

Marine Birds – Tufted Puffin Colonies

description

Tufted Puffins (*Fratercula cirrhata*) are medium-sized, stocky marine birds with rounded heads. They are solid brown-black with a white facial patch and two distinct yellow tufts that appear during the breeding season. They can be easily identified by their bright red and orange bill. The outer wings of Tufted Puffins are wider than the inner wings, giving the outstretched wing a hand-like appearance. They breed in colonies on islands with steep, grassy slopes or on cliff tops. They nest in burrows at the edges of cliffs, on grassy slopes, or in natural crevices in rocks. Winter habitat is well offshore, in mid-ocean.

This atlas page depicts active and historic Tufted Puffin colonies in terms of their relative importance, a value that corresponds to the number of “individuals” estimated at any one site during the most recent survey year. This value was compared to the total BC population, which was determined by summing the estimated number of individuals at all colonies during the most recent survey year. Using these values, relative importance was determined as follows:

- High: colony has >5% of the species’ total BC population.
- Moderate: colony has 1-5% of the species’ total BC population.
- Low: colony has <1% of the species’ total BC population.

These categories correspond with the 1% threshold that has been applied at global and national levels by Bird Studies Canada (and other groups around the world) to identify Important Bird Areas.

Sites have been included regardless of whether breeding had been previously confirmed at a particular site. Attributes for each site also include the date that breeding was last confirmed and the most recent survey results. Colony locations were buffered to represent some of the marine habitat used by these birds adjacent to each colony, based on the distances employed in the creation of the Canadian Wildlife Service’s Marine Bird Areas of Interest dataset.



PHOTO: CHARLIE SHORT



PHOTO: KAREN BOLTNER

data sources

- Environment Canada (Canadian Wildlife Service) – British Columbia Seabird Colony Inventory
- Parks Canada – Nesting Seabird Colonies

data resolution

- 1:250,000 (some points have been adjusted to match the 1:20,000 TRIM coastline)

data collected

- 1977-1989 (years breeding was confirmed)

date compiled

- 2008

reviewers

- Harry Carter, Consultant
- Peter Davidson, Bird Studies Canada
- Representatives from Environment Canada, Canadian Wildlife Service

reviewer comments

- None provided.

caveats of use

- Gaps in the extent of this feature should not be inferred to be an absence of the species, but rather an absence in survey effort.
- Buffer distances do not represent the entire foraging area of the birds.
- Sites of low relative importance may include extirpated sites or sites where the most recent survey did not obtain a count for breeding birds. Not all colonies are surveyed each year and colonies that were active in the past may or may not still support breeding populations. Therefore, these sites are still deemed important by the experts.
- Possible breeding sites are sites where breeding is suspected but has not been confirmed or counted. This information is only available for the Parks Canada dataset for Haida Gwaii.
- Recommended date of expiry for use of these data in a marine planning context: None provided.

map, feature data and metadata access

- Visit www.bcmca.ca/data for more information.

references

Species description contains material from:

- B.C. Conservation Data Centre. *Species Summary: Fratercula cirrhata*. BC Ministry of Environment (MoE) 2010. 21 Sep. 2010 <http://a100.gov.bc.ca/pub/eswp/>
- Seattle Audubon Society. *BirdWeb – Seattle Audubon’s Guide to the Birds of Washington*. Revised 2008. www.seattleaudubon.org/birdweb

BCMCA Atlas
Marine Birds
Tufted Puffin Colonies

Legend

- Relative Importance**
 (range in individuals)
- High (3,897-52,800)
 - Moderate (780-3,896)
 - Low (1-779)
 - Historic/Possible Sites

Notes:

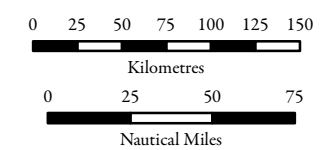
- Polygons of high relative importance have been drawn last and may overlap polygons of lesser importance.
- Colonies have been buffered by 5 kilometres.

Data Sources:
 Environment Canada
 (Canadian Wildlife Service),
 Parks Canada

Base Data:
 ESRI Base Data, GeoBase, GeoBC,
 NOAA, Natural Resources Canada,
 USGS, Washington State Government

Thematic Data:
 For more information on data sources
 and methods please refer to the
 facing page to this map

Projection: BC Albers NAD83



1:4,250,000 *

* Written scales are approximate and are based on a 11 x 17 inch paper size.

Prepared for:



Map template by Caslys Consulting Ltd.
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