

PRESS RELEASE FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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"LOVE A DUCK!" ON ST. VALENTINE'S DAY
SCHEME LAUNCHED TO RESCUE PARKS' DUCK POPULATION

Preparations for St. Valentine's Day are already underway at The Royal Parks in London.

In true Valentine's Day spirit, a scheme is being launched to 'pair up' unattached, lovelorn ducks from St James's Park and Regent's Park who have lost their partners through old-age or other natural causes.

Tony Duckett (sic), Wildlife Officer of Regent's Park, said:

"Sometimes it can be a lonely life for a rare or unusual duck. Even if there's another duck of the right species on the lake they just might not get on. Some of the quacks and whistles can get a bit plaintive."

The Royal Parks hope the situation will have a happy ending and are appealing to the public for help. For as little as £25 people can enable The Royal Parks to provide lonely ducks with prospective partners and also give an unusual Valentine's Day present to their own special someone.

Anyone wishing to give the gift of a duck can visit

www.royalparksfoundation.org/loveaduck

As well as bringing love to the lake and passion to the pond, people will get an immediate online certificate, soon to be followed by an official certificate, a collectors' lapel pin and, when the bird arrives in the Park in late summer, a photo of its first moments out and about. What's more people can even name the duck they've funded.

The numbers of ducks in the Parks have fallen in recent years as old age and nature take their toll. Losses have not always been replaced and many of the rarer ducks have been unable to find a partner after losing a loved-one.

The plan is to raise enough money to be able to secure a new generation of waterfowl - so that romance can blossom between duck couples and breeding can be revived.

The Royal Parks hope to bring in at least 130 ducks, pintails, widgeons, pochards and geese and most of the new in-take will be single birds who will become well-loved partners for the ducks that are currently unattached.

Without the scheme, which will also help house and care for the new arrivals, many of the dozens of rare waterfowl species, including the super-rare Hawaiian Goose and the Marbled Teal, may disappear from St James's Park and Regent's Park.

Sara Lom, Director of the Royal Parks Foundation, the registered charity that is behind the scheme, explained today:

'We have 33 different species of duck in St James's Park alone and the problem is that ducks from one particular species will not mate with ones from another. This is one of the reasons why, with St Valentine's Day approaching, it is so sad that we have so many single ducks swimming around on our ponds feeling lonely.

'When we realised that we had a problem and that St. Valentine's Day was looming, we thought we would appeal to the public for help... and also appeal to their sense of romanticism. We hope there are some romantics out there who can help us!'

- ENDS -

For further Information Contact:

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Notes to the Editor:

Detailed biographies on the 27 species of duck and goose looking for love are available on request.

The Royal Parks are a sanctuary and a breeding ground for an amazing collection of waterfowl and other birds.

Birds have been kept in St James's Park since James I's reign. Birdcage Walk got its name as the home of Charles II's bird collection and Duck Island was built in 1665. It is now home to more than 30 species of waterfowl.

Regent's Nature Study Centre has been raising waterfowl since the 1920s and is currently home to more than 60 species of duck and goose.

Honestly, Tony Duckett is the Regent's Park Wildlife Officer with responsibility for the Park's whole collection of waterfowl. We haven't just made up his name. You can meet him if you like.

The Royal Parks Foundation is a registered charity, no. 1097545.