

Royal Spoonbill



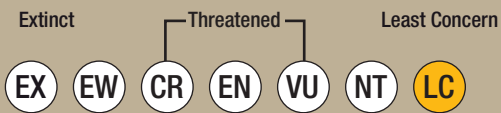
Fast Facts



Other Names: Black-bill Spoonbill

Scientific Name: *Platalea regia*

Conservation Status: Least Concern



Body Length: 75 – 80 cm

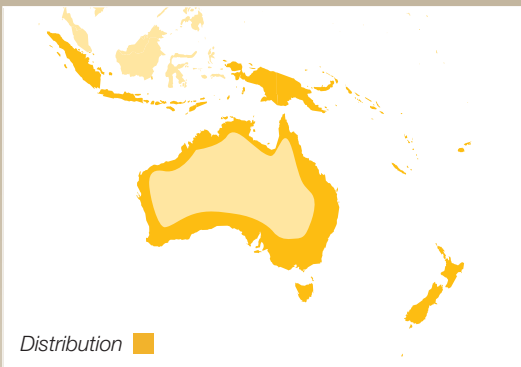
Weight: 77 – 78 g

Incubation: 25 days

Number of eggs: 2–4

Habitat: Salt and freshwater wetlands

Distribution: Mainland Australia except dry and arid areas, Indonesia, Papua New Guinea and New Zealand



Description

The Royal Spoonbill gets its name from its unusual straight bill with a spoon-shaped end. They have white feathers with black bills and legs.

Diet

Royal Spoonbills are carnivores. Their diet consists mainly of fish, but they also eat insects and crustaceans once they have crushed them with the end of their bill.

In the wild

The Royal Spoonbill uses its oddly shaped bill to capture its prey in the water. By swimming along and swaying the bill from side to side under the surface the bird is able to grasp its food. They then eat whatever they catch by throwing their head back, sliding the food down their throat and swallowing.

Threats

Destruction of habitat through land-clearing, increased salinity and flooding are all threats to the Royal Spoonbill. However, artificial wetlands have been beneficial in some areas. They are listed as a vulnerable species in Victoria.

At Perth Zoo

The Royal Spoonbill can be found in the Australian Wetlands exhibit.

DID YOU KNOW?

When they are breeding, the Royal Spoonbill, both male and female, grows white plumes along the nape of the neck about 15 cm long.