



FUN FACT

Puffins can reach flying speeds of up to 88kmph by flapping their wings up to 400 times per minute!

Atlantic puffin

Species name: *Fratercula arctica*

Irish name: Puifín

The puffin is a small sea-bird that spends most of its life at sea, but comes to breed on rocky cliffs and islands. Adults are approximately 20cm in length, with a wingspan of about 50cm. It is predominantly found along Ireland's west coast, as well as on the Saltee Islands off Wexford, and on Lambay Island and Ireland's Eye in Co. Dublin. During the breeding season, puffins will use their beaks and feet to dig a nesting burrow in the earth, where the female will lay a single egg. Breeding pairs usually stay together year after year, with both the male and female looking after the chick. Puffins primarily feed on small fish such as herring, and sand-eels. They can dive to a depth of 60m (200 feet) and swim by using their wings to push themselves through the water, while using their feet to steer! Check out [this great video](#) of a puffin colony!



Actions:

- How does marine litter affect sea-birds? Do a project to investigate this.
- Climate change and overfishing are changing marine ecosystems and affecting the food supply available to puffins – contributing to a decline in puffin populations. Why not do a class project on climate change and how it affects ocean food-webs?
- Go on a bird-watching trip to a coastal area, bring binoculars and see what birds you can identify!

