

There is a book you can read about 'Sheldon', one of my friends.

NZ Pied Shag - 'Karuhiruhi'

Released April 2016

This beautiful Pied Shag came to ARRC with a large puncture wound in his chest and underweight.

He was a juvenile, meaning he was only half grown and was struggling to keep himself fed with such an injury as well as a high risk of infection.

His wound was cleaned and left to heal with the help of antibiotics and a solution that was applied daily to the wound to keep flies away.

While he healed it was important to keep him quiet, well fed and clean and as release time neared, start 'swimming lessons' to re-waterproof his feathers as well as get him use to being in water again and searching for food.

FACTS

Native to New Zealand

Diet: Fish and lots of it - mostly smaller fish eg. flounder, mullet and eel.

Environment: Both salt and fresh water but mostly around harbour and estuaries edges close to cities and towns.

Breeding: Nest mostly in trees and generally have between 2-5 eggs. Both parents incubate and raise the young.



The purple ointment you can see keeps flies away from the wound while it heals.



Carer Experience

"Shags have the most comical faces. Up close they look like a cartoon character. They are very interested in food, so if anyone or anything comes near, they will tell you how hungry they are, even if they have just been fed.

They are very tall at full stretch. At full grown they can stretch to over one and a half metres.

You have to be careful of their beaks as they are always searching for food including from pockets, but they are overly excited rather than aggressive.

Watching them practise swimming in a big tub and then seeing them have so much fun in the water when released makes for a very happy day."

