



Wildlife of the World Newsletter

August 2026



Puffin (Fratercula arctica) on Skokholm Island

Hi ,

I can't believe it! I woke this morning to the sound of rain pattering down... beautiful, fresh, wet rain... here in Wales! In case you weren't aware, we've had the hottest, driest summer on record, with no rain for two months... so I really am delighted!

Despite the drought (and bigger concerns about the extreme weather we're experiencing), I've had an excellent summer exploring the local countryside, including visits to both Skomer and Skokholm islands.



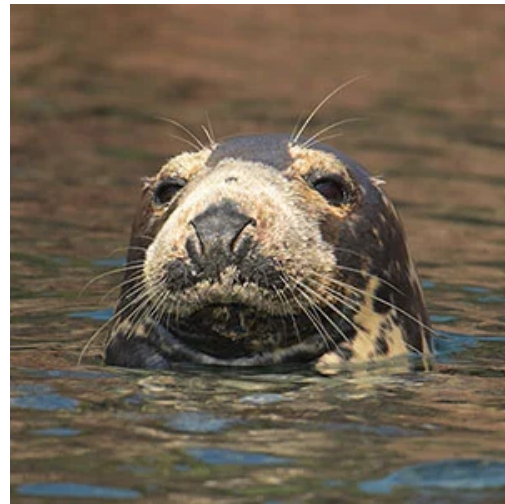
Skomer Vole (Clethrionomys glareolus skomerensis)

The shy little creature above also lives on the island... it's a Skomer vole, which as the name suggests is only found there. The warden, Leighton Newman kindly let me join the annual survey to take some photos.

Nearby Skokholm has similar wildlife. It isn't open to day visitors, but I was lucky enough to spend five days there enjoying the peace and tranquility.

Wardens Richard and Giselle helped me get footage of manx shearwaters returning to their nests at night, and professional filmmaker Nicki Meharg, who was also staying, helped me film seals underwater. [You can read the full report here, with the videos and lots more photos.](#)

If you haven't been to Skomer, you should definitely go, it's one of the best wildlife experiences anywhere. The highlight is the thousands of puffins returning from their fishing trips, but there's lots more. Choughs, peregrines and short-eared owls breed there, together with many different seabirds including over 700,000 manx shearwaters, half the world population!



Atlantic Grey Seal (Halichoerus grypus)

Wildlife-watching Sites

The Tibetan Plateau, China



Wolf Pack (Canis lupus)

Ten years ago I was living in China, so this month I thought I'd focus on one of the vast areas of wilderness I explored... the Tibetan Plateau.

I made several visits and each time the wildlife was superb... from big herds of kiang, gazelle and antelope to secretive Tibetan fox and Pallas' cat, watched over from above by soaring vultures and eagles.

My most memorable encounter was with the pack of wolves above, which I tracked for about half-an-hour before they turned around and started tracking me!



Kiang (Equus kiang)

About a mile from the safety of the car, it was a nervous few minutes before they quietly turned and headed back to their den.

I was there in the Autumn when Himalayan marmots were busy preparing for hibernation. Collecting big bundles of bedding and laying down thick fat reserves... they looked rather like big, cuddly children's toys!

The Tibetan plateau isn't an easy place to get to, but it's well worth the effort because the scenery and wildlife are amazing! [You can read a report with more photos and details here...](#)



Himalayan Marmots (Marmota himalayana)

Events and Books



I have a busy Autumn ahead of me, with lots of Welsh animals to try and photograph. Hopefully I'll be able to show you some of them in next month's newsletter.

In the meantime, all the existing '*Wildlife of the World*' books are now available as eBooks [on Google Play](https://play.google.com/books) for £2.00 (\$3) each. They can be read on any device, but are best on screens 10" or larger. There's [more information here](#), or you can reply to this email if you have any questions.

Best Wishes from a beautifully wet Wales!

Hugh



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