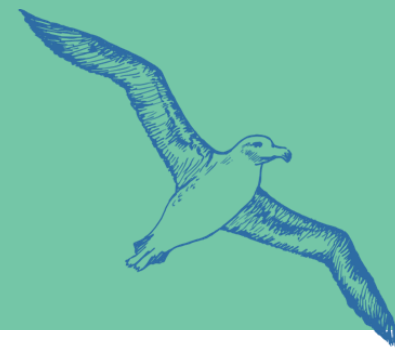


ID GUIDE

PETREL SPECIES



ID GUIDE

PETREL SPECIES

BLACK-BROWED ALBATROSS

Thalassarche melanophris

A RARE SIGHT

- A mid-sized (80-95cm) albatross from the southern hemisphere with a wing span of up to 240cm
- Part of the Mollymawk group, over 500,000 pairs breed on the Falkland Islands (70% of their global population)
- They normally range from Brazil to South Africa but some do cross the Equator.



© Imogen Warren shutterstock_1416229298

THE BASS ROCK ALBATROSS



© Scottish Daily Express

- In 1967 the Bass Rock Lighthouse Keepers (Duncan Jordan is shown left) found a Black-browed Albatross on the Rock
- Perhaps confused and lonely, it stayed from May to September, even attempting courtship displays with the gannets
- Hermaness in Shetland and Bempton Cliffs in Yorkshire have also seen visits from Black-browed Albatrosses
- RSPB Bempton named their visitor Albie and he has been a regular visitor since 2014
- He now winters around the Baltic Sea before returning for the gannets' mating season on Bempton Cliffs

TYPICAL & WANDERING BLACK-BROWED ALBATROSS RANGE



© World Map iStock-1140658071

- Falkland Islands & South Georgia colonies
- Falkland Islands & South Georgia range
- South Seas range
- - - Scottish & Yorkshire Albatross sightings
- Albie's wintering range in the Baltic

The Petrels are a group of seabirds, which share distinctive 'tubenoses' and include petrels, fulmars, albatross and shearwaters. Many of these breed around Scotland's coastline, taking advantage of the rugged cliffs and islands and the abundance of fish.

FULMARS

Fulmarus glacialis



© Emily Burton

- Related to the albatross with tubular nostrils, Fulmars are sturdy looking birds around 40-50cm in length
- Originally an Arctic bird, and previously only found around St. Kilda, they now breed all round Scotland's coastal cliffs
- Feeding on fish, crustaceans and offal from fishing vessels, their name means "foul gull" in Old Norse
- They protect themselves by vomiting sticky oil from a second stomach at intruders up to 10 feet away (this oil then glues the intruders feathers together stopping them from flying)

MANX SHEARWATERS

Puffinus puffinus

- Breeds mainly on the islands of Rum, Orkney and Shetland and is normally a passage migrant (a temporary visitor on its migration) around the Scottish East coast
- 30-38cm in size with a 76-82cm wingspan, they migrate from the South Atlantic around South Georgia and The Falkland Islands
- Lays a single egg in a metre long burrow
- Young shearwaters are very fluffy as seen below and are raised in burrows, similar to young puffins (pufflings)

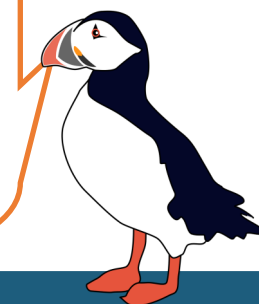


© Shutterstock tonymills

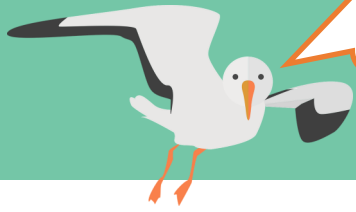


© Anne Gilbert Alamy Stock Photo

So why is a Manx Shearwater's scientific name *Puffinus puffinus*? Well, the name Puffin comes from an Old English word Puffy meaning fluffy. It was used to describe both our young. The common name stuck with us Puffins while Manx Shearwaters got it as a scientific name. My scientific name is *Fratercula Arctica* meaning Little Brother of the Arctic!

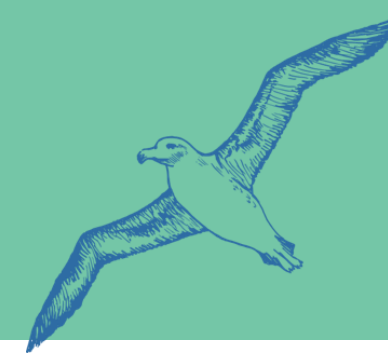


A Petrel's scientific name starts with *Hydrobates*, which literally means 'water walker' in Ancient Greek.



