

## Duhallow

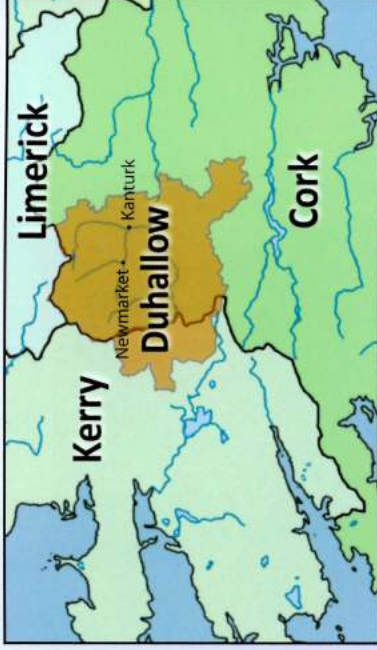
### A special place for birds of prey

Duhallow (East Kerry and North-west Cork) is an important area for some of our sensitive bird of prey populations. The upland moorland and rolling hills provide good hunting and breeding grounds for **Hen Harriers** and **Merlin**, while **Buzzards** favour the low-lying, rich agricultural areas of the eastern half of Duhallow.

Three owl species occur in Duhallow, though they are seldom seen. **Barn Owls** are scarce throughout Ireland but Duhallow is a stronghold for the species. They nest in old, derelict buildings and can occasionally be seen at dusk, or heard calling at night, with their long, blood-curdling screech. **Long-eared Owl** is the commonest of the three species and, while adults are rarely observed, the young can sometimes be heard on calm summer nights, a loud squeaking call, like an un-oiled gate hinge! **Short-eared Owls** are rare in Ireland but may be occasional breeders in moorland habitats in Duhallow.

**Kestrels** are familiar to many, a small falcon hovering in the breeze as they hunt for small mammals and birds, and are common throughout much of the area. **Sparrowhawks** are also reasonably widespread in Duhallow, though their hunting technique – ambushing small birds by flying low and fast – means that they are seldom seen.

The **Peregrine Falcon** breeds on cliffs, quarries, and occasionally on large buildings. They are the fastest flying bird in the world and are superb hunters, preying on a wide range of other birds.



### Protecting raptors in Duhallow

The Duhallow Raptor Conservation Project is co-ordinated by BirdWatch Ireland, is funded by IRD Duhallow through the LEADER 2007-2013 Programme, and is carried out in collaboration with the Duhallow Birdwatching Group. Duhallow is an important area for specific raptor populations, and this project aims to learn more about these elusive species and to develop and implement direct conservation measures to benefit raptors on a local and national basis.

### Find out more

To report your sightings, and to see the latest news, images and videos of Duhallow Raptors, log on to [www.duhallow.blogspot.ie](http://www.duhallow.blogspot.ie)



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**Photo credits** Main image: Background, M.O'Clery; Female Kestrel, Michael Finn; male Kestrel, John Fox; Buzzard, Shay Connolly; Hen Harrier, Shay Connolly; Short-eared Owl, Shay Connolly; Peregrine, Michael Finn; Peregrine in flight, Colum Clarke; Barn Owl, Mike Brown; Sparrowhawk in flight, Wikimedia.org – Christian Knoch; Sparrowhawk, Wikimedia.org – Pierre Dalous; Merlin, Shay Connolly; Long-eared Owl, Richard T. Mills; Cover Background, M.O'Clery; Male Kestrel, Shay Connolly; Buzzard, Shay Connolly; Barn Owl, Faith Wilson; Merlin, Shay Connolly.

# A guide to the Birds of prey of Duhallow



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Male

**Kestrel**

**Pocaire gaoithe**

Wingspan 75cm, Length 34cm

Regularly seen in Duhallow. Hovers while hunting.

Female



**Buzzard**

**Clamhán**

Wingspan 120cm, Length 54cm

Large raptor, increasing, occurs mainly in the E of Duhallow.



Female



**Hen Harrier**

**Cromán na gcearc**

Wingspan 110cm, Length 48cm

Hunts low over moorland. Females are brown with a white rump, males are pale grey.



**Short-eared Owl**

**Ulchabhán réisc**

Wingspan 100cm, Length 38cm

Very rare in Duhallow, possible breeder on moorland.



**Peregrine**

**Fabhcún gorm**

Wingspan 103cm, Length 42cm

Powerful raptor, feeds on birds. Nests on cliffs, quarries or large ruins.

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**Sparrowhawk**

**Spioróg**

Wingspan 62cm, Length 34cm

Common but elusive. Hunts for birds, low and fast.



**Merlin**

**Meirliún**

Wingspan 56cm, Length 28cm

Smallest raptor in Ireland, inhabits moorland. Incredibly agile, hunts mainly small birds.

Female

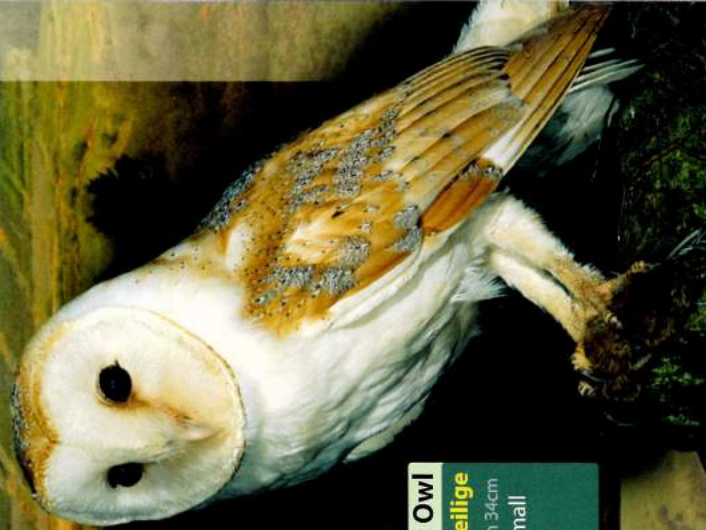


**Long-eared Owl**

**Ceann cait**

Wingspan 95cm, Length 36cm

The commonest of our owls, nesting in old crow nests in woodlands, copses and sometimes gardens.



**Barn Owl**

**Scréachóg reilige**

Wingspan 89cm, Length 34cm

Nocturnal, hunts small mammals. Nests in ruined buildings.