Table	Factor not used in ranking. Need isolated nesting areas, shallow areas to forage, and large enough flight area to take off. Methodology: NS (2003) Original Score: A
Rarity is calculated by averaging weighted factor scores: $((3.93 \times 1) + (4.13 \times 2) + (1.38 \times 1)) / 4 = 3.39$					
Trends					
Short-term Trend	2009-01-21		0.000	MTNHP Species Rank Data Table	Stable to increasing due to ongoing and expanding reintroduction efforts. Methodology: NS (2003) Original Score: E
Long-term Trend	2009-01-21		-0.140	MTNHP Species Rank Data Table	Species was overhunted after European arrival and has not fully recovered yet. Methodology: NS (2003) Original Score: D
Trends score is calculated by summing weighted short and long-term trend scores: $((0.00 \times 2) + (-0.14 \times 1)) = -0.14$					

Threats

Rank Factor	Date Assessed	Value	Score	Data Source	Comments
Threats					
Overall Threat Impact		High	1.830		Altered hydrology, accidentally hunted, collisions, diseases, winter starvation. Climate change.
Intrinsic Vulnerability	2009-01-21	Moderately vulnerable	-	MTNHP Species Rank Data Table	Factor not used in ranking. Long age to maturity, but large clutch size Methodology: NS (2003) Original Score: B
Threat score is calculated from Overall Threat Impact when available or Intrinsic Vulnerability if not: (1.83) = 1.83					

Individual Threats Data

Threat Category	Date Assessed	Impact Score	Scope	Severity	Immediacy	Comments
Residential & Commercial Development	2026-03-10	Medium	Large	Moderate	High	Overall loss of wetland and wintering habitat " insufficient quality nesting habitat, and loss of wintering habitat due rapid increase in human population and development restricting nesting and wintering habitat
Agriculture & Aquaculture	2026-03-10	Medium	Large	Moderate	High	Overall loss of wetland and wintering habitat " insufficient quality nesting habitat, and loss of wintering habitat due to land conversion of wetlands to agriculture. Water diversion, utilization, and management resulting in the reductions of water or dewatering entirely of wetlands used by trumpeter swans. Water diversion, utilization, management affects winter food sources, open water availability in winter range, spring food availability, and nesting habitat flooding. Collisions with fences
Transportation & Service Corridors	None	Low	Restricted	Moderate	High	Multiple Level 2 threats - see Additional Threat Details below.
Biological Resource Use	2026-03-10	Low	Small	Slight	High	Hunting during the general swan hunting season is well managed but may have minor population impacts. Illegal shooting and poaching is a concern for the species.
Human Intrusions & Disturbance	2026-03-10	Low	Restricted	Moderate	High	Increased human disturbance / recreation activities: increased trails, river use, recreational fishing, motorized and non-motorized recreation (boating).
Natural System Modifications	2026-03-10	Medium	Large	Moderate	High	Altered hydrological regime: wetland drainage, decreased water abundance

						and quality. Water diversion, utilization, and management affects winter food sources, open water availability in winter range, spring food availability, and nesting habitat flooding.
Invasive & Other Problematic Species, Genes & Diseases	2026-03-10	Low	Restricted	Slight	Moderate	Competition from invasive mute swans. Invasion of aquatic invasive species.
Climate Change & Severe Weather	2025-01-31	Medium	Pervasive	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate reductions in habitat predicted with warming of 1.5C
Threat Tally: 0 - Very High, 0 - High, 4 - Medium, 4 - Low Overall Threat Impact* = High						

*See [Conservation Status Assessment Definitions, Process, Rank Factors, and Calculation of State Ranks for Montana Species](#) for calculation of Overall Threat Impact based on the number and impact of individual threats.

Conservation Status Rank Calculation

Raw score

Rarity: $(3.39 \times 70\%)$ + Threats: $(1.83 \times 30\%)$ + Trends: (-0.14) = 2.78

Calculated Rank: S3

Accepted Rank	S3
Date Approved	Date Unknown
Approval Authority	Legacy Assessment: MTNHP Staff
Rank Justification	Species is uncommon to rare and has a restricted breeding habitat within Montana. It suffered historic declines due to over-hunting and lead poisoning and nearly became extinct in the lower 48. Reintroduction efforts have established breeding populations in Montana. Currently it appears stable and is facing few threats.

Supplementary Information

Montana Natural Heritage Program. 2021. Conservation Status Assessment Definitions, Process, Rank Factors, and Calculation of State Ranks for Montana Species. 18 p.

https://mtnhp.mt.gov/docs/Montana_State_Rank_Criteria_20211201.pdf

Montana Field Guide Species Account:

<https://fieldguide.mt.gov/speciesDetail.aspx?elcode=ABNJB02030>

Predicted Suitable Habitat Model:

<https://mtnhp.mt.gov/resources/models/?elcode=ABNJB02030>

Information Needs

Information needs are assessed by considering the availability of factors used to assess species status as well as the quality of these assessments. Current information availability and quality to inform Conservation Status Rank for this species are highlighted.

