

# Rathlin Island

## Finding your way around

To discover what makes Rathlin Island such a special place for nature, start exploring today.

There are a total of seven trails criss-crossing the island, and full details can be found at [walkni.com](http://walkni.com)

Many of these routes will take you off-road, so remember to wear comfortable walking shoes and bring plenty of water.

Enjoy your day!

### West Light trail

This four and a half mile trail will take you to the West Light Seabird Centre, home to Northern Ireland's largest seabird colony. It takes about four hours to walk there and back including a one-hour visit to the Seabird Centre.

On the way, look for Knockans viewpoint, where you may spot stonechats perching on top of bushes. Further along, you will pass through Kebble Nature Reserve, which is home to birds such as wheatears, peregrine falcons and Northern Ireland's only breeding pair of great skuas.

This trail is along a paved road and is uphill on the outward journey. A private bus operates between the harbour and the Seabird Centre.

### Roonivoolin trail

The Roonivoolin trail leads you on a three-mile trip, from Church Bay towards the southern end of the island and back again. Allow at least three hours to enjoy it fully.

As you wander along the trail, keep a lookout for seals lounging in Mill Bay, and oystercatchers and ringed plovers scurrying along the stony beaches.

Once you get to Roonivoolin (which means "point of the gulls") stop to enjoy the fantastic views, but don't forget to look skywards – buzzards, ravens and skylarks may well be flying overhead.

Dogs must be kept on a lead at all times. Keep your distance from loose livestock.

### Craigmacagan trail

Follow the waymarkers along this one-and-a-half-mile trail through wild heathland and meadows. At the picnic tables, take in the rugged coastal views and breath-taking scenery.

In spring, look out for an abundance of butterflies, heath spotted orchids and bluebells. Scan the sky for buzzards and skylarks and listen for the sweet song of meadow pipits. Freshwater ponds are home to dragonflies and damselflies in summer. In the autumn and winter, Irish hares are a wildlife highlight alongside common and grey seals which explore close to the shore.

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