

British Nature Guide

Mute Swans

A male Mute Swan is called a cob, a female is called a pen and a young swan is called a cygnet. Mute Swans build a large stick nest near water.



The female lays about six eggs and sits on them to keep them warm for six weeks until they hatch. This is called brooding the eggs. The male does not take turns with brooding, he stays nearby to protect the nest.



Swans will carry their newly hatched cygnets on their backs. In late summer adult swans grow new feathers and pull out the old ones. This is called moulting. Cygnets grow quickly and are soon the same size as their parents. They do not turn white until they are one year old.