Rank Factor	Assessment Category	Value	Criteria
General Status	Status Quality	Adequate	Calculated rank has low uncertainty and is represented by a single rank (e.g. S3); accepted rank may be adjusted to a range rank (e.g. S2S3)
		Poor	Rank assessed as SU or calculated rank has notable uncertainty and corresponds to a range rank with 2 or more values (e.g. S2?, S1S3, or S4S5)
Rarity	Range Quality	Adequate	Range polygon adequately represents area of probable occupancy and does not include substantial unoccupied areas; range may be adequately defined and still include areas of unsuitable habitat (e.g. mountain ranges for plains species)
		Marginal	Range polygon defined, but may include or exclude notable areas where the species may or may not occur on the landscape
		Poor	Range polygon not defined
	Habitat Quality	Adequate	Species-habitat relationship is well-defined (e.g. relevant literature or robust habitat model available)
		Marginal	Understanding of species-habitat relationship is adequate among some but not all habitats (e.g. literature covers similar habitats outside of Montana or habitat model performance is only somewhat adequate)
		Poor	Species-habitat relationship is not well understood
Threats	Threat Quality	Adequate	Threat Impact is a single value (including "Unthreatened")
		Marginal	Threat Impact assessed at more than one value (e.g. "High - Medium")
		Poor	Threat Impact is Unknown but Intrinsic Vulnerability is assessed
		Unknown	Threat Impact is Unknown and Intrinsic Vulnerability is not assessed
Trends	Recency	Current	Short-term Trend assessment date less than 10 years old
		Out of Date but Adequate	Short-term Trend assessment date is more than 10 years old or Unknown, but species is Unthreatened
		Out of Date	Short-term Trend assessment date more than 10 years old
		Not Available	Short-term Trend data are not available
	Trend Quality	Sufficient	Short-term Trend assessed at a single value or multiple values with a minimum trend greater than -10% (stable or increasing)
		Unknown but Sufficient	Short-term Trend is Unknown, but species is Unthreatened
		Poor	Short-term Trend is less than -10% (in decline) with two or more values selected
		Unknown	Short-term Trend is Unknown

Summary of Information Availability

Information to assess status is available.

Summary of Information Needs

No further information is needed.

Additional Threat Details

The table below contains the complete threats assessment for this species. While the Conservation Status Rank Calculation is based on cumulative, broadly categorized (Level 1) threats data, threats are assessed and tracked for more specifically categorized (Level 2) threats when available.

Threat Category	Date Assessed	Assessed By	Data Source	Scope	Severity	Immediacy	Comments
Residential & Commercial Development - 1.1 - Housing & Urban Areas	2026-03-10	Dan Bachen	SWAP Assessment	Large	Moderate	High	Overall loss of wetland and wintering habitat "insufficient quality nesting habitat, and loss of wintering habitat due rapid increase in human population and development restricting nesting and wintering habitat
Agriculture & Aquaculture - 2.3 - Livestock Farming & Ranching	2026-03-10	Dan Bachen	SWAP Assessment	Large	Moderate	High	Overall loss of wetland and wintering habitat "insufficient quality nesting habitat, and loss of wintering habitat due to land conversion of wetlands to agriculture. Water diversion, utilization, and management resulting in the reductions of water or dewatering entirely of wetlands used by trumpeter swans. Water diversion, utilization, & management affects winter food sources, open water availability in winter range, spring food availability, and nesting habitat flooding. Collisions with fences
Energy Production & Mining - 3.1 - Oil & Gas Drilling	2026-03-10	Dan Bachen	SWAP Assessment	Unknown	Unknown	High	Conservation issues across the Canadian breeding range of RMP trumpeter swans (Alberta, British Columbia, Northwest Territories and the Yukon) are associated with land use, land development and land management. Large exploration and development projects, pipelines, forestry practices, and road expansion are present and have occurred across the RMP Canadian breeding range in Alberta and British Columbia, although the negative impacts of these activities is unknown
Transportation & Service Corridors - 4.1 - Roads & Railroads	2026-03-10	Dan Bachen	SWAP Assessment	Restricted	Moderate	High	Collisions with vehicles
Transportation & Service Corridors - 4.2 - Utility & Service Lines	2026-03-10	Dan Bachen	SWAP Assessment	Restricted	Moderate	High	Powerline Collisions
Biological Resource Use - 5.1 - Hunting & Collecting Terrestrial Animals	2026-03-10	Dan Bachen	SWAP Assessment	Small	Slight	High	Hunting during the general swan hunting season is well managed but may have minor population impacts. Illegal shooting and poaching is a concern for the species.
Human Intrusions & Disturbance - 6.1 - Recreational Activities	2026-03-10	Dan Bachen	SWAP Assessment	Restricted	Moderate	High	Increased human disturbance / recreation activities: increased trails, river use, recreational fishing, motorized and non-motorized recreation (boating).
Natural System Modifications - 7.2 - Dams & Water Management/Use	2026-03-10	Dan Bachen	SWAP Assessment	Large	Moderate	High	Altered hydrological regime: wetland drainage, decreased water abundance and quality. Water diversion, utilization, and management affects winter food sources, open water availability in

							winter range, spring food availability, and nesting habitat flooding.
Invasive & Other Problematic Species, Genes & Diseases - 8.1 - Invasive Non-Native/Alien Species/Diseases	2026-03-10	Dan Bahcen	SWAP Assessment	Restricted	Slight	Moderate	Competition from invasive mute swans. Invasion of aquatic invasive species.
Climate Change & Severe Weather - 11.1 - Habitat Shifting & Alteration	2025-01-31	Dan Bachen	Audubon Survival by Degrees Project	Pervasive	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate reductions in habitat predicted with warming of 1.5C