

GREBES

Tiny waterbirds, sharp-billed, almost tailless with lobed rather than webbed feet. Often mistaken for ducklings. They dive for tadpoles, insect larvae and small fish. Nests are floating rafts of weeds; small young are black and white striped. Rarely seen on land.

AUSTRALASIAN GREBE

Tachybaptus novaehollandiae
In fresh or brackish water. Dives to escape danger. Yellow cheek patch, brighter when breeding.
C



HOARY-HEADED GREBE

Poliiocephalus poliocephalus
Streaked head more conspicuous when breeding; dark nape stripe; silver eye; flanks are grey rather than brown.
U, N



GREAT CRESTED GREBE

Podiceps cristatus
Largest grebe. Conspicuous white neck, black crest and rufous and black neck frill.
R



RAPTOR

SWAMP HARRIER

Circus approximans
Large dark bird of prey with pale rump. Cruises above swampy areas searching for prey. Nests on ground in dense reeds.
U



BIRDWATCHING TIPS

- Birds are more active early in the morning.
- There are often clues in the location (trees, fringing reeds or grassland, open water) and in the behaviour.
- Don't overlook dead trees - they may contain hollows suitable for nesting, even by ducks.
- Be careful not to disturb waterbirds. Some are easily spooked, especially when nesting.
- Be aware that mosquitoes may be present.

Acknowledgements:

Illustrations: Pam Agar, John Anderson, Robin Ashford, Michael Bamford, Judy Blyth, Milly Formby, Pam Free, Keith Lightbody, Michael Morcombe, Frank O'Connor, Allan Rose, Georgina Steytler, Chris Tate, Susan Tingay, Ian Wallace.

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Queries to BirdLife Western Australia.
Bird Guide No. 72

Abundance	Status
C Common	* Introduced
M Moderately common	N Nomadic
U Uncommon	O Of conservation concern
R Rare	IA Protected by international agreement
Mi Migratory	Mi Migratory
♂ male bird	

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Waterbirds of the Eastern Metropolitan Region



Purple Swamphen by Athena Georgiou

Kalamunda, Mundaring Shires and City of Swan

birds are in our nature


birdlife
Western Australia

BLUE-BILLED DUCK

Oxyura australis

Stiff-tailed duck species, usually found in deeper fresh water. When breeding, male is rich chestnut with blue bill. Otherwise, like female: plainer blackish-brown.

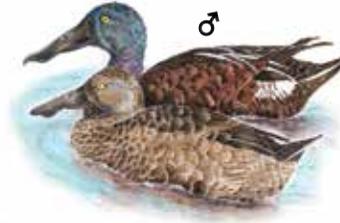
U



AUSTRALIAN SHOVELER

Spatula rhynchotis

Has a spoon-shaped bill fringed with lamellae for filtering small aquatic animals. Female plainer. U N



FRECKLED DUCK

Stictonetta naevosa

Distinctively sloped forehead; slight crest at nape. In breeding plumage, male has red base to bill; otherwise like female and immatures.

R



PINK-EARED DUCK

Malacorhynchus membranaceus

Filter feeder of microscopic plants, animals and small seeds. Sometimes seen rotating in pairs to stir up insects.

U N



PACIFIC BLACK DUCK

Anas superciliosa

Feeds by upending in shallow water for plant or animal food. Often nests in a tree hollow near water.

C



MUSK DUCK

Biziura lobata

Stiff-tailed duck; prefers deep water. Dives for food. When courting, the male splashes and whistles, while inflating a leathery lobe beneath his bill.

U



BLACK SWAN

Cygnus atratus

Use their long necks to reach underwater plants. Need open water for flight take-off.

U



NORTHERN MALLARD / DOMESTIC DUCK

Anas platyrhynchos

Limited to a few Perth wetlands. Male has orange legs and curled tail feathers. Female & immature much harder to separate from Pacific Black Duck. Colouring of other domestic ducks varies.

