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Birds of New Zealand - Locality Guide. 3rd edn.

Arun Books, Orewa, New Zealand.

Black swan: pp 100-101.



BLACK SWAN

Family Anatidae

Species *Cygnus atratus*

Common name Black Swan

Status Introduced.

Abundance Common

Size 1200 mm (cf sparrow 145 mm, Mute Swan 1500mm)

Habitat A bird of inland lakes, tidal harbours and estuaries.

Worldwide range Black Swans probably arrived naturally from Australia in the 19th century. Later, introductions were made for hunting reasons which bolstered this population. Since then they have multiplied rapidly and spread to most wetland areas of New Zealand. They are hunted during the shooting season in May and June.

New Zealand range Found throughout New Zealand on both the main islands and Stewart Island. Also visits some of the offshore islands.

Description

Upperparts and underparts Black. **Wings** Black with white on primaries and some of the secondary feathers. **Bill** Red with a white band near the tip and a white tip. **Legs and feet** Black.

Conspicuous features

- A large black Swan.
- Has a “painted” white band across the upper mandible.
- White wing primaries when bird is in flight are conspicuous but not when the bird is on the water unless wings are flapped.

Conspicuous characteristics

- Continually raises wings and flaps them when on water.
- In flight, neck is outstretched.
- Its song and wing whistle are regularly heard overhead at night.

Call A musical song usually heard when birds are flying. Also, a musical whistle when birds are sitting on the water.

Nest A mound of grass and rush stems near the shoreline and on the ground. Nesting material is gathered from around the nest site by reaching from the nest. Up to 6 pale green eggs are laid.

Where to find – North Island

North Auckland – Waiwera at Strakas Refuge. P. 291.

Auckland – Western Springs Lakes. P. 297.

Auckland – Lake Pupuke. P. 297.

North Waikato – Lake Whangape at Rangiriri. P. 309.

Hamilton Lake – Hamilton city. P. 310.

Rotorua – Lake Rotoma in the Rotorua district. P. 323.

Tauranga Harbour – At northern end near Katikati. P. 318.

Bay of Plenty – Matata Lagoon. P. 320.

Where to find – South Island

North Canterbury – St Annes Lagoon Cheviot. P. 347.

Canterbury – Lake Ellesmere P. 351.