

# Inishbofin Wildlife Detective



## The Marine Fauna & Wildlife of Inishbofin

Name of Detective: \_\_\_\_\_

Where are you from: \_\_\_\_\_

Contact phone number: \_\_\_\_\_

## BIRDS

### CORNCRAKE

Corncrake - the secretive bird of the meadows - with the distinctive crex crex call of the male, could once be heard throughout Ireland, but are now confined to a handful of areas. There are several corncrakes on Inishbofin. Corncrakes breed almost exclusively in hay and silage meadows, staying out of sight in the long grass.



### ROBIN

**The robin** with its bright red breast it is familiar throughout the year and especially at Christmas!

Males and females look identical, and young birds have no red breast and are spotted with golden brown.

Robins sing nearly all year round and despite their cute appearance, they are aggressively territorial and are quick to drive away intruders.



### BLACKBIRDS

The blackbird is one of the most common birds found in Ireland. It lives here all year round. The blackbird lives on worms, insects and fruit. It is one of Ireland's best song birds



### STARLINGS

At a distance can look like a small thrush, but has a short tail and pointed wings. Adults are dark, babies are greyish brown. The legs are dull pink at all times.



### SKYLARKS

The skylark is a rather vocal bird. The above photo was taken in Inishbofin Westquarter. These birds have black & brown streaking. The skylark is amber listed. This means that there is some concern about the falling number



## FLORA AND FAUNA

### REDCLOVER

Red Clover is a straggling, hairy plant which spreads throughout moist but well-drained soils. This is a native plant.



### YELLOW IRIS

This handsome plant shows its large, bright yellow **flowers** from June to August. It thrives along damp ditches and riverbanks, in marshes and bogs, around lakes and ponds.



### CUCKOO FLOWER

This flower favours damp meadows. It is also known as 'Lady's Smock' as the flower was said to resemble a milkmaid's smock. It appears in April and lasts until June.



### WILD THYME

This plant is a low growing fast spreading plant which can be found in coastal dunes. It is a strong smelling plant. It can be seen between June and September and has a pink/purple flower.



### WILD ORCHID

Of Ireland's 28 native orchid species, an extraordinary 24 are known to exist in the Burren. Beginning every year around April with the flowering of the early purple orchid, and ending in September with the intricate flowering spikes of the autumn lady's tresses, these wonderful little flowers provide a rich and fascinating attraction in the summer pastures.



### CORNFLOWER

An iconic image of rural meadows, the bright blue cornflower was once a common sight in cornfields, but it has declined dramatically in the wild in the last 60 years.

#### Where it grows

Cornfields, roadsides and hedgerows, particularly on light and sandy soils.

#### Best time to see

Flowers from June to August.



## MARINE LIFE

### OTTERS

Otters are very private creatures and you will be very lucky to see one on the island. There is a big population of otters on Inishbofin. They spend most of their day fishing for eels which is their favourite food



### GREEN CRABS

As its name suggests, the common shore crab is one of the commonest crabs on the Irish shore, and anyone who has gone rock-pooling is likely to have encountered one. This species is usually dark green in colour, although young individuals may have whitish blotches.



### PERIWINKLES

The common periwinkle or winkle is a species of small edible sea snail, a marine gastropod mollusc that has gills and an operculum, and is classified within the Littorinidae family. This is a robust intertidal species with a dark and sometimes banded shell. It is native to the rocky shores of the north-eastern, and introduced to the north-western, Atlantic Ocean.



### LIMPETS

A limpet is an aquatic snail with a shell that is broadly conical in shape. "Limpet" informally refers to any gastropod whose shell has no obvious coiling, like the coiling which can be seen in the shells of garden snails or winkles.



### SEALS

Seals are based on the island near the Stags Rock. This colony, while still viewable, is in serious decline over the past ten to fifteen years. It has not been well researched or documented why this is the case. The decline in fish stocks could be one reason for the decrease of the seal population in this area. Inis Goirt island west of Inishbofin is home to a large seal colony.



### CARRAGEEN MOSS

Carrageen Irish moss is a seaweed which is freshly picked along the Irish coast then sundried, not bleached, which is why it retains its beautiful natural colour. Carrageen is a rich source of nutrients, particularly minerals and antioxidants. Carrageen is said to ease ailments such as gastritis, nausea, indigestion, constipation, as well as ulcers.



There are no toads or lizards, foxes or hares on Inishbofin.

In bygone times there were trees on Inishbofin but they were cut down for fuel.

Later trees were never able to re-establish themselves because of the salt air.

There are no Blue Tits, Jackdaws or Bullfinch on Inishbofin.

Inishbofin is divided into five townlands: Westquarter, Fawnmore, Middlequarter, Cloonamore and Knock.

### **A lagoon**

Is a shallow body of water, especially one separated from a sea by coral. Lough Bó Finne/ Westquarter Lake is a wonderful example of a coastal lagoon.

### **Seashore**

Is an area of sandy, stony, or rocky land bordering and level with the sea.

### **Sand dunes**

Are ridges of sand created by the wind. These can be found in Dumhach.

### **Commonage**

Is land that is owned by more than one person. There is commonage throughout the island.

**Make a Nature Note of what you see.**

**This will help you learn about the marine & wildlife on Inishbofin.**

Date	Location	Marine/Wildlife	Plant

**Be an Inishbofin Wildlife Detective**

How to be a good Wildlife Detective

Be quiet, some animals birds & mammals are very shy.

Be patient. You will not see everything in one place or at the one time.

Bring home all litter

Explore

**References**

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[www.wildflowersofireland.net](http://www.wildflowersofireland.net)

[www.google.ie](http://www.google.ie)

\*The Birds of Inishbofin Connemara\* Tim Gordon

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