

REFLECTION FROM THE LAAMB



The other day on my early morning walk I decided to walk along Colpoy's Bay blue water campground. There is a trail that follows the shoreline. The sunrise was beautiful as it reflected off the water. As I walked, looking out into the bay I saw a huge white swan quite close into the shore. As I got closer I saw another swan. I

thought this must be the two that Lore and I always see in this area. But as I walked even closer towards the water, I saw another swan even closer to the rocks inland. I couldn't believe it! Lore and I had never seen this other swan before. There was a bench that was a little farther off the path in the grassy area. I decided to sit down to watch these three swans. I was far enough from them that I would not threaten them. It was strange because the one set of swans were much farther from the lone swan. Why were they keeping their distance from each other?



As I settled into the bench, I enjoyed watching the swans. But then much closer to shore I saw a fourth swan. I could just see the head popping up. I didn't want to go closer for fear of scaring this fourth one away. So I just sat and watch the head of this swan. It must have been over fifteen minutes when all of a sudden, I saw this beautiful huge swan swim out a bit and there beside her was a small swan! It wasn't tiny but about a quarter the size of the mother. Wow, I thought, Lore is never going to believe this! I watched as the small swan played this game with her mother. The little swan chased her mother for a bit then the mother turned around and started chasing the little one. I could tell they were having fun with this game. I also noticed the male swan watching all this from a distance while keeping watch over his territory. Now I understood why the other two swans were so far away. They were respecting this other family with their little one and the male was ensuring that they did! .



I couldn't believe I was seeing this. It was a beautiful moment. I stayed watching until a jogger came down the path from the other way and it scared the swans. I can't tell you the words that went through my mind as that jogger went by me. Once the swans saw the jogger, the male swan made a noise and they quickly swam with the little one following out to deeper waters.

I got up and walked out towards the harbour to see them again but now they were headed past the harbour to the other side of the bay where they could get to a different shore line.

As I continued on my walk, I thought I would have never done this before the pandemic because on my walk I was always on a mission to get my exercise then get home to start the rest of my day. I might not have even seen the swans and if I did, I might have stopped to take a look and then continued on my mission to get home. And yet, stopping to enjoy those beautiful swans did something to me. They changed me for the good, they taught me something. They allowed me to relearn that it is ok to stop and enjoy God's creation. They became a part of my day that I needed. Sometimes we need to stop and enjoy the little things in life; those beautiful things that remind us to play, to enjoy and to take in the fullness of our lives. We have all heard this but it is true...I need to be reminded that life is too short not to stop and take in these joyful moments of life.

Thank you swans and especially the little one that allowed me to remember that it is ok to stop, it is ok to play and it is ok to spend time seeing God's creation enjoying life.

Perry

More info about small swans that I learned from the internet.

A Typical Day For A Young Swan Family

These little stations they create for themselves become an integral part of their daily activity. Swans, on the whole, have a life where one day is very similar to the next.

The family will sleep together as a group, with the male and female swans making sure their cygnets are always close by – especially when they're very young. At first light, the cygnets will start to stir and you can hear lots of their 'contented' calls coming from them.

Various family members will have a bit of preen and shakedown (a shakedown is where they stand up and flap their wings back and forth a few times). The pen will then lead them to a food source, like some floating weed, overhanging vegetation or the adults will pull up plant material for them to eat. The young will still consume a few insects, but the number they eat will decrease as they will have a growing preference for the normal swan diet of pond weed, etc... As their preference for plant material grows, they will start to 'upend' to feed, holding their breath for longer and longer as they grow up. But they will not be sufficiently developed to match the adults for the time spent holding their breath until they have left the family unit.

Periods of feeding could last anywhere between twenty minutes up to an hour. It depends on how quickly the cygnets tire – as they progress through these first three months, they can last for longer and longer periods of time before they let out their tired calls and the family will take a break.

For this break, the pen will lead them (often by using high pitched calls) to a sheltered spot – somewhere out of the main flow, if they're on a river, or to a suitable area of gently sloping banking, if they live on a pond or lake. If their nest is not too far away, they could return to that spot for their rest. The cob will normally follow on at the rear, but sometimes keeping a distance away from the main group – more so as the cygnets get older.

Once at their chosen location, all the individuals will have another preen and once this is done (which can take about thirty minutes), they'll take a nap.

When settling down for a sleep, the cygnets will often huddle together, sometimes even resting their head on another's body – although this is not usual