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PETREL SPECIES



STORM PETREL

Hydrobates pelagicus

- Our smallest breeding seabird at 14-18cm in size, it is no bigger than a sparrow and migrates here from South Africa
- A nocturnal species, they are known to follow fishing vessels and will feed on small fish, plankton and squid
- Clumsy on land, they waddle to their underground nests in burrows or rocky crevices on islands such as the Isle of May
- Often thought to be running on the water due to its feet hanging beneath them as they fly low over the water



© MikeLane45

LEACH'S PETREL

Hydrobates leucorhous

- Slightly larger than the Storm Petrel at up to 22cm long, but less numerous, they breed on Scotland's remoter islands
- Their white rump and larger size makes them easy to tell apart
- Nocturnal feeders in order to avoid potential predators, they will mostly eat plankton so do not follow fishing boats
- Migrates to equatorial waters during the winter months
- Their biggest colonies are on Canada's northern islands



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SOOTY SHEARWATERS

Ardenna grisea

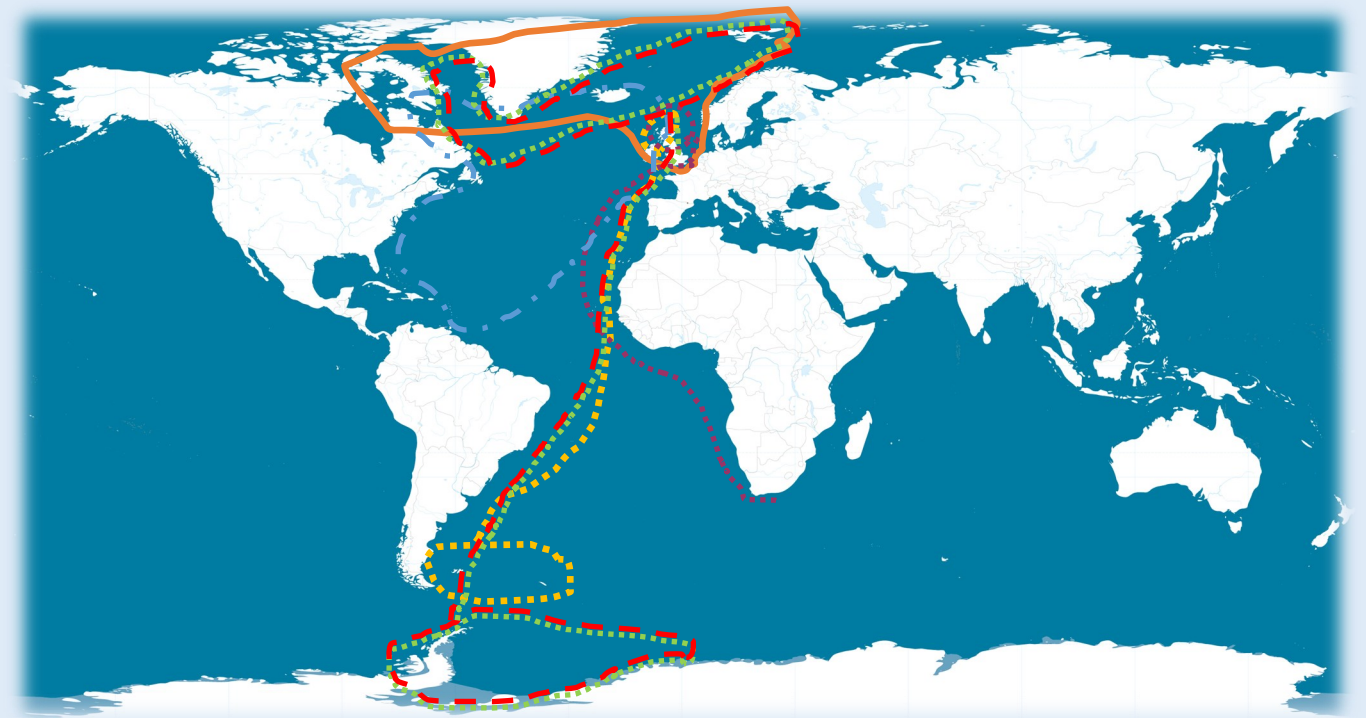
- Big for a Shearwater (around 50cm long), the Sooty shearwater is roughly the size of a European herring gull
- Often spotted in transit around Scottish coastlines heading to the Arctic from their Antarctic breeding grounds
- Their dark brown plumage and bill sets them apart from other shearwaters and a pale band along the underside of their wingspan further helps identify them
- Opportunistic feeders, they will follow fishing boats, eating fish, squid and crustaceans



© Birdsonline iStock-1419670768

TYPICAL RANGE AND MIGRATION ROUTES FOR:

- Fulmars
- Manx Shearwaters
- Sooty Shearwaters
- - - Great Shearwaters
- ... Storm Petrels
- . - . Leach's Petrels



© World Map iStock-1140658071

GREAT SHEARWATERS

Ardenna gravis

- Similar to the Sooty shearwaters, Great shearwaters breed on Antarctic islands and migrate to the Arctic for the northern summer
- They are around 50cm long and similar in stature and size to a Fulmar but their dark cap and longer wingspan helps set them apart
- Feeds on sand eels, crustaceans and the scraps thrown from fishing boats
- Spotted around Scotland from August to October with many gathering in the Bay of Biscay before migrating



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