

Birds of the Mar Menor

Now that winter is with us (though it really doesn't feel like it at the moment) there are many more birds to be seen in the area. Those which migrated north for the summer have returned and are enjoying this sunny weather as much as we are.

One bird seen in huge numbers on the Mar Menor is the Cormorant. They nest on the Islands and are also frequently seen on the nature reserve at the northern end of La Manga strip.

In the early morning or evening you will see flocks of Cormorants flying low over the water, searching for fish, which they will dive to catch. Throughout the world Cormorants are renowned for their excellent fishing skills. So much so, that they are used by humans to catch fish for them in China. They are also very unpopular with fishermen as they eat so many fish!



There was great excitement on Caravanning La Manga on Sunday morning when a flock of hundreds of Cormorants were seen driving fish into the beach to catch them. The site was so amazing that people were seen coming out of their caravans in curlers and dressing gowns to get a glimpse!

As seen in the picture, Cormorants can perch holding their wings out wide to dry them. When flying Cormorants have their necks outstretched.

Cormorants are not too fussy about their nesting location and sometimes nest in trees as well as on cliffs and rocky ledges. They are also seen inland and can live and feed on reservoirs or lakes.

Shags are very similar in appearance and behaviour to Cormorants and can often be confused, however I am assured by some avid bird watchers that Shags are rarely seen in the area. So if you see what you think is a Shag it is probably a Cormorant!

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