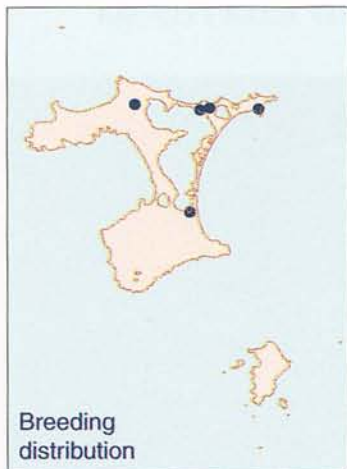


Black shag *Phalacrocorax carbo*

88 cm

NEW ZEALAND NATIVE, SPARSE

Black shags are also known as great, common or black cormorants, or kawau. They are the largest of the shags, and have black plumage that is somewhat browner on the wings and tail, yellow facial skin with a white band on the cheeks, and a white patch on the flank when breeding. Black shags nest in small colonies in tree-tops or among flax clumps. A survey conducted in 1997 found five black shag colonies, all on Chatham Island, with a total of 233 breeding pairs. Black shags feed on small and medium-sized fish in lakes, rivers and sheltered inshore coastal waters.



Black shag at nest.  
Photo: Peter Reese.