



Courtesy of Shane Twomey

## A SELECTION OF THE BIRDS YOU MAY SEE ON THE TRAIL



### BLACK HEADED GULL

*(Chroicocephalus ridibundus)*

In Irish and Scottish folklore it was believed to be a sign of bad weather when seagulls flew inland. The Black-headed Gull can live for over 30 years, consuming a broad diet which includes insects, fish and carrion. In winter, its black head fades to just a dark spot behind the eye. Although numerous, there are concerns about the decline of this species in Ireland.



### BLACK TAILED GODWIT

*(Limosa limosa)*

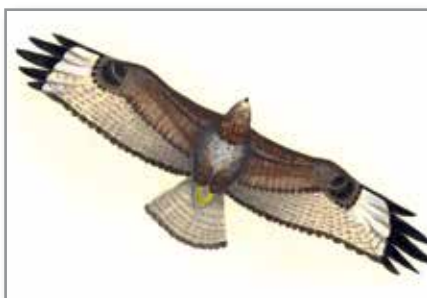
The Black-tailed Godwit is of conservation concern as the majority of these birds overwinter in less than ten sites in Ireland. Most Black-tailed Godwits breed in Iceland during the summer with up to 18,000 overwintering in Ireland, representing 30% of the world population. Some of the highest concentrations in Ireland are found in the SECAD area.



### BRENT GOOSE

*(Branta bernicla)*

Summer is spent on the breeding grounds of the Canadian Arctic, with the majority of the light-bellied Brent Geese overwintering in Ireland. The Irish Brent Geese travel further than any other species of goose, potentially up to 7,000 km. The Irish population is also internationally significant as it is classed as vulnerable in mainland Europe.



### BUZZARD

*(Buteo buteo)*

The Buzzard is a medium-sized bird of prey often seen circling high up, with a loud mewing call. They were extinct in Ireland until the 1930s, when a pair bred in County Antrim. Having spread slowly from the North, the Buzzard is now widespread in this region and resident all year round.



### CHOUGH

*(Pyrrhocorax pyrrhocorax)*

A very acrobatic flier, the Chough is a coastal member of the crow family, with glossy black plumage and bright red bill and legs. Although suffering a major decline in mainland Europe, coastal regions of the SECAD area are a haven for this species.



### CORMORANT

*(Phalacrocorax carbo)*

A large dark seabird, often seen diving and resurfacing having swam some distance underwater, or drying itself on rocks with its wings outstretched. An efficient predator, it is often a good indicator of where fish are located and is known to devour them in large quantities.



### CURLEW

*(Numenius arquata)*

The largest of our waders, the Curlew is both a resident and a winter visitor. The resident population is in rapid decline, which is of conservation concern. Although this bird has a long curved beak, it gets its name from its call, cur-lew cur-lew. Traditionally the Curlew was known for its shy and wary nature.



### DUNLIN

*(Calidris alpina)*

One of our smallest waders and one of our most numerous in winter. Commonly found on estuarine mudflats where it feeds on worms, snails and other small mud-dwelling arthropods.



### GANNET

*(Morus bassanus)*

Large seabird resident all year round. Spectacular when hunting with many birds diving from up to 40m above the water surface. Can be seen on all Irish coasts at all times during the year.



### GREENSHANK

*(Tringa nebularia)*

The Greenshank is a winter visitor to Ireland and gets its name from the green colour of its legs. It is a specialist of pools, and channels and is easily identifiable by its 'funky' walk. They mainly feed on small fish and invertebrates such as shrimp and crabs. It has a very interesting looking dash and grab hunting technique.

## BIRDWATCH IRELAND

BirdWatch Ireland (BWI) is the largest independent conservation organisation in Ireland. BWI is a charity devoted to the conservation and protection of Ireland's wild birds and their habitats.  
[www.birdwatchcork.com](http://www.birdwatchcork.com)  
[www.birdwatchireland.ie](http://www.birdwatchireland.ie)



## LEAVE NO TRACE

Please follow the principles of Leave No Trace when enjoying the South and East Cork Bird Trail.

