

RECOVERY OUTLINE

Imperial Shag (Macquarie Island)

1	Family	Phalacrocoracidae
2	Scientific name	<i>Leucocarbo atriceps purpurascens</i> (Brandt, 1837)
3	Common name	Imperial Shag (Macquarie Island)
4	Conservation status	Vulnerable: D2

5 Reasons for listing

The subspecies breeds only at two small locations (Vulnerable: D2).

	Estimate	Reliability
Extent of occurrence	75 km ²	high
trend	stable	high
Area of occupancy	50 km ²	high
trend	stable	high
No. of breeding birds	2,500	medium
trend	fluctuating	medium
No. of sub-populations	2	high
Largest sub-population	2,100	medium
Generation time	15 years	low

6 Intraspecific taxa

L. a. nivalis (Heard I.) is also Vulnerable. The other six subspecies, found on remote subantarctic islands outside Australian territory are more numerous and widespread. Globally, the species is Least Concern.

7 Past range and abundance

Endemic to subantarctic Macquarie I. and the adjacent Bishop and Clerk Islets, 33 km to the south. Most breeding colonies are on western coast of Macquarie I., though the species feeds along both coasts (Brothers, 1985). Population estimated at 760 pairs, including 100 pairs on the Bishop and Clerk Islets. Of 23 breeding colonies recorded, 19 active 1975-1979 and with between 3 and 320 pairs in each colony. Numbers of breeding birds fluctuate between years and pairs probably move between breeding sites (Brothers, 1985).

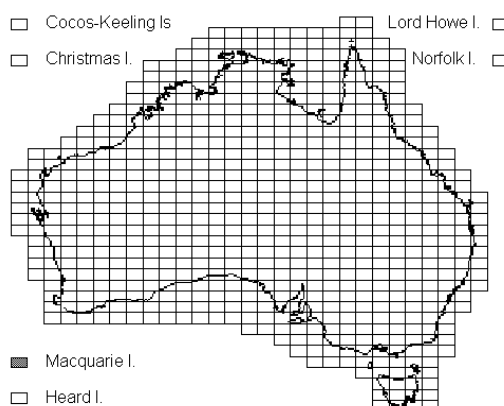
8 Present range and abundance

As above.

9 Ecology

The Macquarie I. subspecies of Imperial Shag feeds in the limited area of shallow water around the island, taking benthic fish from amongst rocks and kelp beds (Brothers, 1985, Green *et al.*, 1990). Nests are built on bare rock in the spray zone, not far above the high tide line. Breeding success is reasonably high, varying

between 72% and 82% in the period 1975-1979, with mortality being caused by stormy weather, predation by Subantarctic Skuas *Catharacta skua lonnbergi* and introduced cats (Brothers, 1985).



10 Threats

The main potential threat would be from natural catastrophes that could eliminate small sub-populations. Increased predation by cats or skuas could have a significant effect, if coincident with a catastrophe.

11 Information required

None.

12 Recovery objectives

12.1 Maintain existing population.

13 Actions completed or under way

13.1 Continuing predator control.

13.2 Periodic monitoring of population size

14 Management actions required

None.

15 Organisations responsible for conservation

Tasmanian Parks and Wildlife Service.

16 Other organisations involved

None.

