

Canal Birds

Swallow

This is a summer visitor which breeds in Ireland but spends the rest of its time in Southern Africa. The Swallow can be identified by its red-orange face-patch and its long-tailed feathers, called streamers. The swallow will feed over waters like the canal, catching flies like midges.



Kingfisher

None could mistake the kingfisher for any other Irish bird as its electric blue and orange feathers are unique. It flies like a dart over the surface of rivers and canals all over the country. Ireland is thought to have one of the highest densities of kingfishers in Europe.



Coot

The coot is a very handsome black water-bird with an obvious white forehead and bill. It is normally found on larger water bodies such as lakes and canals. It is an omnivore eating plants, tadpoles, small fish and even stealing bread from ducks.



Moorhen

The moorhen is another familiar bird although quite secretive at times. Its small hen-like body is black and its beak is a very obvious orange-red. It is an omnivore - eating both plants and small animals from bugs to fish. It is the most common freshwater bird in Ireland.



Grey Heron

The Grey Heron is a very familiar year-round resident of the canal. They can be found feeding along the edge of the water and are usually encountered as solitary birds and sometimes as pairs.



Swan

There are three swans seen in Ireland. The most common is the mute swan, a familiar sight on our lakes rivers and canals. This is Ireland's largest bird and the young are called cygnets



Duck

Among the largest of our ducks are the mallard duck. The male has striking green head and yellow bill. Females are brown in colour, but with blue speculum, dark stripe across the eye and whitish tail slides. They live in almost all available wetland habitats in Ireland.