Leave No Trace Ireland promotes understanding, responsibility and care for Ireland's natural environment.



To learn more about how you can Leave No Trace, visit [www.leavenotraceireland.org](http://www.leavenotraceireland.org)



### KINGFISHER

*(Alcedo atthis)*

Widespread over much of Ireland, the Kingfisher is a very brightly coloured small bird. Often quite hard to see when perched and when flying may be seen as a blue blur. It dives to catch small fish such as sticklebacks and minnows.



### LITTLE EGRET

*(Egretta garzetta)*

Unmistakable white bird. The Little Egret was a onetime winter visitor who is now resident and breeding successfully in Ireland. If seen in the 90s, it would have caused a bit of a fuss amongst birdwatchers keen to see a rare species, but it is quite common nowadays. Forages for fish, amphibians, molluscs and insects.



### MALLARD

*(Anas platyrhynchos)*

Generally speaking, when people think of ducks in Ireland, they think of Mallard. Our second largest duck, the Mallard is a widespread resident with overwintering populations arriving from Iceland and mainland Europe.



### MEADOW PIPIT

*(Anthus pratensis)*

One of the most common resident bird species associated with uplands in Ireland, with many also arriving in winter from mainland Europe. However, Meadow Piptits can likewise be found in lowland coastal areas like Pilmore, Garryroe and Ballinamona. It is the chief host in Ireland for the Cuckoo and is also known as the "nurse of the cuckoo" or the "servant of the cuckoo".



### OYSTERCATCHER

*(Haematopus ostralegus)*

A very distinctive black and white shorebird often seen flying rapidly in formation low to the ground, it can live for over 42 years. Its long straight beak is incredibly strong, enabling it to prize open shellfish and knock Limpets off rocks. In Cork folklore, the Seagull couldn't swim until it asked the Oystercatcher for a loan of its webbed feet, which it never gave back!

## BIRD WATCHING IN CORK HARBOUR AND ADJACENT COASTAL AREAS

Take a tour around the Ring of Cork Bird Trail, a driving route of over 100km, stretching from Rocky Bay in South Cork, to Pilmore Strand in East Cork.

The trail can be enjoyed by everyone, young and old alike; from complete beginners to bird watching enthusiasts, as it takes you on a journey through a region of national and international importance for birds. Remember too that the type and number of birds you can see here will change with the seasons, so there is something different to see all year round.

Don't forget your binoculars; essential for those real close up views!



Courtesy of Mark Carmody

Courtesy of William O'Halloran

Courtesy of Mark Carmody



### REDSHANK

*(Tringa tetanus)*

The Redshank gets its name from the colour of its legs and has a very loud piercing call. Found on mudflats and salt marshes, the flock spreads out to form a line probing the mud as they go.



### SAND MARTIN

*(Riparia riparia)*

A summer visitor to Ireland having spent winter in sub-Saharan Africa. Our smallest breeding Hirundine species, being about a third smaller than both House Martin and Swallow. It nests in burrows in riverbanks, cliffs or quarries and feeds by catching insects in flight.



### SANDERLING

*(Calidris alba)*

Feeds by following the waves up and down sandy beaches. A winter visitor from Siberia with Canadian Arctic birds stopping here to feed before continuing as far as South Africa. It can fly non-stop for 5,000 km.



### SHELDUCK

*(Tadorna tadorna)*

Our largest duck species is both resident and a winter migrant. Irish and British birds fly to Heligoland Bight in the Wadden Sea each year between July and September to moult before returning again. Often appearing on coats of arms as a symbol of resourcefulness as the duck can elude its enemies by flying, running, swimming or diving.



### STONECHAT

*(Saxicola torquatus)*

A small, robin-sized resident bird. It feeds on insects and is quite vocal with a call that sounds like two pebbles banged together. Looks out for Stonechats in Rocky Bay and Ballycotton.