R

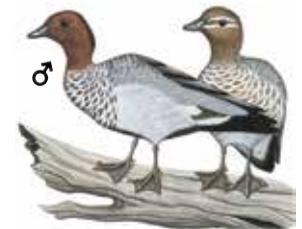


AUSTRALIAN WOOD DUCK

Chenonetta jubata

Enjoys dams and pastures. Often feeds on grassy margins of a wetland. Female more heavily mottled with pale stripes above and below eye.

C



AUSTRALIAN SHELDUCK

Tadorna tadornoides

Large boldly marked duck; on fresh or salt water. Sifts mud and water for food or grazes on grasslands. Female has white eye.

C



GREY TEAL

Anas gracilis

More wary than Pacific Black Duck. Feeds by upending. Disperses widely after good rains.

C N



OLD WORLD WARBLER

AUSTRALIAN REED-WARBLER

Acrocephalus australis

Lives among reed-beds but not often seen. In spring its rich, loud call is conspicuous.

M



HARDHEAD

Aythya australis

Prefers deeper water where it dives for molluscs and seeds. Only the male has a white eye.

M



CHESTNUT TEAL

Anas castanea

Prefers more saline waters. Female & immatures are similar to Grey Teal - the latter has a whiter throat & slightly lighter colouring but not easy to separate.

R



LITTLE GRASSBIRD

Poodytes gramineus

Secretive; sneaks to top of dense vegetation to view intruders. Presence indicated by a melancholy, three-note call.

U



HERONS, EGRETS, IBIS & SPOONBILL

Herons and egrets are medium to tall birds with long necks and legs and straight sharp bills for seizing slippery prey. Most nest in tree-top colonies.

Ibis have a long down-curved bill while **spoonbills** have a straight bill with the end flat and broad.

NANKEEN NIGHT HERON

Nycticorax caledonicus
Feeds dusk to dawn; shelters in trees by day. Sometimes seen standing statue-like in surrounding vegetation but often goes unnoticed. Juvenile is mottled brown.

U



CATTLE EGRET

Bubulcus ibis
Stocky build. Usually seen in pasture with grazing stock; snaps up disturbed insects. Orange crown, neck & breast in breeding plumage. Similar to Little Egret but this is less stocky & always has a black bill. U



WHITE-NECKED HERON

Ardea pacifica
Irruptions occasionally occur, such as in 2002 when the herons were seen regularly. Seen only occasionally since. R N



GREAT EGRET

Ardea alba
Stately bird, usually found singly. Waits, motionless, before making a lightning thrust at prey. M IA



WHITE-FACED HERON

Egretta novaehollandiae
Feeds on frogs, insects, small fish and crustaceans found in shallow wetlands or open grassy areas. Nest is a platform of sticks in a tree. C



LITTLE EGRET

Egretta garzetta
Similar to Great Egret but smaller, more slender with shorter neck. Much more active, dashing about after prey in shallow water. R



AUSTRALIAN WHITE IBIS

Threskiornis moluccus
Has moved south from the Kimberley since 1952. Eats crustaceans and small aquatic animals; probes water-logged areas, sometimes lawns and ovals. C



STRAW-NECKED IBIS

Threskiornis spinicollis
Iridescent wings, white neck & underparts; feeds in grasslands or shallow wetlands; prefers irrigated pastures, often in large numbers; sometimes seen circling high. C N



YELLOW-BILLED SPOONBILL

Platalea flavipes
Sweeps its flattened bill from side to side, in search of small aquatic animals. M



GLOSSY IBIS

Plegadis falcinellus
Small dark ibis; iridescent wings but no white areas. Found on shallow fresh water. Uncommon visitor to Swan Coastal Plain. R N IA



AUSTRALIAN PELICAN

Pelecanus conspicillatus
Often gregarious when fishing; singles more likely on dams. Soars on thermals. Breeds in huge colonies in remote areas when conditions are suitable. M



CORMORANTS & DARTER

Diving birds whose wings are extended to dry out feathers after fishing as they are not water-proofed like ducks' feathers. They roost and breed in colonies.

