



**A bright beak** – The Atlantic Puffin is adored the world over for their small wings, soulful eyes and colourful, oversized beaks. In winter, the colourful parts of their bill fall off leaving behind a grey beak which ‘blooms’ orange again in the spring. It is thought that the brighter the colour the more chance a puffin has of finding a mate. They also skilfully use their beaks for holding fish in neat stacks, securing the fish with their tongues.



**Song of the seas** – The humpback is the most common species of whale to be found in British waters. These gentle giants are known for their acrobatic behaviour and their complex and magical songs, which can last 30 minutes at a time and travel vast distances. Sounding like a long series of clicks, deep bass noises and whines, it’s only the males that make these melodies. Scientists have spent years trying to understand what they are saying, and yet it still remains a mystery.



**A tale of a tail** – The common European otter has made something of a comeback across the British Isles in recent years. Closely related to badgers and ferrets, the otter has a powerful tail which enables it to swim fast and it sometimes uses it for fighting off rivals. What’s more, otters occasionally use their tails as a third leg when standing upright, as well as a rudder when they float on their back. Look out for them at river mouths and in lochs.



# Fauna of the British Isles

With wildlife-rich seas, hundreds of uninhabited islands and ecologically diverse coasts, the British Isles is a haven for the creatures great and small that call it home.

**Natural inspiration**

There’s more than enough to delight the nature enthusiast on an expedition voyage to the British Isles. For many, the main draw is the chance to get up close to some of the greatest seabird breeding colonies in Europe and experience the clamour and commotion of thousands of Northern Gannets, Atlantic Puffins, Northern Fulmars and more. For others, the thrill of looking out for seals, otters

and birds of prey in their natural habitat will enthrall and delight, and there’s a wealth of smaller birds and animals to watch out for on guided walks.

**Seas rich in marine life**

Be sure to head up to the observation deck and keep an eye out for marine life. Some 16 species of cetacean can regularly be observed, from pods of common dolphins to the graceful

humpback whale. During the summer months, mighty whale sharks pay a visit to these isles, as do other travellers such as the speedy Atlantic bluefin tuna and the peculiar-looking ocean sunfish.

MAIN IMAGE: © GETTY IMAGES - IMAGE FROM TOP: © CAMILLE BERMAN - ANDREAS HALLIG ANDERSON - DANIEL COLALETTE - UNSPLASH