## Welcome to the South and East Cork Bird Trail

On the southern edge of the western-most country in Europe, South and East Cork promises a unique birdwatching experience for beginners and experts alike. Ideally placed for attracting birds from all parts of the globe, the area boasts a rich diversity of flora and fauna, against the vivid backdrop of its spectacular habitats. The experience of watching hunting Peregrines, soaring flocks of Choughs, and thousands of waders and wildfowl is hard to beat.

Home to some of the most famous birdwatching sites in Europe, including the legendary Ballycotton, South and East Cork offers the thrill of outstanding birdwatching with the possibility of stunning rarities.

## SECAD's Biodiversity ('B') Plan



One third of Irish bee species are threatened with extinction. In 2015, the Island of Ireland launched its All-Ireland Pollinator Plan. Pollinators play a key role in our ecosystems. In taking action to protect them, we start a chain reaction that has positive benefits for the general health of our environment. SECAD was named as a Community Leader to develop initiatives to address this drastic reduction of pollinator species, such as the bees, hoverflies, butterflies and other insects.

SECAD aims to lead the development of 'Biodiversity/Pollinator Corridors' stretching across our region and county in conjunction with Cork County Council, Farmers, Businesses and Communities. Please support the SECAD 'B' Plan; from garden to garden, field to field, business to business, school to school and town to town... we can make a difference....[www.secad.ie](http://www.secad.ie)

## SECAD

South & East Cork Area Development (SECAD) is a Local Development Partnership. Our overall objective is to promote greater sustainability across the communities that live in South and East Cork by supporting investments which promote balanced economic, social and environmental development. The Bird Trail is one example SECAD's multi-dimensional strategy to encourage a greater awareness of our precious environment, whilst also promoting eco-education and eco-tourism across South and East Cork. To learn more about our work please find us at [www.secad.ie](http://www.secad.ie)



The South and East Cork Bird Trail was supported through the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development and the National Development Plan.



For more information visit  
[www.secad.ie](http://www.secad.ie)  
[www.ringofcork.ie/birdtrail](http://www.ringofcork.ie/birdtrail)

or scan the QR code



## TOURIST INFORMATION OFFICES

### Cobh Tourist Information

Located near the Railway Station at the Sirius Arts Centre  
Tel: 021 4813301 email: [tourism@cobhharbourchamber.ie](mailto:tourism@cobhharbourchamber.ie)  
Web: [www.cobhharbourchamber.ie](http://www.cobhharbourchamber.ie)

### Midleton Tourist Information

Open all year round, located at the gates of The Jameson Experience  
Tel: 021-4613702 email: [midletontourism@gmail.com](mailto:midletontourism@gmail.com)

### Crosshaven Tourist Information

Open all year round. Located adjacent to  
Royal Cork Yacht Club, Lower Road, Crosshaven

### Youghal Heritage Centre and Tourist Office

Adjacent to quay side and near the clock gate  
Tel: 024 92447 email: [info@youghalchamber.ie](mailto:info@youghalchamber.ie)  
Web: [www.youghal.ie](http://www.youghal.ie)

### Ring of Cork

Midleton Enterprise Centre, Knockgriffin,  
Midleton Co. Cork, Ireland  
email: [info@ringofcork.ie](mailto:info@ringofcork.ie) Web: [www.ringofcork.ie](http://www.ringofcork.ie)

## THE RING OF CORK



The Ring of Cork is a SECAD initiative. One of SECAD's priorities is to support the development of tourism through direct investment in rural tourism and related businesses, tourism events and festivals and networking and collective marketing through the Ring of Cork initiative.

Come and visit our heritage towns, walking trails, sunken ships, maritime attractions, stately homes and wildlife park. With award-winning restaurants, delicious pub grub and renowned farmers' markets, you'll never go hungry, whether you want a picnic for a days birdwatching or a gourmet meal after a day in the fresh air.

Accommodation options are available to suit all budgets and tastes, including an excellent selection of hotels, B&Bs, self-catering, hostels and campsites.

So come and visit the Ring of Cork

[www.ringofcork.ie](http://www.ringofcork.ie)



birdwatching  
**IN CORK**