



Puffins at Lunga, Treshnish Isles, Scotland by Steve Deger / CC BY 2.0



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## ATLANTIC PUFFIN

*Fratercula artica*

Puffins spend all autumn and winter at sea and only come to land to breed in the spring, building nests in underground burrows.

Populations are on a rapid decrease due to lowering fish stocks, climate change and invasive species. Pollution (oil spills and litter) also has a devastating effect on numbers.



Distribution:

North Atlantic. Their breeding sites range from eastern North America to north west Europe

Diet:

Fish (sand eels and herring)

Size:

25cm tall

Weight:

500g



Capercaillie by David Palmer / CC BY 2.0



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## CAPERCAILLIE

*Tetrao urogallus*

The capercaillie went extinct across the UK 300 years ago due to habitat loss. Birds from Sweden were reintroduced to Scotland in 1837 and the population reached 20000 in the 1970s.

Today, numbers have again crashed to fewer than 2000 due to habitat loss and human activity (recreational and forestry).



Distribution:

Northern Europe and western Asia. In the UK, restricted to Tayside, Deeside and Speyside

Diet:

Flowers, buds and seeds

Size:

86cm

Weight:

3kg





Harbour seal feeding pup by Nevit Dilmen / CC BY-SA 3.0



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## GREY SEAL

*Halichoerus grypus*

Since 1970, seals have been protected from hunting to encourage the recovery of the UK population. Today, there are around 170000 (90% of which breed in Scotland).

Unfortunately, the seals suffer from a build up of toxins in their blubber which comes from ingesting large quantities of toxic fish (which are toxic due to pollution).

Distribution:

Northern Europe and north west Atlantic

Diet:

Fish (sand eels and cod)

Size:

207cm (m) and 180cm (f)

Weight:

233kg (m) and 155kg (f)

Life span:

25 years (m) and 35 years (f)







Red fox (*Vulpes vulpes*) by Kevin Law/ CC BY-SA 2.0



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## RED FOX

*Vulpes vulpes*

Foxes have managed to adapt to almost every environment, from the quiet countryside to very busy urban landscapes. This is mostly due to being a hardy animal with an incredibly varied diet. As a result, they have become the most numerous and widely spread member of the order of carnivora, a group which includes cats, dogs, bears and seals.

### Distribution:

Most of the Northern Hemisphere and very common throughout the UK except the islands.

### Diet:

Insects, small mammals, birds and fruit

### Size:

120cm

### Weight:

10kg







European otter 02 by Alexander Leisser/ CC BY-SA 4.0



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## EUROPEAN OTTER

*Lutra lutra*

Although Scotland has always had strong populations of otters, in England they very nearly went extinct. Thanks to conservation efforts, however, they are now back and in every county in the country.

The main issues they have faced over the years have been persecution and pollution.

Distribution:

Widely across Europe. In Scotland, there are good populations on most islands. Also found in Asia and Africa.

Diet:

Fish (sand eels and cod)

Size:

130cm (including tail)

Weight:

10kg







Bottlenose dolphin (*Tursiops truncatus*) by Gregory "Slobirdr" Smith/ CC BY-SA 2.0



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## BOTTLENOSE DOLPHIN

*Tursiops truncatus*

Dolphins in the UK are much bigger than those found in warmer waters of Australia and America.

The best place to spot them in Scotland is the Moray Firth and they come especially close to land at Chanonry Point near Cromarty, Black Isle, when the tide is turning and the salmon are plentiful.

Distribution:

Worldwide

Diet:

Fish, squid and crustaceans

Size:

380cm

Weight:

Up to 650kg

Life span:

40 years







Scottish Wildcat by Peter Trimming / CC BY 2.0



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## SCOTLAND'S WILDCAT

*Felis silvestris silvestris*

Experts have found there aren't enough wildcats in Scotland to survive without our help.

The main threats to wildcats in Scotland include breeding with domestic cats and historical persecution (which means they were hunted for specific reasons).



Distribution:

Several organisations are now part of Saving Wildcats.

They're helping wildcats in Scotland by breeding and releasing them into the wild.

