



Important Bird and Biodiversity Areas for Seabirds in Ireland

The following information was distilled from the analysis that Birdwatch Ireland and BirdLife International conducted to identify Important Bird and Biodiversity Areas (IBAs) for seabirds in Ireland¹.

More information including maps on Ireland's IBAs for seabirds can be found on our website².

Breeding Colony/Terrestrial IBAs

- The tables below detail out which of the 51 colony/terrestrial IBAs that need either SPA designation or the addition of Qualifying Interest species to existing SPAs in order to appropriately protect seabirds in Ireland
 - Table 1: Colony/Terrestrial IBAs that need SPA designation (9 IBAs in total)
 - Table 2: Colony/Terrestrial IBAs with corresponding SPAs that are missing QI species that need to be included in the existing SPA (19 IBAs in total)

Marine IBAs

- The tables below detail out which of the 24 marine IBAs need SPA designation
 - Table 3: Marine IBAs that need SPA designation (24 IBAs in total)
 - This includes the marine IBAs that overlap with the marine cSPAs and candidate marine extensions to existing SPAs that have not been officially recognized by the European Commission

¹ Auchincloss, C., Handley, J., Newton, S., Clarke, B., Donaghy, A., Duggan, O., Davies, T., Mitchell, D. 2025. Ireland: Important Bird and Biodiversity Area identification for seabirds. Project Report (Activity 1). Version 2. BirdWatch Ireland, Wicklow available here <https://birdwatchireland.ie/publications/ireland-important-bird-and-biodiversity-area-identification-for-seabirds-2/>

² <https://birdwatchireland.ie/ibas-for-seabirds-in-ireland/>

- Table 1: Colony/Terrestrial IBAs that need SPA designation- 9 IBAs

<i>IBA name</i>	<i>IBA triggering seabird species</i>
Kid Island (Mayo)	Black-legged Kittiwake
North Mayo coastline	Black-legged Kittiwake
Black Rock (Mayo)	Black-legged Kittiwake, Leach's Storm Petrel
Bills Rock (Mayo)	Atlantic Puffin, Black-legged Kittiwake, Leach's Storm Petrel
Mutton Island	Great Black-backed Gull
Dunmore East	Black-legged Kittiwake
Scarriff, Deenish, and nearby islands	European Storm Petrel, Manx Shearwater
Sandycove Island (Cork)	European Herring Gull
Bray Head	Black-headed Kittiwake

- Table 2: Colony/Terrestrial IBAs with corresponding SPAs that are missing QI species that trigger IBAs and should be added to the SPAs- 19 IBAs

<i>IBA name</i>	<i>SPA name (SPA code)</i>	<i>IBA triggering specie(s) missing from QI list</i>
Tory Island	Tory Island SPA (004073)	Black-legged Kittiwake
West Donegal coast	West Donegal Coast SPA (004150)	Black Guillemot
Roaninish	Roaninish SPA (004121)	Arctic Tern, European Storm Petrel
Rathlin O'Birne	Rathlin O'Birne Island SPA (004120)	Great Black-backed Gull
Stags of Broadhaven	Stags of Broad Haven SPA (004072)	Atlantic Puffin, Black-legged Kittiwake
Illaunmaistir (Oileán Máistir)	Illaunmaster SPA (004074)	Atlantic Puffin
Clare Island cliffs, Inishturk, and Mweelaun	Clare Island SPA (004136)	Atlantic Puffin, Black Guillemot, Northern Gannet
Inishbofin and Inishshark (including Davillaun)	Inishbofin, Inishdooley and Inishbeg SPA (004083) High Island, Inishshark and Davillaun SPA (004144) *(see comments below table)	Black-legged Kittiwake, European Shag, European Storm Petrel
High Island	High Island, Inishshark and Davillaun SPA	European Storm Petrel

	(004144) *(see comments below table)	
Rockabill	Rockabill SPA (004014)	Black Guillemot, Black-legged Kittiwake
Lambay Island	Lambay Island SPA (004069)	Great Black-backed Gull, Northern Gannet
Ireland's Eye	Ireland's Eye SPA (004117)	Atlantic Puffin, Great Black-backed Gull
Connemara Islands	Slyne Head to Ardmore Point Islands SPA (004159)	Black Guillemot, Common Tern, European Herring Gull, Great Black-backed Gull
Magharee Islands, Mucklaghmore and Illaunbarnagh	Magharee Islands SPA (004125)	Black Guillemot
Lady's Island Lake	Lady's Island Lake SPA (004009)	Mediterranean Gull
Saltee Islands	Saltee Islands SPA (004002)	Manx Shearwater
Puffin Island	Puffin Island SPA (004003)	Black-legged Kittiwake
Bull and Cow Rocks	The Bull and the Cow Rocks SPA (004066)	Black-legged Kittiwake
Sheep's Head and Mizen Head peninsulas	Sheep's Head to Toe Head SPA (004156)	Black-legged Kittiwake

*Comments on High Island, Inishshark and Davillaun SPA (004144) is included twice as the SPA covers islands that are located within two different IBAs. Please reach out if further information is needed.

