



Immature

Breeding Adult

 **Great Cormorant**

 **Grand cormoran**

Phalacrocorax carbo

Large with a long thick neck. Powerful beak. Angular and elongated head. The size and the flight are reminiscent of geese, flying with the neck stretched, at good altitude and often in formation but characterized by short glides, a longer tail and the sinuous neck. The head and the tail are in flight held rather raised. On the water, swims with the body sunken and the head raised. Can be confused with a dive, but the Great Cormorant dives with a leap and then shows its long tail. The bill is also held up.

Adult: European birds are black with bluish and greenish metallic highlights and the wings are bronze with black scaly patterns. Bare yellow skin at the base of the lower mandible surrounded by white. White spot appearing on the top of the thighs during the nesting period as well as the top of the head and the nape of the neck more or less dotted with white feathers. In interuptial plumage, the white of the throat and cheeks is duller and more diffuse and the plumage is less brilliant. Adults of subspecies *lucidus* and *maroccanus* in northwest Africa are distinguished by a clear contrast between the white neck, breast and upper belly and the black underbelly.

Young: dark brown above and more or less whitish below, normally on throat, breast and belly. Brown streaks on neck and upper chest. Voice: guttural gray at colonies and roosts.

L. 77-94 cm; W. 121-149 cm.

Similar species: European Shag, Pygmy Cormorant.