AUSTRALASIAN DARTER

Anhinga novaehollandiae
Specially jointed neck enables it to suddenly stab at prey (fish), or to submerge with barely a ripple. Nest is a platform of sticks and leafy twigs. Female much paler. C



LITTLE PIED CORMORANT

Microcarbo melanoleucos
Has a stubby yellow bill. Usually fishes alone. Often seen perched while drying their wings. C



GREAT CORMORANT

Phalacrocorax carbo
Larger than Little Black Cormorant with a conspicuous yellow facial patch. Usually seen singly or in small groups. U



LITTLE BLACK CORMORANT

Phalacrocorax sulcirostris
Common in both fresh and brackish water. Very active when fishing in flocks; more likely in small numbers in these areas. C



BUFF-BANDED RAIL

Hypotenendia philippensis
Usually seen singly in vegetation along the water's edge; sometimes in open grassland.
R



CRAKES:

All three are secretive, feeding among dense vegetation at margins, sometimes venturing beyond shelter to feed, usually early morning or late afternoon.

AUSTRALIAN SPOTTED CRAKE

Porzana fluminea
Constantly flicks tail to reveal patch of white under tail (unlike other crakes). If disturbed, runs crouched with tail cocked.
R N



BAILLON'S CRAKE

Zapornia pusilla
Tiny crake. Note mottled brown back, pale grey face & breast. Prefers vegetated freshwater wetlands.
R



SPOTLESS CRAKE

Zapornia tabuensis
Like a small dark hen as it dashes between rushes. Note red legs and eye.
U



PURPLE SWAMPHEN

Porphyrio porphyrio
Feeds on tender reed stems; also grazes some distance from water. Clambers noisily through fringing shrubs. Note white under tail.
C



DUSKY MOORHEN

Gallinula tenebrosa
Grazes aquatic vegetation by upending like a duck. Also feeds on land plants, insects and frogs. Note white outer tail feathers.
U



BLACK-TAILED NATIVE-HEN

Tribonyx ventralis
Highly irruptive. Usually singles or pairs in metro area. Note green frontal shield, white marks on flanks, no white under tail.
R



EURASIAN COOT

Fulica atra
Has flattened lobed toes and feeds in water or on land. Their call is a sharp loud "kyik".
C



SHOREBIRDS

Many waders and shorebirds breed in the Northern Asian/Alaskan summer and travel annually between breeding grounds and Australia. A few may over-winter here.

PIED STILT

Previously Black-winged Stilt
Himantopus leucocephalus
Feeds on aquatic plants, insects and shrimps. Breeds in Australia. (NB Banded Stilt is less likely. Bulkier and with shorter legs than Pied Stilt; broad chestnut breast band in breeding plumage).
U N



RED-NECKED AVOCET

Charadrius ruficapillus
Wades through shallow water, sweeping its upturned bill in search of food.
R N



BLACK-FRONTED DOTTEREL

Elseynornis melanops
Prefers shallow margins or mudflats. Bobs its head, tips and runs. Nests on ground, relying on cryptic colouring and distraction displays.
M



BANDED LAPWING

Vanellus tricolor
Upright posture. Feeds in short grasses, often far from water but may occur on bare, dry mud at margins of wetlands.
R



RED-KNEED DOTTEREL

Erythrogonys cinctus
Prefers natural or modified freshwater wetlands. Probes muddy shorelines; often feeds in water.
R N



COMMON SANDPIPER

Actitis hypoleucos
Occasionally seen wandering solitarily along margins. Bobs nervously. Note white of breast forms a slight 'hook' round bend of wing.
R IA Mi



COMMON GREENSHANK

Tringa nebularia
Found solitarily along the water's edge, searching for insects and molluscs. Call is a haunting "tew-tew-tew".
R IA Mi



WOOD SANDPIPER

Tringa glareola
Slender, dainty, active but wary; prefers shallow freshwater with emergent plants and living or dead trees.
R IA Mi

