

LIVE

Teaching Through Nature



European Shag Threats



Shags are vulnerable to changes in the marine environment such as extended periods of severe weather which makes the water murky so they cannot see their prey to catch it. Changes in fish stocks can also have a big impact on their breeding success. If food is not easily available, then Shags will not breed. They are also vulnerable to oil pollution and getting tangled in discarded fishing nets. Chicks are threatened at breeding colonies by disturbance and in the UK the American mink, a species first brought over for the fur industry in the 1920's but by 1956 was found to be well established and breeding in the wild. Although now illegal and covered by the Wildlife and Countryside Act, seabird eggs were also once targeted by collectors, along with adults and chicks for museum collections.