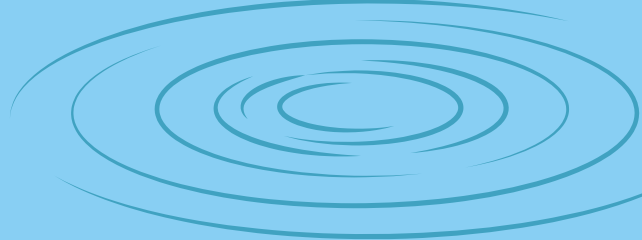


**River & Rowing
Museum**
Henley on Thames



Fact File: Mute Swan

The mute swan is a large white waterbird with a wingspan measuring up to 238cm. It has a distinctive long neck and orange bill with a black base and knob at the top. There are an estimated 74,000 mute swans who spend the winter in the UK.

Their long necks help them to reach down into the water to eat plants, small fish, frogs and molluscs.

A female swan is known as a 'pen' and a male is a 'cob' and they work as a pair to look after their cygnets. They make a large nest made of plants and sticks. The nest is built by the female swan with the male collects the materials.

Mute swans belong to the Queen and are counted and marked on the River Thames every year during Swan Upping.

A mute swan needs to build up speed by running before it can fly because of its large size. Once it is in the air it can fly up to 50 miles per hour!

