

## Marine Birds – Brandt’s Cormorant Colonies

### description

Brandt’s Cormorants (*Phalacrocorax penicillatus*) are large with long, slender necks. Adults are almost solid black while juveniles are buff-brown and black. During the breeding season the birds have white plumes. Birds of all ages and phases have light-coloured cheek patches and a blue patch at the neck. Almost always found on salt or brackish water, Brandt’s Cormorants inhabit rocky shorelines and open ocean. Nesting colonies are typically located on slopes rather than cliff ledges. Brandt’s Cormorants, like other cormorants, are colonial nesters.

This atlas page depicts active and historic Brandt’s Cormorant colonies in terms of their relative importance, a value that corresponds to the number of “nest pairs” estimated at any one site during the most recent survey year. This value was compared to the total BC population, which was determined by summing the estimated number of individuals at all colonies during the most recent survey year. Using these values, relative importance was determined as follows:

- High: colony has >5% of the species’ total BC population.
- Moderate: colony has 1-5% of the species’ total BC population.
- Low: colony has <1% of the species’ total BC population.

These categories correspond with the 1% threshold that has been applied at global and national levels by Bird Studies Canada (and other groups around the world) to identify Important Bird Areas.

Sites have been included regardless of whether breeding had been previously confirmed at a particular site. Attributes for each site also include the date that breeding was last confirmed and the most recent survey results. Colony locations were buffered to represent some of the marine habitat used by these birds adjacent to each colony, based on the distances employed in the creation of the Canadian Wildlife Service’s Marine Bird Areas of Interest dataset.



PHOTO: FRANCO FOLINI



PHOTO: ALAN GRINBERG

### data sources

- Environment Canada (Canadian Wildlife Service) – British Columbia Seabird Colony Inventory

### data resolution

- 1:250,000 (some points have been adjusted to match the 1:20,000 TRIM coastline)

### data collected

- 1989-2004 (years breeding was confirmed)

### date compiled

- 2008

### reviewers

- Harry Carter, Consultant
- Peter Davidson, Bird Studies Canada
- Representatives from Environment Canada, Canadian Wildlife Service

### reviewer comments

- None provided.

### caveats of use

- Gaps in the extent of this feature should not be inferred to be an absence of the species, but rather an absence in survey effort.
- Buffer distances do not represent the entire foraging area of the birds.
- Sites of low relative importance may include extirpated sites or sites where the most recent survey did not obtain a count for breeding birds. Not all colonies are surveyed each year and colonies that were active in the past may or may not still support breeding populations. Therefore, these sites are still deemed important by the experts.
- Recommended date of expiry for use of these data in a marine planning context: None provided.

### map, feature data and metadata access

- Visit [www.bcmca.ca/data](http://www.bcmca.ca/data) for more information.

### references

Species description contains material from:

- B.C. Conservation Data Centre. *Species Summary: Phalacrocorax penicillatus*. BC Ministry of Environment (MoE) 2010. 21 Sep. 2010 <http://a100.gov.bc.ca/pub/eswp/>
- Seattle Audubon Society. *BirdWeb – Seattle Audubon’s Guide to the Birds of Washington*. Revised 2008. [www.seattleaudubon.org/birdweb](http://www.seattleaudubon.org/birdweb)

**BCMCA Atlas**  
**Marine Birds**  
**Brandt's Cormorant Colonies**

- Legend**
- Colony Locations**  
 (range in nest pairs)
- Active (7-39)
  - Historic/Possible

**Notes:**

- Polygons of active colony locations have been drawn last and may overlap polygons of historic/possible locations.
- Colonies have been buffered by 2 kilometres.

**Data Sources:**  
 Environment Canada  
 (Canadian Wildlife Service)

**Base Data:**  
 ESRI Base Data, GeoBase, GeoBC,  
 NOAA, Natural Resources Canada,  
 USGS, Washington State Government

**Thematic Data:**  
 For more information on data sources  
 and methods please refer to the  
 facing page to this map

**Projection:** BC Albers NAD83

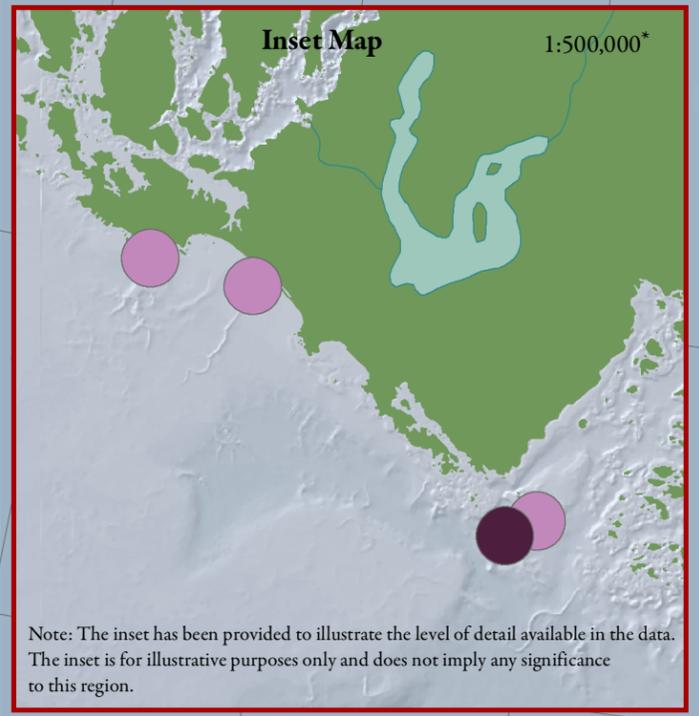
0 25 50 75 100 125 150  
 Kilometres  
 0 25 50 75  
 Nautical Miles

1:4,250,000 \*  
 \* Written scales are approximate and  
 are based on a 11 x 17 inch paper size.

Prepared for:

**BC MARINE  
 CONSERVATION  
 ANALYSIS**

Map template by Caslys Consulting Ltd.  
 August 19, 2010



Note: The inset has been provided to illustrate the level of detail available in the data. The inset is for illustrative purposes only and does not imply any significance to this region.