

On the south facing cliffs of Haystack Rock, the lanky, greenish-black **Pelagic Cormorant** builds nests of seaweed on precarious narrow ledges high above the surf. These birds are



Tufted Puffin in flight.

unmistakable, especially when posed in their highly recognizable position, wings outstretched to dry, after diving for fish.

The most common bird you will see along the coast is the **Western Gull**. Mature gulls are white with gray wing feathers, yellow bill and pink legs. The grayish-brown gull is not the female, but an immature bird under four years old. Unlike most birds, both sexes have the same appearance. This gull is one of the largest coastal birds and one of the bravest. Hence, their reputation as pirates. They resort to any means for a meal, including raids upon the nested eggs and fledglings of other birds. Furthermore, they will steal from your picnic blanket!

The pigeon-sized bird with a white wing patch and bright reddish orange legs and feet is a **Pigeon Guillemot**. This bird constitutes the smallest population of nesting birds on Hay-

stack Rock. It nests in low, level crevices three to ten meters above the ocean. It is especially sensitive to human presence, so please give it lots of space.



Once again, **Pigeon Guillemot in flight.**

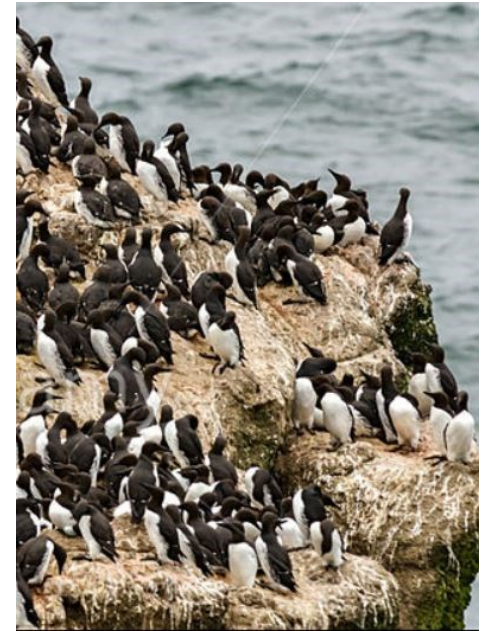
because Haystack Rock is a fragile bird nesting area, climbing on the rock is not allowed. Please respect the restricted area signs. Think of Haystack Rock, and all natural areas that we visit, as places where we have the responsibility of stewardship.

An especially important point to remember is to keep a close watch on the tides, and to pay attention to lifeguards' announcements while exploring Haystack Rock. On occasion unwary visitors get trapped on the rock at high tide requiring rescue teams to swim out or be lowered in by helicopter. The use of a helicopter is especially harmful and disruptive to the birds of Haystack Rock, and exercising caution and common sense alleviates this risk so that all can enjoy a peaceful adventure at Cannon Beach's monolith.



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Bird Watching in and near Cannon Beach



Common Murres nest on the Bird Rocks north of Ecola Creek. The largest single colony in the world: approx. 28,000

Bird Watching In and Near Cannon Beach

Cannon Beach is surrounded by forests, wetlands, rocky headlands, beaches, and offshore rocks ideal for seabirds and waterfowl. Consequently the area hosts a seasonal array of bird populations year-round.

Along with a wide assortment of native species, numerous species also migrate through the area along what is called the **Pacific Flyway**. Many arrive in the spring and summer to nest and raise young, and others in the winter to enjoy what for them are warmer temperatures.

Haystack Rock, Cannon Beach's monolith, is one of 1400 sites in the Oregon Islands Wildlife Refuge. This huge basalt rock is host to many species including **Pelagic Cormorants, Pigeon Guillemots**, and the year-round **Western Gull**. The **Tufted Puffin** arrives in April and stays through early August, nesting in burrows high on the grassy area on the north face of Haystack Rock. Of the four Puffin nesting sites in Oregon, the colony here is the most visible.

