

'Snow Birds' in Gothenburg

Written by Elizabeth Barrett

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MAJESTIC VISITORS: Three adult trumpeter swans, and a one-year-old brown swan (not pictured), were eating in a cornfield near 96 Ranch south of town Friday. Central Nebraska Public Power & Irrigation District biologist Mark Peyton said trumpeter swans are the largest waterfowl in North America but, at one time, were almost extinct in the lower 48 states. The estimated population is now more than 40,000. Peyton said Nebraska is one of the places the species breed and overwinter but it's mostly in the Sandhills where they'll likely nest and lay eggs in April. The young birds stay with their parents through the summer and have the ability to fly away by fall. Peyton said adults maintain their pair bond through the year and can live in the wild 20 to 30 years.