



CONSERVATORS OF THE RIVER CAM

Navigation authority for the River Cam, between Cambridge and Bottisham Lock

Predicting an increase in Cambridge's Swan Population

Thanks to the misplaced kindness of Cambridge residents and the widespread availability of bread, I'm expecting to see a further increase in the swan population in the city centre this year. I'd request that people resist feeding the swans and allow them to find their own food which will bring about a sustainable swan population level.

Swans on the Cam

We've spotted 4 nesting locations this year on the Cam. Each nest has a pair that is territorial of the area of the river. So between Bottisham Lock near Waterbeach and Riverside in town we probably have about 8 swans in total. Then when the territory ends and due to the feeding of swans in the town centre we have over 100 swans. I'd like to discourage people from feeding swans as it is creating an artificially high number in the town centre. If people really can't resist feeding them, the RSPB recommends feeding them wheat grains or lettuce and not bread.

Facts about swans

They tend to breed for life, although if their partner dies they will move on to find a new mate. We are mid nesting period at the moment. Each nest is built by the female with the male supplying the materials. Both partners share the incubation of up to 7 eggs.

Aggressive swans

This is the time of year I'd expect to see some incidents with swans guarding their nests from any passing boats, particularly small craft such as canoes or single rowers. To date I've had two reported incidents involving the swan just downstream of Baits Bite Lock. We're keeping an eye on that particular swan, so I'd ask people to take care and keep their distance from the nest.

Plans for the Bumps

I met earlier in the year with the rowing associations (CUCBC, CRA), Natural England, the Royal Swan Marker and local residents. The plan we have this year is to corral the swans into a side channel and keep them out of harms way during the Bumps. This is possible thanks to the help of local residents and the willingness of the rowing associations to contribute to a workable solution.

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