



Waimanu Lagoon

photo Eileen Thomas

Black Swans

There are many black swans on the Waimanu lagoon at the moment, with a couple of pairs nesting. This means that the cobs that are nesting spend lots of time chasing the younger birds all around the lagoon and up onto the bank if they can, keeping them away from the bird nesting. The younger swans keep a wary eye out for these aggressive birds even flying from one end of the lagoon to the other, although mainly paddling flat out to keep well away. If you look at the base of a swans neck you can see whether it has been attacked by an aggressive swan as the feathers don't grow back very well. Swimming with the swans are quite a few mallards, shoveler and scaup and with the cobs chasing the younger swans all over the lagoon they have to be quick and watch out or they will get run over. These large aggressive swans don't worry about the other birds they are so intent on chasing and pecking the bums of the swan they are chasing.

Little black shags

The little black shags are back in the estuary in a group of around thirty birds, having been away for awhile. They have been fishing the river and even powered into the backwater on the river side of the weir. The water was quite low and these birds all dived in unison and herded the little fishes into the weir proper where the trapped fish became a feast-then over to the lagoon where they had a little swim around. They then flew the length of the lagoon, swung around the shag tree and back to the river.



Nesting

We are moving into the winter months and the birds are still raising young. The scaup have had a good year as have the shoveler ducks and our black swans are about to hatch their latest brood. The black swans will nest any time of the year if conditions are right.



photograph Frank Neill

The Shag Tree

How many birds are there in the Shag Tree on the Waimanu lagoon? This shot was taken on the northern side of the shag tree with around a dozen Royal Spoonbills roosting at the top of the tree on the side away from where the shags like to nest, overlooking the water. There are about fifteen shags to be counted on this side however, as you go around the tree you will find just as many on the side facing the water. As its half way through the morning there will be equally as many shags out to sea fishing or resting on the side of the river. The bare branches to be seen are the result of the birds acid droppings, they strip any foliage off the tree and eventually after a very long time may even kill the tree.

Thomas the Goose.

On the "Ellen" show screened world wide the question arose in her quiz show --"which of these are not true stories?"

The contestant picked our own Thomas the goose story as being untrue-- so she lost!

Makes you realise just how famous our love story is.



The Lost Cows of Kapiti

Mik's latest Children's story

This is farmer Kerry being informed that his 42 cows are now 8 kilometres from his farm and are lost--he didn't believe his cows weren't still in their home paddock.

**This is another of Mik's true stories.
[selling extremely well]**

Hits last month --Eighteen Thousand six Hundred and Five
Mik Peryer the Birdman of Waikanae