Diet: Small mammals, birds, reptiles and amphibians

Size:

80-100cm

Weight: 9kg

Life span: 15 years





Beaver (*Castor fiber*) by Martina Lion/ CC BY-SA 3.0



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## EURASIAN BEAVER

*Castor fiber*

Beavers were hunted to extinction in the UK 400 years ago but have since been brought back on a trial basis in Scotland by RZSS and Scottish Wildlife Trust.

Beavers are a keystone species, creating and modifying habitats for a huge variety of other species. They are Europe's largest rodent and **DO NOT EAT FISH!**



Distribution:

Several projects across the UK, most notably in Argyll

Diet:

Trees and water plants

Size:

140cm (including tail)

Weight:

20kg

Life span:

8 years





European badger (*Meles meles*) by Kallerna / CC BY-SA 3.0



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## EURASIAN BADGER

*Meles meles*

Being nocturnal, badgers do not have to have bright colours to show off to potential mates. The stripes on their heads are a warning not to get too close.

You'll notice the stripes almost point towards the mouth of the badger which highlights its main defence: large teeth!

Distribution:

Throughout Europe but not as common in the far north of Scotland or the islands

Diet:

Worms, insects, fruit and nuts

Size:

70cm

Weight:

12kg







*Sciurus vulgaris* by RedR / CC BY-SA 3.0



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## RED SQUIRREL

*Sciurus vulgaris*

There are currently 120,000 red squirrels in Scotland, which is half as many as the bigger grey squirrel.

Grey squirrels were brought over from the USA in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century and now outcompete the red squirrels for food and habitat. They also cause the spread of a virus called squirrelpox which is deadly to the red squirrels.



Distribution:

Throughout Europe but not as common in the far north of Scotland or the islands

Diet:

Worms, insects, fruit and nuts

Size:

70cm

Weight:

12kg





Pine marten BWC by Surrey John / CC BY-SA 4.0



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## PINE MARTEN

*Sciurus vulgaris*

There are only 3 – 4000 pine martens left in the UK. Historically, this decline was due to persecution and habitat loss but today, pine martens are being caught out by poisoned bait and traps destined for other 'pest' species.

They are, however, now legally protected in an attempt to safeguard the species.

### Distribution:

Good populations throughout Europe. In the UK, Highlands and Grampians of Scotland and on the verge of extinction in England and Wales

### Diet:

Small animals and fruit

Size: 80cm

Weight: 2kg







Golden Eagle 11a by Tony Husgett / CC BY 2.0



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## GOLDEN EAGLE

*Aquila chrysaetos*

Thought to be only 440 breeding pairs left in the UK, most golden eagles can be found in north west Scotland.

The main threats to their numbers are poisoning and egg collecting. As well as a crack-down on this illegal activity, there have also been attempts to retor their habitats to make sure there is enough prey to support the current population.

Distribution:

Most of the Northern Hemisphere (although mainly found in the north west Highlands of the UK)

Diet:

Mammals and birds

Size:

Wingspan up to 234cm

Weight:

5kg







White-tailed Sea Eagle by Talks Presenters 09 / CC BY-SA 3.0



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## WHITE-TAILED SEA EAGLE

*Haliaeetus albicilla*

The largest bird in the UK, the white-tailed eagle actually went extinct in the UK in 1918.

Following reintroductions of Norwegian birds in 1975, there are now around 80 successful pairs in Scotland. The best place to see them is on Mull and, following East Coast introductions, they might also be spotted in Fife.

Distribution:

Throughout much of northern Europe (and restricted to reintroduction sites in Scotland)

Diet:

Fish and sea birds

Size:

Wingspan up to 250cm

Weight:

5.5kg







Red deer stag by Mehmet Karatay / CC BY 3.0



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## RED DEER

*Cervus elaphus*

Red deer are our largest land mammal and an important source of food for a variety of animals (including golden eagles, white-tailed eagles, badgers and foxes) as carrion and live prey.

Due to the lack of large predators (such as wolves, bears and lynx) however, populations have to be managed by humans in annual culls between July and February.



Distribution:

Most of Scotland's open moorlands throughout the Highlands and islands.

Diet:

Grasses, shrubs, bark and leaves

Size:

120cm (shoulder height)

Weight:

225kg