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# Radjah Shelduck

*Radjah (Tadorna) radjah*

**Class:** *Aves*

**Order:** *Anseriformes*

**Family:** *Anatidae*

## Characteristics:

Also known as the white-headed shelduck, black-backed duck or Burdekin duck, the radjah shelduck has a mostly white body with chestnut wings topped with green bands, a chestnut collar and flesh-colored beak and feet.

## Behavior:

Radjah shelducks are seldom seen away from water as they rely heavily on it for food and nesting. They feed by filtering water through their beaks to pull out seeds and bugs. They are very vocal.

## Reproduction:

The reproductive pair is strongly monogamous for life and build a nest in a hollow tree. They become extremely territorial during breeding season. The clutch size is 8 to 14 eggs which hatch after a 28-day incubation period. The ducklings leave the nest soon after hatching and head straight for water ([Perth Zoo](#)).

## Diet:

Wild: Mollusks, insects, algae, seeds and aquatic plants

Zoo: Flock raiser pellets, scratch grains, greens

## Conservation:

Although they have a large home range and IUCN lists them as Least Concern, radjah shelducks benefit from being protected nationally in Australia so their numbers are steady.

## FYI:

The radjah shelduck is protected throughout Australia and there are harsh penalties for harming or disturbing them ([Beauty of Birds](#)).

It is unclear why the ornithologist who first described the duck named it "radjah" ([Australian Bird Names](#)).



## **Range & Habitat:**

Tropical coastal wetlands, mudflats, mangrove forests



**Lifespan:** up to 15 years in captivity, 5-10 years in the wild.

**Special Adaptations:** Flight pattern is more like a goose than a duck.

## **IUCN Conservation Status:**

Least Concern

