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# Bird Emblem of the State of Western Australia



## DESCRIPTION

BLACK SWAN  
(*Cygnus atratus*)

The Black Swan was first recorded by the Dutch navigator Vlaming in January 1697 in the Swan Estuary. Although it is to be found throughout Australia, this graceful bird has been regarded with special affection by many generations of Western Australians and has long been used to identify things Western Australian.

The plumage is black, often with a brownish tinge, but the flight quills are pure white and very prominent when the bird is seen in flight. The beak is red with a white band near the tip and the legs and feet are dark grey.

Males and females are similar in size and appearance but males can be identified in flight by their larger neck and, when swimming, hold their neck more erect. The bird's voice can often be heard at night and is a musical honk or bugling sound.

Nests are a bulky collection of sticks and rushes found in fresh or brackish swamps and lakes. Between four to eight eggs are laid and these are pale green, becoming paler as incubation proceeds. Incubation takes thirty-five days.

Aboriginal lore tells how the family ancestors of a section of the Bibbulman tribe of Western Australia were black swans who had been changed into men.



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OF

WESTERN AUSTRALIA

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[1973

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## PROCLAMATION

WESTERN AUSTRALIA }  
TO WIT,  
DOUGLAS KENDREW,  
Governor.  
[L.S.]

By His Excellency Major General Sir Douglas Anthony Kendrew, Knight Commander of the Most Distinguished Order of Saint Michael and Saint George, Companion of the Most Honourable Order of the Bath, Commander of the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire, Companion of the Distinguished Service Order, Governor in and over the State of Western Australia and its Dependencies in the Commonwealth of Australia.

WHEREAS it appears to me, the Governor, desirable that a bird emblem should be adopted as an emblem of the State of Western Australia and further that such emblem ought to be the bird known as the Black Swan and more fully described as *Cygnus atratus* : NOW, THEREFORE, I, the Governor, acting with the advice and consent of the Executive Council hereby declare that the bird known as the Black Swan and more fully described as *Cygnus atratus* be adopted and recognised as the bird emblem of the State of Western Australia.

Given under my hand and the Public Seal of the said State, at Perth, this 25th day of July, 1973.

By His Excellency's Command,  
JOHN T. TONKIN,  
PREMIER.

GOD SAVE THE QUEEN !!!