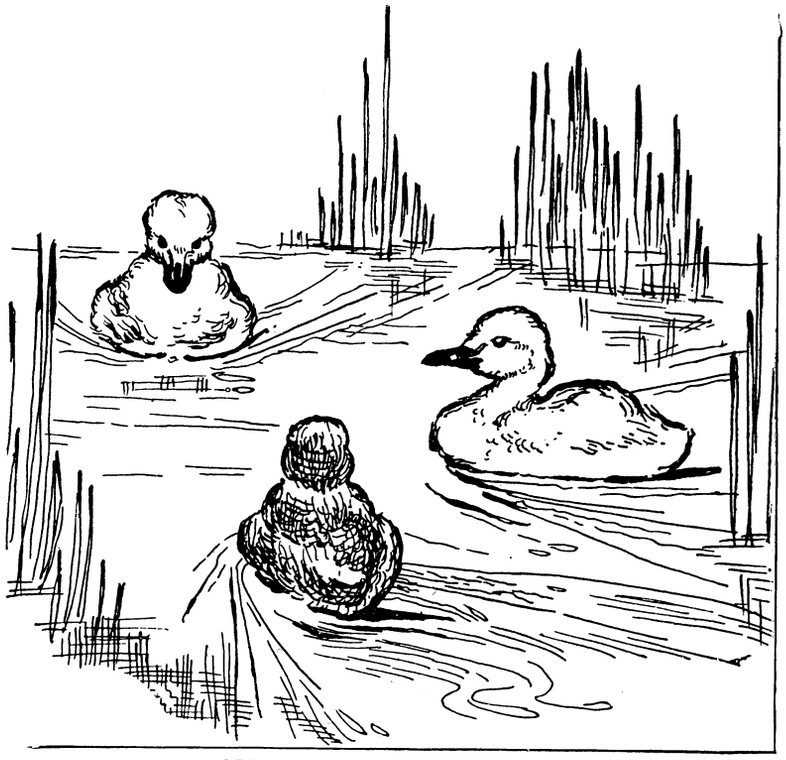

NOT "UGLY DUCKLINGS"

The offspring of the Trumpeter Swan, in their appealing and attractive infancy, sketched by Margaret L. Arnold in Yellowstone National Park while her husband, a ranger, missed meals and sleep in order to guard the little birds against prowling enemies. (See SNL, Jan. 27, 1934, p. 57).

ORNITHOLOGY

Trumpeter Swans to Be Given Artificial Islands

YELLOWSTONE National Park is the last stand of a species of magnificent birds, the trumpeter swans, whose chances of survival are more problematical now than were the chances of the bison a generation or so ago, when the come-back of the western herds began. In an endeavor to give the few remaining swans the best possible opportunity to rear their young in safety, CCC workers are building small artificial islands in the little lakes where they breed. On these, it is expected, the birds will build their nests.

Careful check-ups of the trumpeter swan population by naturalists of the National Park Service have shown a hopeful increase during the past three seasons. In 1931 there were 20 adult swans and 15 cygnets (young). In 1932 the count was 58 swans, 12 cygnets; in 1933 there were 49 swans, 17 cygnets.

This looks like an exceedingly small population, but Yellowstone oldtimers remember that the little group of less than thirty bison introduced into the Park a little over a generation ago has grown up into the present huge herd and so decline to be discouraged over the swan situation—just yet, at any rate.

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directly exposed to hot sun and wind.

Finally, when even this and other mechanical devices of the leaves have failed, and the plant is near complete collapse, the living content, the protoplasm, of each individual cell has its last stubborn bit of resistance to offer.

Protoplasm is a thickish stuff, under normal conditions resembling mucilage or thinned-out white of egg. It has the same resistance such substances have, to giving up the last bit of its water. A drop of egg-white or mucilage stays moist long after a similar drop of pure water has evaporated completely.

So it is also with protoplasm. It will resist complete drying out for a long time, and if rescuing rain comes, it will soak up enough to restore it to normalcy in an amazingly short time. It is this, mainly, that accounts for the quick greening of apparently burned-out pastures after a drought-breaking rain.

Science News Letter, June 30, 1934