



Gannet

Morus bassanus

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Species information

i **Common name**
Gannet

Latin name
Morus bassanus

Category
Birds
Gulls and seabirds

Statistics
Length: 86-96cm
Wingspan: 2m Weight:
3kg Average Lifespan: 17
years

🌍 Conservation status
Classified in the UK as an
Amber List species under
the Birds of Conservation
Concern review.

About

One of our largest seabirds, Gannets nest in large colonies at a handful of places, mostly on Scottish islands, but also at sites in Wales, North East England and the Channel Islands. Gannets feed on fish, which they catch by diving head-first into the sea, their wings folded back. Diving from heights of 25 metres, they can hit the water at speeds of up to 100km per hour. They have an extensive network of air-sacs between their muscles and skin to help cushion this impact.

How to identify

Gannets are easily identified: a big white bird with black wingtips and a yellow head. They can be spotted circling high above the waves before performing their characteristic fishing dives.

Where to find it

Nests on coastal cliffs around the north of Britain. Can be seen around most of our coasts during migration.

Habitats



When to find it



How can people help

The survival of our seabirds is threatened by the pollution and degradation of our marine and coastal habitats. The Wildlife Trusts are working with fishermen, researchers, politicians and local people towards a vision of 'Living Seas', where marine wildlife thrives. This work has recently had a massive boost with the passing of the Marine Bill, promising sustainable development of the UK's marine environment. Do your bit for our Living Seas by supporting your local Wildlife Trust.

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