



Seabird Spectacular - 5th to 11th May 2012



Tour Leader: Danny Green

Itinerary

Day 1: We are all booked on the 14.30 Ferry from Fishguard to Rosslare. My vehicle is booked on to carry 3 guests and the remainder of you will be foot passengers: we can sort this out when we meet up, which I suggest we look to do in the seafront car park near the terminal and directly opposite Tesco. Check in closes at 13.30 so I suggest we look to meet between 12.00 and 12.30 latest to organise ourselves. You can then either leave your car here (free last year!) or in the official car park which saves a 5 minute walk but will cost you. The ferry is due to arrive in Rosslare at 18.00 and through a combination of my car and a pre-booked taxi we will make our way to Kilmore Quay where we will check into our B&B accommodation and enjoy some dinner in a local hostelry.



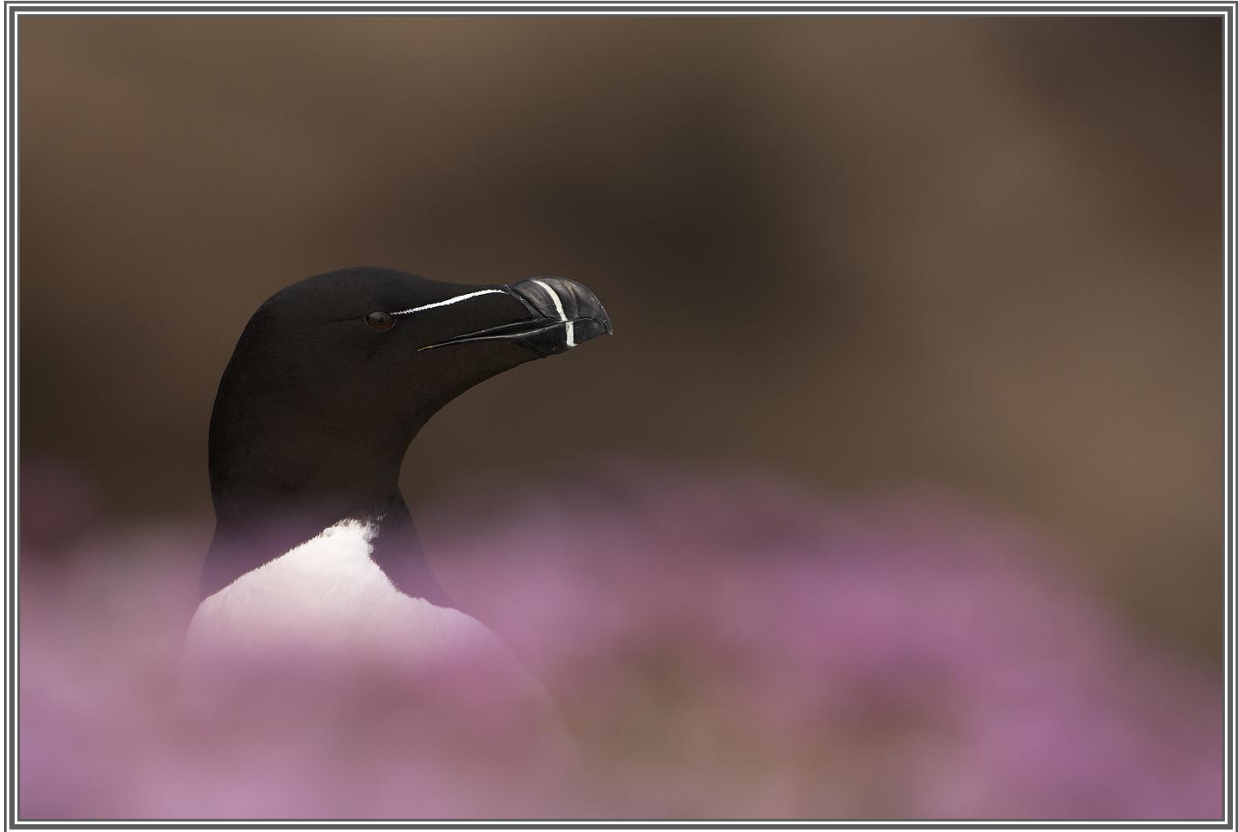
Days 2/3: We will leave early for Great Saltee Island by pre-arranged boat with a local fisherman, taking our food and refreshments for the day with us. We will not be returning until the evening light has gone so be prepared for a full day out when the weather may change. Packed refreshments will be available for you to prepare the

