

The Mute Swan in Ayrshire

ROBERT C. WALLS

During the Spring of 1955 a census was made of the mute swan (*cygnus olor*) population in Britain. The results were published in *Bird Study*, the journal of the British Trust for Ornithology; those for Scotland in Vol. 5, p. 45, and those for England and Wales in Vol. 7, p. 208.

My contribution was a count, as complete as I could manage in the time at my disposal, of the swans in our county and their nests and cygnets. Owing to the mobility of the birds and the length of time necessarily spent on the search, totals can only be approximate. In addition, birds which are too young to breed, and birds which have failed in their efforts to nest, congregate in suitable places in herds, which increase in size as the season advances.

The swans are fairly evenly distributed over the county's waters, which provide suitable food, and are generally below the 700 ft. contour line. There were counted 33 nests, 114 cygnets and 206 adult swans, as shown in the map and tables.

I.—NESTS.

Map Reference.	Locality.	Adults.	Cygnets.	Remarks with Dates of Visit and/or Revisit.
26/192630	3 mls. N. Largs.	2	0	Deserted, 2 eggs seen (18 Jun.)
26/391563	Rowbank Reservoir.	2	7	Nest Renfrewshire, swans Ayrshire (4 Jun.)
26/249478	Munnock Reservoir.	2	8	(11 Jun.)
26/296493	Dalry.	2	2	3 hatched, 1 lost in flood (25 Jul.)
26/304435	Kilwinning (Dam).	2	5	(11 Jul.)
26/305433	Kilwinning.	2	0	Deserted, 2 eggs seen (25 Jul.)
26/238430	Ardrossan.	2	5	(11 Jul.)
26/256414	Saltcoats.	2	0	3 eggs robbed by boys (11 Jul.)
26/270415	Stevenston.	2	5	Only 4 cygnets on 25 Jun.
26/458411	Craufurdland.	2	0	Eggs robbed (7 May)
26/319385	Irvine Bridge.	2	0	5 eggs washed away (25 Jul.)
26/485370	Bankhead.	1	0	Pen shot. 9 hard-set eggs. New pen with cob or new pair on 24 June.

Map Reference.	Locality.	Adults.	Cygnets.	Remarks with Dates of Visit and/or Revisit.
26/356357	1 ml. W. Drybridge.	2	1	5 eggs originally; logs laid on mud suggests interference later (11 Jun.)
26/393325	Coodham.	2	2	(11 Jun.)
26/760285	Glenbuck Loch.	2	7	(12 Jun.)
26/539249	1 ml. E. Catrine.	2	5	7 originally (20 May)
26/350212	Ayr (Craigie House).	2	6	(22 May)
26/435215	Trabboch.	2	7	(22 May)
26/590220	1 ml. N. Lugar.	2	6	(25 Jun.)
26/392176	L. Martnaham.	2	3	Reported as successfully reared
26/394180	L. Fergus.	2	5	(18 Jun.)
26/385174	Snipe Loch.	2	0	6 eggs robbed (5 Aug.)
26/595151	L. Creoch.	2	3	4 eggs, 1 infertile (20 Jun.)
26/225099	Culzean.	2	5	(17 Jun.)
26/439083	Waterside.	2	5	(24 Jun.)
26/473053	Bogton Loch.	2	3	(26 Jun.)
26/203027	Dipple.	2	7	(10 Jun.) All at Girvan (17-21 Jun.) Returned to Dipple, minus 1 cygnet.
25/196987	1 ml. E. Girvan.	2	0	Eggs reported taken. Sitting (29 Jun.)
25/085823	Stinchar mouth.	2	5	(18 Jun.)
26/606137	1 ml. W. New Cumnock	2	1	(25 Jun.)
26/606135	1 ml. W. New Cumnock	2	6	Pond next to previous nest pond (25 Jun.)
26/328382	Near Irvine.	2	3	May be from used nest at old colliery (ref. given) or from within Ardeer factory site (18 Jun.)
26/376210	Ayr Harbour.	2	2	May be from used nest near Gateside (ref. given (24 Jun.)



FIG. 4.—Status of Mute Swan (*Cygnus olor*) in Ayrshire—Spring 1955.

II.—NON-BREEDERS.

<i>Map Reference.</i>	<i>Locality.</i>	<i>No.</i>	<i>Remarks.</i>
26/240438	Ardrossan Reservoir.	2	(11 Jun.)
26/330535	Kilbirnie Loch.	7	Herd (4 Jun.)
26/298416	River, S. Kilwinning.	2	(28 May)
26/453447	Burnfoot Reservoir.	2	(4 Jun.)
26/437410	North Craig Reservoir.	2	(28 May)
26/300400	Garnock Mouth.	4	2 pairs half-mile apart (28 May)
26/280410	I.C.I. Factory.	3	Reported by employee (10 Jun.)
26/310390	Irvine mouth.	21	Herd (28 May)
26/356370	River near Dreghorn.	2	(17 Jun.)
26/411360	River, Caprington.	2	(28 May)
26/420362	Water meeting, Kilmarnock	2	(28 May)
26/429369	R. Irvine, Kilmarnock.	2	(28 May)
26/498367	Waterside Farm, Galston.	2	River flood pond (7 May)
26/344279	Pow Burn mouth.	2	(27 May)
26/760285	Glenbuck Reservoir.	14	Herd (3 May)
26/392235	River, Auchincruive.	2	(22 May)
26/371213	R. Ayr.	2	(22 May)
26/340220	Ayr.	42	(22 May). Herd nos. reached 93 (30 Jun.)
26/325190	Doon mouth.	2	(7 May)
26/388176	$\frac{1}{4}$ -ml. W. Loch Fergus	2	Wet rushy field (13 May)
26/398174	L. Martnaham.	2	(13 May)
26/603147	Loch o' Lowes.	2	Had tried nesting (20 May)
26/619141	New Cumnock.	1	River by station (20 May)
26/225099	Culzean Swan Lake.	2	One-year-olds, probab- ly from Maidens, and chased by cob of nesting pair (7 May)
26/221098	Port Cary.	2	Two-year-olds from Swan Lake (7 May)
26/209082	Maidens Harbour.	2	One-year-olds (7 May)

<i>Map Reference.</i>	<i>Locality.</i>	<i>No.</i>	<i>Remarks.</i>
26/290082	Glenside Reservoir, Maybole	2	(13 May)
26/341084	Kirkmichael.	2	Probably seven-year- olds, ex. Culzean, wings clipped (7 May)
26/326073	River, Crosshill.	1	(13 May)
26/291032	River, Dailly.	1	Mate frozen to death in ice early in year (13 May)
26/332052	Kirkbride.	2	Royal swans obtained two years before (13 May)
26/236007	Bargany.	1	(3 May)
25/080783	Ballochdoan Reservoir.	2	(10 May)