

Which species can be protected in Marine SPAs?

The [Birds Directive](#) protects two types of bird species: particularly threatened bird species (listed in Annex I of the Birds Directive) and regularly occurring migratory bird species. A total of 106 bird species are thought to use UK waters. Of these, 52 species are marine birds¹ that could be protected by the Birds Directive (see Table below). However, only 44 of these are estimated to occur in large enough numbers² to be considered for protection in SPAs. These include divers, grebes, several seaduck species, and almost all seabirds³.

Besides the marine bird species, some of the SPAs with Marine Components protect also 'terrestrial' bird species, e.g. where they include habitats such as saltmarshes or intertidal areas. However, these occur only inshore and are irrelevant for the SPAs with Marine Components in the offshore area under JNCC responsibility.

Species	Status under Birds Directive
greater scaup <i>Aythya marila</i>	Migratory
common eider <i>Somateria mollissima</i>	Migratory
long-tailed duck <i>Clangula hyemalis</i>	Migratory
common scoter <i>Melanitta nigra</i>	Migratory
surf scoter <i>Melanitta perspicillata</i>	Migratory
velvet scoter <i>Melanitta fusca</i>	Migratory
common goldeneye <i>Bucephala clangula</i>	Migratory
red-breasted merganser <i>Mergus serrator</i>	Migratory
goosander <i>Mergus merganser</i>	Migratory
red-throated diver <i>Gavia stellata</i>	Annex I
black-throated diver <i>Gavia arctica</i>	Annex I
great northern diver <i>Gavia immer</i>	Annex I
northern fulmar <i>Fulmarus glacialis</i>	Migratory
Cory's shearwater <i>Calonectris diomedea</i>	Annex I
great shearwater <i>Puffinus gravis</i>	Migratory
sooty shearwater <i>Puffinus griseus</i>	Migratory
Manx shearwater <i>Puffinus puffinus</i>	Migratory

¹ 'marine bird species': bird species which are using and are depending upon a marine habitat

² It has been common practice to consider only areas with at least 50 individuals present on a regular basis for selection as an SPA.

³ Of all seabird species in the UK, black guillemot is the only species neither classed as a rare or vulnerable (Annex I) species nor as a regularly occurring migratory species by the Birds Directive.

Species	Status under Birds Directive
Balearic shearwater <i>Puffinus mauretanicus</i>	Annex I
European storm-petrel <i>Hydrobates pelagicus</i>	Annex I
Leach's storm-petrel <i>Oceanodroma leucorhoa</i>	Annex I
northern gannet <i>Morus bassanus</i>	Migratory
great cormorant <i>Phalacrocorax carbo</i>	Migratory
European shag <i>Phalacrocorax aristotelis</i>	Migratory
great crested grebe <i>Podiceps cristatus</i>	Migratory
red-necked grebe <i>Podiceps grisena</i>	Migratory
Slavonian grebe <i>Podiceps auritus</i>	Annex I
black-necked grebe <i>Podiceps nigricollis</i>	Migratory
red-necked phalarope <i>Phalaropus lobatus</i>	Annex I
pomarine skua <i>Stercorarius pomarinus</i>	Migratory
Arctic skua <i>Stercorarius parasiticus</i>	Migratory
long-tailed skua <i>Stercorarius longicaudus</i>	Migratory
great skua <i>Stercorarius skua</i>	Migratory
Mediterranean gull <i>Larus melanocephalus</i>	Annex I
little gull <i>Larus minutus</i>	Migratory
Sabine's gull <i>Larus sabini</i>	Migratory
black-legged kittiwake <i>Rissa tridactyla</i>	Migratory
black-headed gull <i>Larus ridibundus</i>	Migratory
common gull <i>Larus canus</i>	Migratory
lesser black-backed gull <i>Larus fuscus</i>	Migratory
herring gull <i>Larus argentatus</i>	Migratory
Iceland gull <i>Larus glaucoides</i>	Migratory
glaucous gull <i>Larus hyperboreus</i>	Migratory
great black-backed gull <i>Larus marinus</i>	Migratory
little tern <i>Sternula albifrons</i>	Annex I
sandwich tern <i>Sterna sandvicensis</i>	Annex I
common tern <i>Sterna hirundo</i>	Annex I
roseate tern <i>Sterna dougallii</i>	Annex I
Arctic tern <i>Sterna paradisaea</i>	Annex I
common guillemot <i>Uria aalge</i>	Migratory

Species	Status under Birds Directive
razorbill <i>Alca torda</i>	Migratory
little auk <i>Alle alle</i>	Migratory
Atlantic puffin <i>Fratercula arctica</i>	Migratory

Note:

Migratory = regularly occurring migratory species (Article 4.2, Birds Directive)

Annex I = listed on Annex I of Birds Directive