

VANISHING GLORY

THE PROPER METHOD.

In New Zealand, when the extermination of some species is threatened, the usual idea put forth is that a few specimens should be captured and released on a sanctuary. The advocates of such schemes usually have little or no knowledge of the capabilities of the area to supply the routine of food required nor know what the necessary food supply consists of month by month. Such methods are nothing more than experiments or gambles.

In Canada and the United States of America, a threatened species is given the credit of knowing what it wants. Much money and biological knowledge are therefore made available to protect the species on the last resort or resorts it itself has chosen.

The following is condensed from an article by John Lindsey Blackford in "Nature Magazine," which describes the energy, money and skill which are now being expended in an effort to save the Trumpeter Swan, America's most noble waterfowl. Red Rock Lakes sanctuary is one of its known breeding grounds, and was specially acquired for the attempt to save the species.

HIGH among the ranges of the Rockies, verdant beneath the snow-crowned peaks of the Centennials, gemmed and bejeweled with shimmering lakes, lies the valley of a last refuge, the vale of a final tarrying. For it is at Red Rock Lakes Migratory Waterfowl Refuge, new scenic super-sanctuary of the federal government in south-western Montana, created primarily for the protection of our threatened trumpeter swan, and in nearby Yellowstone Park, that this largest and most gracious of all North American wild fowl makes its courageous last stand within our borders.

There we find hope that the trumpeter swan—whose high white legions once thronged the skyways, whose resonant voices once proclaimed the ebb and flood of New World migration—may survive. And, in its survival, we may hope that its snowy chevrons will signalize America's new vision, her new conception of a priceless natural heritage.

Lying at an elevation of seven thousand feet, the Centennial Valley is best reached from the Dillon-Idaho Falls highway. A fair-weather road exists, connecting it with the Henry Lake district of Idaho, and from there over beautiful Targhee Pass, and through the Targhee National Forest one arrives at West Yellowstone.

Claimed to be the most scenic of our federal

wildlife refuges, Red Rock presents a memorable panorama of mountain grandeur and lake-land loveliness. Vaulting skyward to form a southern rampart for this valley of the last refuge, the crests of the Centennials first command the eye. In late July, when we drove over the pass, numerous snowbanks still lined the road, while in hidden cirque and sheltered gorge, or on favoured northern exposure, gleamed broader fields of white.

Red Rock Lakes Migratory Waterfowl Refuge, comprising "the most important single nesting ground of the trumpeter swan in the United States," was established by Executive order of April 23, 1935, in no small measure a tribute to the vision and championship of the late George Wright. It now contains 27,555 acres, and while it is of particular value to the swans, more than 200 other species of birds, including many nesting ducks, make use of the sanctuary. The reserve is not only strategically located upon the flyways of the vast western interior, but is suited by natural fitness for such a site. An ample water supply does not diminish greatly even in the driest years, and a small dam in the watercourse leading from the lower lake maintains a fairly constant water level. The depth of the upper body of water varies from six inches to seven feet; that of Lower Red

TRUMPETER SWAN AT RED ROCK. Note cover down to water's edge.

[Photo, "Nature Magazine."

