

Skomer Island Welcome Talk 2026

Welcome to Skomer Island! This talk is in two parts. The first has essential points that I need everyone to be aware of so please read these if nothing else. After this, you're free to explore the island if you would like. I will then also give a 5-minute presentation on wildlife and features of the island (please turn over).

Essential points

- **Return boat** - The time for your return boat today is on the blackboard by the steps. Please arrive 15 minutes before this time to ensure you can board on time.
- **Stay on the path** - We have 2 species of breeding seabird on Skomer that burrow underground. The first is the Atlantic Puffin (we had 43,626 in 2025). We also have 350,000 pairs of Manx Shearwaters. As such, their burrows are everywhere. Our golden rule here is to stick to the path at all times – that's bags, children, tripods, everything.
- **Walk anti-clockwise** - We ask our visitors to explore the island in an anti-clockwise direction. Please head to the Farm first and head north, keeping the sea on your right. Please note, the paths back to the Farm from the west, east and south are always two-way.
- **Toilets** - The only toilets are at the Farm up a staircase on the end of the building.
- **Rubbish bins** - There are no bins on Skomer so please take all your rubbish home with you.
- **For sale** - We have water and guidebooks for sale and binoculars for hire here. You can also find water and guidebooks at the Farm too.
- **Emergency contacts** - Please take a photo of these on the right hand side of the hut.

Wildlife and points of interest

Please check the sightings board for current wildlife information.

- We're at the sales point. Behind us is North Haven and the land you can see is the Neck, our research area which is out of bounds.
- As you head up the hill, you will see the Harold Stone on your right. It is a 5000-year-old standing stone and the oldest evidence of civilisation on the island.
- The fields on the way to the Farm are a good spot for waders – in 2025 we had Curlew and Oystercatcher breeding here.
- At the Farm, there are toilets and a visitor centre in the back left corner. There are information boards in the ruin of the old farmhouse about the history of the

island. Skomer was occupied in the Iron Age, Middle Ages and Victorian periods so there's plenty of history to the site.

- West of the Farm, there's a hide looking out over North Pond which is a good spot for waders, ducks and geese.
- Heading into North Valley (right from the Farm as you approach), is a great opportunity to birdwatch. Look out for Short-Eared Owls here (we had 11 pairs in 2025).
- Up at the Garland Stone, look out for Grey Seals hauled out on the rocks (particularly in August/September). On the west coast, you may see Harbour Porpoises and Common Dolphins.
- Bull Hole is a good spot for watching Guillemots and Razorbills (April-July).
- Skomer Head is a good lunch spot. You can see our surrounding islands from here. These are Ramsey Island to the north, Grassholm to the west (with thousands of Gannets) and Skokholm Island to the south. Look out for Chough at Skomer Head (we had 9 pairs in 2025).
- The Wick is a dramatic sea cliff and a great spot for Puffins (May-July), though please don't stop here too long as the paths get very busy. It's also good for Kittiwakes, Fulmars, Guillemots and Razorbills.
- South Plateau is a great place to watch our three protected gull species. These are Herring Gulls, Lesser Black-backed Gulls and Great Black-backed Gulls.
- The Wick was a good place in 2025 to see Peregrines - one of our three pairs bred here in 2025. Other birds of prey include Kestrel, Sparrowhawk, Common Buzzard, Merlin and Short-Eared Owl.
- Captain Kites is the top rocky outcrop you can see from the sales point. This is a great place to sit and wait for your boat if you're a bit early.
- Moorey Mere is the hide to the south - it's a good place to birdwatch and see waders and Moorhens on the pond.

Some notable sightings (please see the board for up-to-date sightings)

April	May-June	July-August	September
Spring Migration - look out for migrant species, for example Ospreys. Puffins will only be present for some days this month as they prepare to breed.	Puffins will have settled in their burrows to incubate their eggs. Guillemots, Razorbills, Fulmars and Kittiwakes are all on nests too. Look out for breeding birds including Stonechat, Oystercatcher, Peregrine, Chough and Raven.	Puffins will be bringing in Sand Eels for their chicks in July and will be gone by August. In August, Grey Seals start pupping on the beaches. Cetacean sightings are also particularly good and the last few Fulmars will be fledging.	In 2025, we had just under 250 seal pups born on Skomer with most of them born in September. You can see them most readily from the sales point or by looking down at the beaches from Captain Kites.

When you return for your afternoon boat

We'll ask people to return any borrowed binoculars and to tell us of any unusual sightings or collapsed burrows you noticed. We'll then guide you to your boat.

We hope you have a great day on Skomer. Diolch!