

Black Swan

Cygnus atratus

Distribution and Habitat: Black Swans are found throughout Australia with the exception of Cape York Peninsula, and are more common in the south. They prefer larger salt, brackish or fresh waterways and permanent wetlands, requiring 40 m or more of clear water to take off.

Description: The Black Swan has a body length of up to 142 cm, with the females being smaller than the males. In adults, the body is mostly black, with the exception of broad white wing tips, which are visible in flight. The bill is a deep orange-red, paler at the tip, with a distinct narrow white band towards the end. Younger birds are much greyer in colour, and have black wing tips. It is the only entirely black-coloured swan in the world.

Food and feeding

The Black Swan is a vegetarian. Food consists of algae and weeds, which the bird obtains by plunging its long neck into water up to 1 m deep. Occasionally birds will graze on land, but they are clumsy walkers

