

Black Skimmer

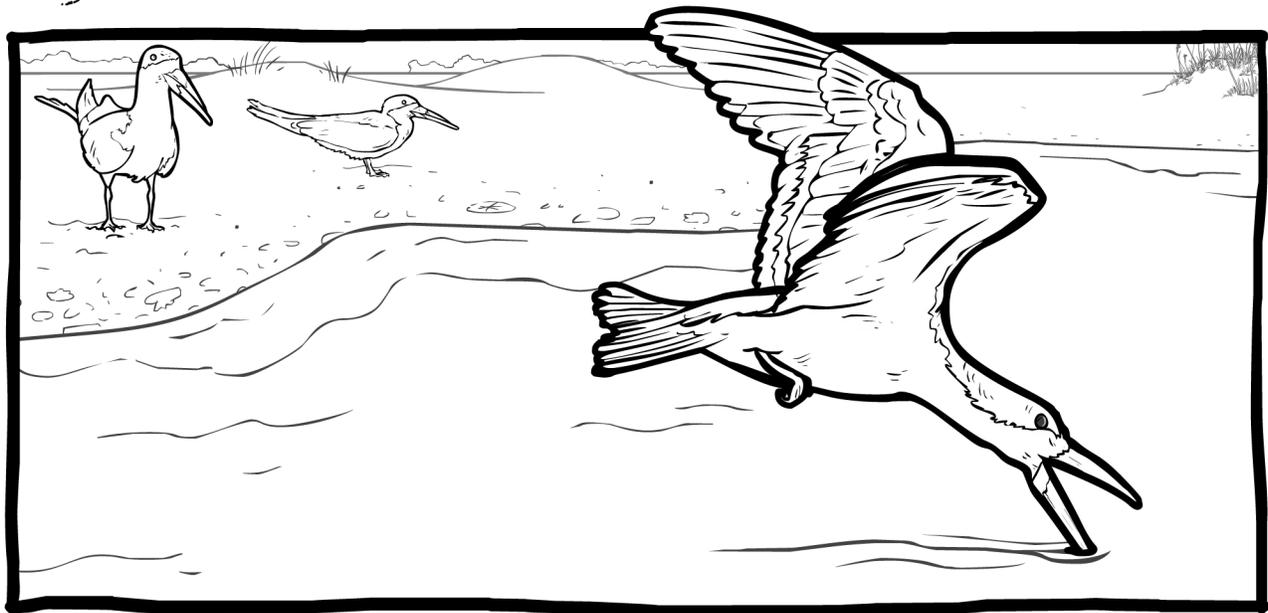
Black Skimmer *(Rynchops niger)*

Instant ID

- A shore bird with a black and red bill and a 44 inch wingspan
- Has a black back, upper wings and cap
- White on belly, throat and undersides of wings
- Bill is longer on bottom than on top
- Juveniles have mottled backs

Native Niches

- Found in the United States along the coastal regions of the Gulf of Mexico and Atlantic
- Pacific range expanding into California
- Also found in Florida by larger inland lakes
- Nests on open shores in colonies (groups of a species living together) with terns



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Favorite Foods

- Eats fish caught by feel when skimming the water

Critter Characteristics

- Often rests with head lying on ground
- Can hunt with very little light because it finds prey by feel
- Chicks are born with upper and lower bill of equal size, yet the lower bill grows faster

Population Protection

- Listed as a species of special concern in Florida
- If parents are frightened away, unshielded eggs easily overheat
- Avoid approaching or allowing pets to approach designated resting / nesting zones

