

MO (Moderate) *Cygnus olor*

Date assessed	2021-11-29
Year published	2022
Eicat category	MO (Moderate)
Justification for EICAT assessment	The Mute Swan may have been responsible for the decline of waterfowl species due to overgrazing and reduction of submerged aquatic vegetation and aggressive interactions. Population declines of waterfowls appear to be related to reductions in submerged aquatic vegetation (SAV), causing the decline of these species. They have been observed to reduce the biomass of SAV due to herbivory, varying between 20% and 95%. SAV comprised of 81.8%% of swan food in gizzard analysis. They can consume on average 43% (females) and 35% (males) of their body weight daily. Based on these calculations, mute swans have the ability to consume more than 3.6 kilograms of SAV per day (Fenwick 1983, Allin and Husband 2003, Atlantic Flyway Council 2003, Perry et al. 2004, The Chesapeake Bay Mute Swan Working Group 2004, Ellis and Elphick 2007, Tatu et al. 2007, Stafford et al. 2012, Guillaume et al. 2014, Atlantic Flyway Council 2015).
Confidence rating	High
Mechanism(s) of maximum impact	Competition; Grazing/herbivory/browsing
Countries of most severe impact	U.S.A.; North america
Description of impact	The mute swan feeds on submerged aquatic vegetation in North America, causing the decline of native species. It competes with native bird species and shows aggressive behaviour against them, like killing chicks or displacement. It also impacts native species by habitat alteration or trampling, which caused nest abandonment.
Assessor	Tom Allmert; Thomas Evans
Contributors	
Reviewers	EICAT authority
Recommended citation	Tom Allmert; Thomas Evans. (2025). <i>Cygnus olor</i> . IUCN Environmental Impact Classification for Alien Taxa (EICAT) .

