

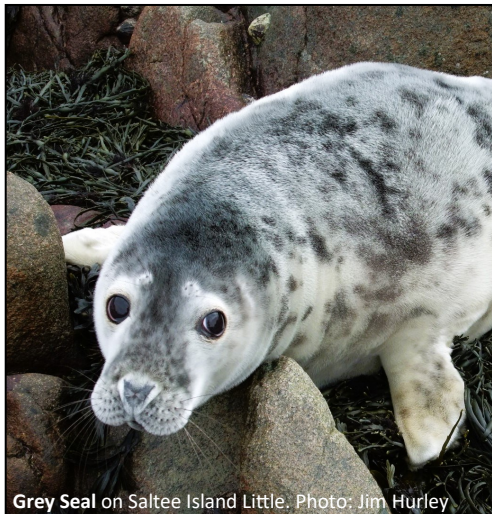
# SAC Qualifying Species

**T**hree species of marine mammal are qualifying interests of special areas of conservation (SACs) on the South Wexford Coast: Harbour Porpoise, Common Bottlenose Dolphin, and Grey Seal.

**Harbour Porpoise.** When it surfaces to breathe, the Harbour Porpoise seldom exposes much of its body. It is more likely to be seen inshore during the summer months, especially during July and August, and when the surface of the sea is calm. It is a qualifying interest of both the Hook Head SAC and the Carnsore Point SAC and is a protected species under the Wildlife Acts. For a profile of the species go to [https://iwdg.ie/cms\\_files/wp-content/uploads/2019/04/Harbour-porpoise-profile.pdf](https://iwdg.ie/cms_files/wp-content/uploads/2019/04/Harbour-porpoise-profile.pdf).

**Common Bottlenose Dolphin.** The Common Bottlenose Dolphin is not seen as often as the Harbour Porpoise but it is believed that there is a resident population of these large dolphins in Irish coastal waters and that animals regularly visit the South Wexford Coast. The species is a qualifying interest of the Hook Head SAC and is a protected species under the Wildlife Acts. For a profile of the species go to [https://iwdg.ie/cms\\_files/wp-content/uploads/2019/04/Bottlenose-dolphin-profile.pdf](https://iwdg.ie/cms_files/wp-content/uploads/2019/04/Bottlenose-dolphin-profile.pdf).

**Grey Seal.** Grey Seals may be seen at the Saltee Islands throughout the year. They breed on both islands between August and December. The species is a qualifying interest of the Saltee Islands SAC and is a protected species under the Wildlife Acts. For further information about seals on the Saltee Islands see [https://www.npws.ie/sites/default/files/publications/pdf/000707\\_Saltee%20Islands%20SAC%20Marine%20Supporting\\_Doc\\_V1.pdf](https://www.npws.ie/sites/default/files/publications/pdf/000707_Saltee%20Islands%20SAC%20Marine%20Supporting_Doc_V1.pdf).



Grey Seal on Saltee Island Little. Photo: Jim Hurley



Harbour Porpoise.

Photo: <https://www.naturepl.com/search?s=Harbour+Porpoise>



Common Bottlenose Dolphin.

Photo: Irish Whale and Dolphin Group



Pod of Common Bottlenose Dolphins at Hook Head. Photo: Liam Ryan



Two **Common Bottlenose Dolphins** seen off Fethard Dock (left) and later off Ingard Point (centre). The image on the right shows the species' single blowhole, and short, well-defined, stubby, bottle-shaped beak with a distinct crease between the beak and the melon (enlarged 'forehead'). Photos: Jan Jenkins.

**SWC Promotions: promoting the natural heritage resource values of the South Wexford Coast.**

Copy available as a PDF file from <https://www.southwexfordcoast.com/>. Version date: October 2024.

SWC Promotions

