

# PRESS RELEASE

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## CANAL CHARITY ASKS PEOPLE IN WEST MIDS TO REPORT WILDLIFE CRIME

The Canal & River Trust charity is calling on the thousands of people who regularly visit its canals in the West Midlands to report any suspected wildlife crime they see to the West Midlands Police, after the bodies of four cygnets (young swans) were found on the Wyrley & Essington Canal in Pelsall and Brownhills. Reports suggest that the birds may have been killed by a pellet gun or catapult.

As the charity that keeps the canals navigable and available for the wildlife that flourishes on them, the Canal & River Trust is deeply saddened by these suspected attacks. Although the isolated incidents are, thankfully, rare, any instance of animal cruelty is one too many. The Canal & River Trust has logged a Wildlife Crime report with West Midlands Police – local people are advised not to put themselves in harm's way, but to report any suspected wildlife crime to the police.

Paul Wilkinson, senior ecologist at Canal & River Trust, said: "Canals are a haven for wildlife, places where people can get close to our amazing natural world without fear, and the place where many of us see our first swans, ducks, dragonflies or even an otter. But our nature is under threat, it's incredibly upsetting that our iconic waterway cygnets have seemingly been killed in these senseless attacks. Cruelty to animals can't be tolerated, it is a crime and needs to be addressed, and we are working with the West Midlands Police and local community to prevent it happening again. Thankfully these incidents are rare, and, with your help, we can help keep our canals safe places for nature to thrive along them."

Please report any wildlife crime or anything suspicious to the West Midlands Police:

<https://www.westmidlands.police.uk/>

If you see a swan or any other animal in distress, contact the RSPCA:

<https://www.rspca.org.uk/utilities/contactus>

For more information about the Canal & River Trust, visit: [Canal & River Trust | Making life better by water \(canalrivertrust.org.uk\)](https://www.canalrivertrust.org.uk)

Canal & River Trust, National Waterways Museum Ellesmere Port, South Pier Road, Ellesmere Port, Cheshire

E: [press.office@canalrivertrust.org.uk](mailto:press.office@canalrivertrust.org.uk) W: [www.canalrivertrust.org.uk](http://www.canalrivertrust.org.uk) Twitter: [@CanalRiverTrust](https://twitter.com/CanalRiverTrust)

Canal & River Trust is a charitable company limited by guarantee, registered in England and Wales with company number 7807276 and registered charity number 1146792, registered office address: National Waterways Museum Ellesmere Port, South Pier Road, Ellesmere Port, Cheshire, CH65 4FW

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**For further media requests please contact:**

Fran Read, Canal & River Trust

m 07796 610427 e [fran.read@canalrivertrust.org.uk](mailto:fran.read@canalrivertrust.org.uk)