

# The Dolphin and Seal Centre

North Kessock, by Inverness



Viewing Area, Childrens Activities,  
Hydrophones, Gift Shop, Picnic Site,  
Toilets and Tourist Information Centre.



Watching Wildlife  
Visit the other locations  
shown below to watch  
for dolphins, seals and  
other wildlife such as  
otters, heron, osprey,  
dippers, ringed plover,  
wagtails, siskin, red kite  
and even bats!!



Grey Heron



The Highland Council Rangers carry out a range of wildlife activities and events around the Inner Moray Firth at which you can learn about the animals and plant life. These include pond dipping, mini beast hunts and rock pool exploring along with more species specific events investigating dolphins, bats and other interesting wildlife. Further details and information leaflets can be found at the Dolphin and Seal Centre and at local Tourist Information Centres.  
or contact  
The Highland Council,  
Planning & Development Service  
Tel: 01463 731920  
e-mail: [planning@highland.gov.uk](mailto:planning@highland.gov.uk)



How to get there

From Inverness, follow the main A9 road (northbound) for 2km. The Visitor centre is located in the Tourist Information car park first left over the Kessock Bridge, and is clearly sign posted.



## Dolphins and Seals of The Moray Firth

The Visitor Centre is one of the best opportunities in Europe to observe dolphins in their natural habitat.

Listen to the dolphins through the unique underwater microphone system.

Learn about the marine environment and find out where you can watch dolphins and seals in your local area.

**Open June to September,  
daily from 9.30am to 4.30pm.  
closed for lunch 12.30 - 1.00pm**

**FREE ENTRY**

**Telephone/Fax: 01463 731866  
Email: [planning@highland.gov.uk](mailto:planning@highland.gov.uk)**

Wildlife photographs courtesy of Laurie Campbell  
[[laurie@lauriecampbell.com](mailto:laurie@lauriecampbell.com)]



# Welcome

to the Dolphins and  
Seals of the Moray Firth  
Visitor Centre

The Centre is situated in the A9 lay-by in the Tourist Information Centre Car Park (north bound) over the bridge at North Kessock, just one mile north of Inverness.

- ❖ *Watch the bottlenose dolphins and seals through the Centre's binoculars and listen to their calls through the hydrophones.*
- ❖ *Be a "Dolphin Detective" for the day and take part in various activities.*
- ❖ *Follow the Dolphin Trail and visit sites where you can see;-*

## Grey Seals

The grey seal is regularly seen from the Centre and at other locations around the Moray Firth. With their straight Roman noses and vertical nostrils they are easily separated from the smaller common seal. They weigh up to 5 times that of a normal adult human being and can be seen diving for fish and crabs at North Kessock.



*Grey Seal*

## Common Seals

Also known as the Harbour Seal, these can be seen swimming between their feeding areas offshore, and the sandbanks where they haul themselves out of the water to rest and to digest their large meals of sand eels and fish. They can be seen from a distance on sandbanks near the west end of the Beaully Firth and also near the Cromarty Bridge when the tide is low. Common seals can be identified by their dog-like nose and V shaped nostrils. They swim from the Beaully Firth to an area east of Chanonry Point where they feed on the sand eels on sandbanks on the seabed.

Common seals usually give birth to one pup around the end of June. Occasionally pups are found apparently abandoned along the shores of the firths. This isn't always the case - these pups can swim within a few hours after birth and may be just resting whilst they wait for mum to come back from a fishing trip. The trip may take mum away from her pup for up to a day.

***If you find a pup, don't touch it, and please keep your distance.***



*Common Seals*

## Bottlenose Dolphins

The Bottlenose Dolphins based in the Moray Firth are the only resident population in the north of Britain. They can be easily seen from the shore at various locations around the Firth. They feed on fish and use 'echo location' to find their food. The clicking and whistling noises made by the dolphins as they search for food can be heard on the hydrophones at the Centre. They often hunt in packs and at up to 4 metres in length, these dolphins are powerful enough to catch fast swimming salmon.



*Bottlenose Dolphins*

## Harbour Porpoise

This cetacean is less frequently seen despite there being a larger population. It is seen less often because it doesn't leap and frolic about like the Bottlenose Dolphins. It is also smaller in size (up to 1.4 metres in length) and is not easy to spot, especially on days when the sea is choppy. However, on calm days throughout the year it can be seen near the Centre and in the outer firths around Inverness, Chanonry Point and Easter Ross.