night before. Please note that the landing on the island is a wet landing: we will transfer from our fishing boat to a smaller craft and then need to exit this into the shallow waters – bare foot, Wellingtons or waterproof sandals are the options available for you, and they can be left on the shore to switch to your more conventional light walking boots.

Day 4: We are again scheduled for an early start for Great Saltee Island for a full mornings photography building on the previous two days, but we will be departing during the afternoon to return to the B&B, collect our bags and head to Rosslare for the 21.15 ferry. We'll eat on board and are due to arrive in Fishguard at 00.45 we are then booked in a local hotel.



Days 5 – 7: The early mornings continue as we head straight to Marloes (about an hours drive) to catch the passenger boat out to Skomer Island. We have places reserved on the boat but we do need to be prompt to get on the first shuttle of the day. Your car parking will be booked at East Hook Farm. If you have several bags it's probably best to drive down to the offices/toilet block and drop them off and then return up the hill to park the car up, but please note these are narrow lanes with only a few points to turn around in so use your discretion accordingly as you'll need to be happy in your reverse gears! Skomer will be our base for the next two nights in the accommodation hostel in the centre of the island, and we'll have the best opportunity to photograph early and late light puffins, the magnificent bluebell display on the island and a night time visit of Manx Shearwaters too. You'll be free to leave the island on the boat of your choice on the last day – this will be between 10.00 am and 15.00 hours so the choice is yours dependant on the weather.



What to Bring

We will have B&B accommodation in Ireland so all facilities will be provided, but please note my comments on the length of stay on Saltee Island, the wet landing and the potentially changeable weather. It's almost always windy too!

On Skomer we will be in hostel accommodation and you will need to bring a duvet cover/under sheet and pillow case or a sleeping bag (your choice) - whatever you take though you will have to get on and off the boat and the steps are quite steep so think practically too.



I will be organising all the food for our stay, but if you want to bring any items for yourself then feel free. Please let me know if there are any food allergies or dietary requirements that you may have that I need to allow for: it won't be cordon bleu I'm afraid, more the sort of basic home cooking you might reasonably expect under the limited options available so there won't be a great deal of variety to pick and choose from - hence why I'd rather get any serious dislikes off my shopping list.

In terms of camera kit you'll need a tripod, the longest lens you have (500mm + convertor would be my recommendation/choice) and then some supplementary lenses for other opportunities such as a 24-70mm for landscapes, I would suggest a macro lens of some sort and then maybe an intermediate zoom (70-200 or 100-400) so that you don't miss anything in terms of opportunity. A tripod is essential in my view but I know this is a personal thing so it's your choice. Again remember though that you'll have to get your gear onto Skomer (but the reserve volunteers are generally great at helping on the island end of things).



In the evenings we will have a chance to critique and look at individuals work if you so wish, so feel free to bring anything you'd like to share on either a laptop or memory pen/CD. There are only 2 power points on Skomer – this will mean sensible queuing for battery recharging so bear this in mind. Your mobile should work on both islands (service provider willing).

