

Black Tern

Chlidonias niger



Photo: Gary Fairhead



Photo: John Meadows



PROVINCIAL STATUS

Special Concern

DESCRIPTION

- robin-sized gull-like water bird
- black head and underparts with gray wings, gray underwing
- fairly short, slightly forked tail
- erratic flight

VOCALIZATION

- sharp *kik*, *keek* or *klea*

PREFERRED HABITAT

- wetland

MIGRATION

Spring arrival: early May
Fall departure: late August

WINTERING GROUNDS

- Panama: north coast of South America to Peru in west and Surinam in east

LOCAL POPULATION

- nests in a few locations but generally rare in Renfrew County

THREATS

- habitat destruction and alteration
- wetland loss
- water pollution
- human disturbances of nesting colonies by boat traffic

NICHE INFORMATION

- eats aquatic invertebrates and flying insects including dragonflies
- eaten by small hawks, falcons, herons, raccoons, mink
- active in daytime
- lives in shallow marshes, natural ponds, lakes and swampy grasslands
- floating nests in dense emergent vegetation, rushes or cattails

WHAT WE CAN DO

- protect wetlands from draining
- operate watercraft with care in potential habitat areas

