



Nature
on your
doorstep

Welsh Coastal Birds

The coasts of Wales are one of the best places to spot birds, from beaches to cliff tops, to secluded islands and the open sea. Get your binoculars and let's get spotting!

Find more nature guides or get in touch with our museum scientists for help with identification: museum.wales/collections/on-your-doorstep

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87-100 cm

Jan-Aug

Gannet

Morus bassanus

Look for these large white sea birds circling the water out to sea and diving at speeds of up to 60mph! They have a distinctive yellow head, and long pointed wings with black tips.



39-40 cm

All Year

Chough

Pyrhocorax pyrrhocorax

Pronounced 'chuff', these birds are only found on rocky cliffs and coastal grassland in the west of the UK. Easy to spot with their red bill and legs, glossy black feathers and loud 'chee-ow' call.



65-80 cm

All Year

Shag

Phalacrocorax aristotelis

A large, long-necked bird with a curved head crest and dark glossy green body. Look for them swimming and diving near the shore, or on rocks with their wings outstretched to dry.



38-45 cm

Mar-July

Guillemot

Uria aalge

Guillemots nest in tightly packed colonies on steep ledges and cliff edges with Razorbills. To tell them apart, look for their chocolate brown back and thin bill. In winter, they have white faces.



30-38 cm

Feb-Jul

Manx Shearwater

Puffinus puffinus

These black and white birds are found on coastal islands like Skomer, which holds the world's largest breeding population. Look for them gliding on stiff straight wings over the sea.



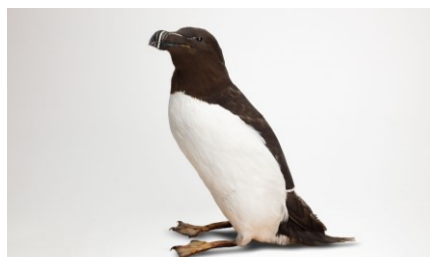
26-29 cm

Mar-Aug

Puffin

Fratercula arctica

A familiar seabird known for its orange webbed feet and brightly coloured red, yellow and blue-grey bill. Look for them on coastal islands flying between the sea and their burrows.



37-39 cm

Mar-July

Razorbill

Alca torda

Razorbills nest in tightly packed colonies on steep cliff edges with Guillemots. Look for them on the lower parts of the cliff. They have a black back and head, thick black bill with a white stripe.



40-45 cm

All Year

Oystercatcher

Haematopus ostralegus

Listen for the loud 'peeping' call of these large black and white birds on rocky and muddy shores. They have an eye-catching long, orange-red bill and pink legs.



16-20 cm

All Year

Dunlin

Calidris alpina

These small wading birds are often seen foraging on the shore using their slightly curved bill. In summer they have a brown-red speckled back and black belly. In winter they are grey above and white below.



50-60 cm

All Year

Curlew

Numenius arquata

Look for these large wading birds on the shore using their long-curved bill to find food. They are speckled brown and white with blue-grey legs. Listen for their distinctive 'cur-lee' call.



When and where to spot them:



at sea



cliffs



on the shore



islands