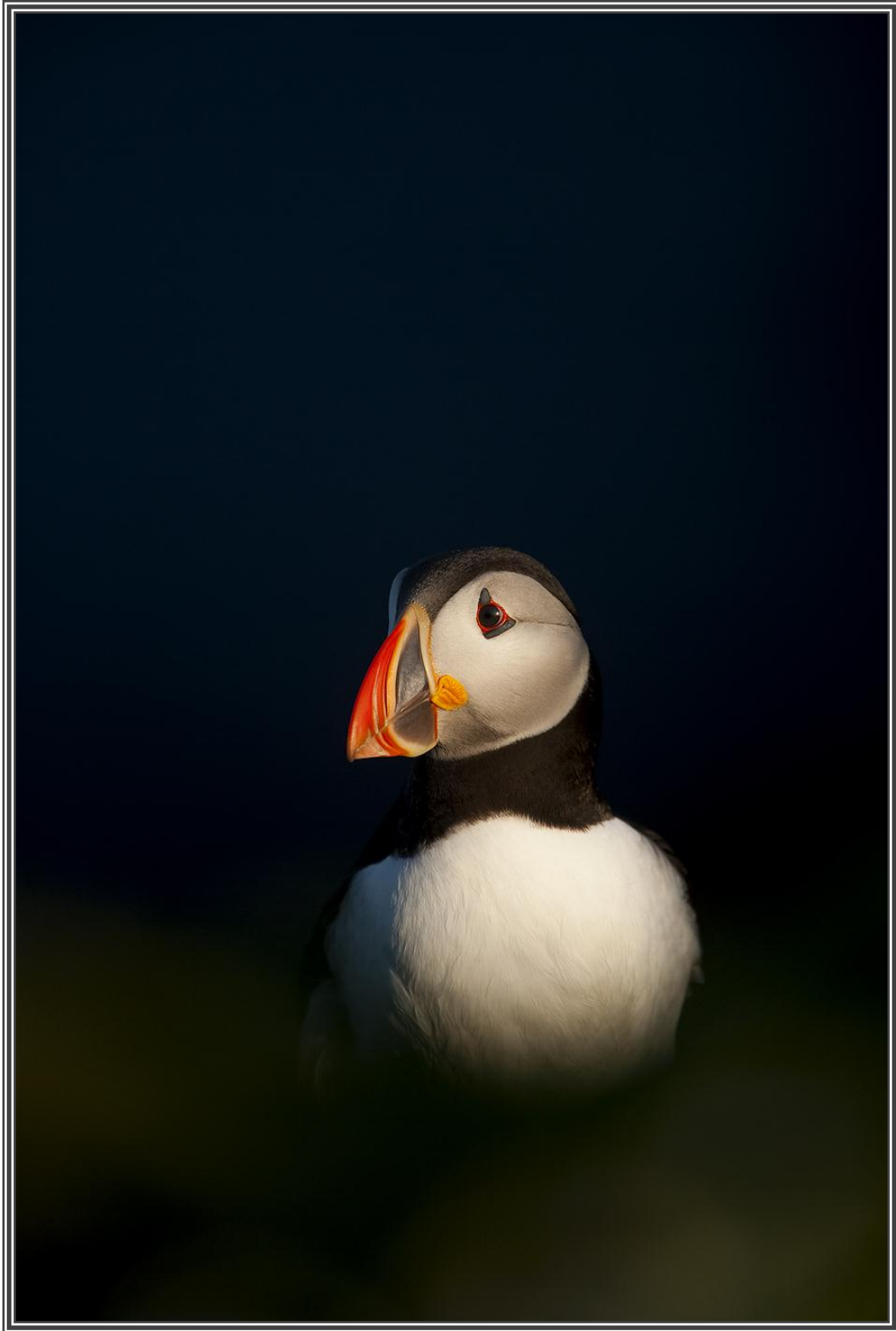
My contact number in the build up to and for the duration of the trip is **07951 945433**.

I have spent the past twenty years visiting seabird colonies in the UK and Europe and these two islands are without doubt two of the best that I have been too. There is nothing better in having an island to yourself and just spending quality time with these beautiful birds.

See you in Fishguard

Danny





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