- Table 3: Marine IBAs that need designation- 24 IBAs

<i>IBA name</i>	<i>IBA triggering seabird species</i>
North Donegal coast and islands marine extension	Atlantic Puffin, Black-legged Kittiwake Razorbill, Sandwich Tern
Árainn Mhór marine extension	Black Guillemot, Black-legged Kittiwake
Roaninish marine extension	Arctic Tern, Black Guillemot, Black legged Kittiwake, European Storm petrel
Rathlin O'Birne - Malin Beg marine extension	Black Guillemot, Black-legged Kittiwake, Great Black-backed Gull
Outer Donegal Bay (marine extension)	Black-legged kittiwake, European Shag, Northern Gannet, European Herring Gull
North Mayo coast and islands marine extension	Atlantic Puffin, Black-legged Kittiwake, European Storm-petrel, Leach's Storm-petrel

Inishkea Inishglora Duvillaun complex marine extension	Arctic Tern, European Shag, European Storm-petrel
Clew Bay	<u>Seabirds</u> : Little Tern <u>Wetland birds</u> : Eurasian Oystercatcher, Northern Lapwing, Eurasian Curlew, Bar-tailed Godwit, Black-tailed Godwit <i>*(see comments below table)</i>
South Mayo - North Connemara Islands marine extension	Arctic Tern, Atlantic Puffin, Black Guillemot, Black-legged Kittiwake, European Shag, European Storm petrel, Leach's Storm-petrel, Manx Shearwater, Northern Gannet
Greater Galway Bay Inner marine extension	Arctic Tern, Atlantic Puffin, Black Guillemot, Black-legged Kittiwake, Common Guillemot, Common Tern, European Herring Gull, Great Black-backed Gull, Great Cormorant, Little Tern, Manx Shearwater, Razorbill, Sandwich Tern
Greater Galway Bay Outer marine extension	Manx Shearwater
Magharees and Tralee Bay marine extension	Black Guillemot, Manx shearwater
Basket Islands pelagic extension	Northern Gannet
Basket Islands marine extension	Black-legged Kittiwake, European Shag, European Storm-petrel, Manx Shearwater
Mid Waterford marine extension	Black-legged kittiwake, European Herring Gull
Skelligs - Doulus - Lamb's Head marine extension	Atlantic Puffin, Black-legged Kittiwake, European Storm-petrel, Manx Shearwater, Northern Gannet, Great Black-backed Gull
Old Head of Kinsale marine extension	Black-legged kittiwake, European Herring Gull
Bull Rock pelagic extension	Northern Gannet, European Herring Gull
Bull and Cow Rocks marine extension	Black-legged Kittiwake, European Storm-Petrel, Northern Gannet
The following IBAs partially overlap with the two cSPAs (Northwest Irish Sea cSPA and Seas off Wexford cSPA) but are listed here as not having SPA coverage due to these sites not being officially designated yet.	
Northeast Irish Sea	Black-legged Kittiwake, Manx Shearwater, Northern Gannet, Razorbill, Great Black-backed Gull

Dublin Islands & cliff marine extension	Atlantic Puffin, Black Guillemot, Black-legged Kittiwake, Common Guillemot, Common Tern, European Herring Gull, European Shag, Great Black-backed Gull, Great Cormorant, Manx Shearwater, Northern Gannet, Razorbill, Roseate Tern
Saltees- Lady's Island marine extension	Arctic Tern, Atlantic Puffin, Black-legged kittiwake, Common Guillemot, Common Tern, Great Cormorant, Little Tern, Manx Shearwater, Mediterranean Gull, Northern Gannet, Razorbill, Roseate Tern, Sandwich Tern
Northeast Celtic Sea	Black-legged kittiwake, Manx Shearwater, Northern Gannet, Common Guillemot, Great Black-backed Gull, European Herring Gull
This marine extension covers the same amount of space as the candidate marine extension to the Murrough SPA; however, since this has not been officially classified yet, we are including it here as an SPA in need of designation.	
Wicklow Murrough marine extension	Little Tern