

Item 49.2

Cruel jobs' brick attack kills week-old cygnet.
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Cruel jobs' brick attack kills week-old cygnet

They have brought delight to people enjoying the Shropshire spring by the river, a mother proudly caring for her cygnets.
But to the horror of people walking along the River Teme in Ludlow, their peace was shattered by a group of youths armed with bricks.

Their attack left one one-week-old cygnet dead in an attack today branded "100 cruel for words" by a retired vet in the town.

The youths, believed to be aged between 14 and 17, were seen throwing rocks towards the bottom of Weeping Cross Lane.
They ran away when challenged by

a member of the public. Weir manager Gareth Thomas, a retired veterinary surgeon and wildlife photographer, had photographed the swans just a couple of days before the attack.

He said: "A family were passing by when they saw the rocks being thrown. The youths eventually managed to hit one of the cygnets with a brick and killed it."

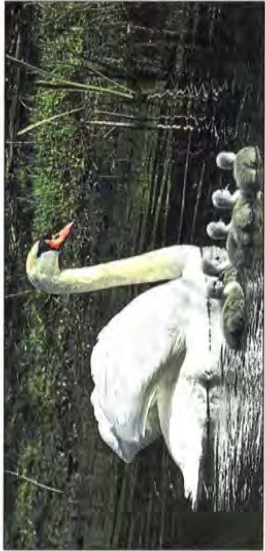
"They were carrying a telescopic fishing rod and had been drinking lager."
"They ran off after realising what they had done, leaving behind several unopened beers and a fleecy jacket."

"It was such a callous and cruel thing to do because the cygnet would have been completely defenceless."

"It's just too cruel for words," Police spokesman Richard Ewells said they were appealing for witnesses to the attack, at around 2pm on Sunday.

Information should be passed to Ludlow Police on the non-emergency, 101, number.

Mr Ewells said: "One cygnet was struck and killed and the culprits ran off when they were challenged. We are appealing for witness or anyone with information about those responsible."



The swan and her cygnets on the River Teme. Picture Gareth B Thomas.