Along the shore north from Haystack Rock toward Chapman Point and into the Ecola Creek estuary, many species thrive. Thousands of gulls - **Glaucous Wing, Mew, Heerman's, Herring, and Bonaparte's**, to name a few - dot the shoreline along with the predominant **Western Gull**. Telling these species apart can be a daunting task, especially as many interbreed. The immature gulls are the easiest to spot. Mature gulls are sharp white and gray while the immature birds are a drab tan or dirty gray.

Squadrons of **Brown Pelican** can be seen skimming the surf and swooping and diving for fish. **Surf Scoters** are visible out on the water in winter, and flocks of shore birds, among them **Sanderlings, Dunlins**, and the tiny **Western Sandpiper**. In the estuary, always a calm

pocket away from the winds and weather of the beach, waterfowl, **Dippers**, and **Great Blue Herons** feed, bathe, and rest. Les Shirley Park along the north shore of the creek features interpretive signs illustrating the Cannon Beach watershed and estuary ecosystem, its plant life and the animals and birds that are dependent upon it.

Further north to Chapman Point and the Bird Rocks, the largest single nesting colony of **Common Murres** in the world, around 28,000 birds, can be observed. **Brandt's Cormorants** are also visible nesting on open, flat areas. This colony may be the third largest in the world. The endangered **Marbled Murrelet**, a rare seabird, which nests in old growth forest, can be observed feeding near the shore during the spring and summer breeding season. **Bald Eagles, Hawks (Redtailed, Coopers, Marsh)** and **Peregrine Falcons** also frequent the Chapman Point area.

Ecola State Park offers an array of good nesting areas for a variety of shore, rock, and forest birds. In its panoramic Pacific view lays Tillamook Rock, a one-acre basalt island a mile off shore. Home to Tillamook Rock Lighthouse, it is also a federally protected wildlife refuge, housing huge colonies of **Common Murres** and **Cormorants**. Interpretive signs at Ecola State Park describe the bird species, which frequent the north coast region, including those dependent on Tillamook Rock and Ecola Point.

Just off downtown Cannon Beach east of the Chamber Information Center and City Park, innovative sewage ponds use natural processes to filter water after primary treatment. Overlooking these placid ponds is an observation deck with a plaque describing the many species of waterfowl observable here, including **Mallards** and **Canada Geese**.

In nearby Little Pompey Wetland and other marshy areas, **Green Herons, Pileated Woodpeckers**, and a variety of sparrows can be observed. An interpretive sign located on the public restroom building near the Information Center illustrates several bird species that live in or frequent the wetland. Seasonally, the observer can see **Coots, Wood Ducks, Scaups, Northern Shovelers, Ring-necked Ducks, Buffleheads**, and **Mergansers**. Raptors such as **Osprey** and **Red-tailed Hawk** hunt here, and the marshes often fill with the songs of **Redwing Blackbirds**. Around town in the alder and spruce trees, live a large number of songbirds, whose presence becomes more observable during the bare winter months. Observers can see **Winter Wrens, Varied Thrushes, American Robins, Oregon Juncos, Black-capped and Chestnut-backed Chickadees**, and **Cedar Waxwings**. Year-round in the trees can be seen and heard the **American Crow** and **Steller's Jay**. In summer predominant birds downtown, asking for handouts, are several varieties of sparrows, European Starlings, and pigeons. Hummingbirds, such as Anna's and Rufous, enjoy the downtown flowers.

Haystack Rock is home to several bird species that nest there during the summer. One of the most popular and colorful birds to see is the **Tufted Puffin**. Puffins nest on the rock from April through July and are best viewed throughout June and July. They are squat, black birds with large, bright orange bills, white facial features, and tufts of white feathers above the eyes. Look for them on the grassy north slope of Haystack Rock. This grassy area is where the puffins burrow tunnels into the soil so nests, eggs, and chicks are protected from predators.