



The seas around Rathlin abound with marine life and are a diver's paradise. It is also a resting place for many shipwrecks the most notable being the HMS Drake which is marked by Church Bay - the landing area on Rathlin Island.

The Sea of Moyle is steeped in legend and folktales. The Children of Lir, King Lir's children who were turned into swans by their jealous step-mother spent 300 years in this sea.

The Giant's Causeway, Northern Ireland's only World Heritage Site, lies to the west just around the corner from Benbane Head on the North Antrim Coast. The island near to the shore is Sheep Island which is seaward of Carrick-a-Rede rope bridge.

In 440AD, a fleet of 50 currachs led by Breacain, grandson of Niall of the Nine Hostages, who was King of Ireland was lost in the Rathlin rip tide.

The tidal patterns of this area are unusual because of the Atlantic waters from the west narrowing to enter the North Channel. The position of Rathlin in the tidalway causes many variations therefore local knowledge and understanding is needed. At certain stages of the tide a turbulence occurs in the centre of the channel known as Slough na Mara "the hollow of husband Congal".

King Donn of Rathlin lived at Doonmore with his daughter Taisie Taobhghéal. "She had clear blue eyes, long black tresses and a melodious voice". Fair Head is named after this beautiful Rathlin Princess. Glen Taisie, one of the nine Antrim Glens was home to Taisie and her husband Congal.

Once out of Ballycastle Bay the ferry crosses the Sea of Moyle. On the North Eastern tip of Ireland is the imposing geographic feature of Fair Head. It towers 636 feet above sea level and marks the entrance to the Irish Sea.

During the 1700s and 1800s salt works were also an important part of the economy and the rocks off the beach shore on the east coast are called the "Pan Rocks" - the site of the evaporation pans for the salt production.

Ballycastle is the departure port for Rathlin Island. Now mainly a leisure port with a small local fishing fleet, it was once a busy industrial port exporting coal from the local mines to Belfast and Dublin. The breakwaters and marina were built in 1998 to make the harbour a safe haven for all vessels. Ballycastle beach and Golf Club are on your right as you leave the harbour. The Margy is the river that flows into Ballycastle Bay.

The Boat Trip

Dileán Reachlainn Rathlin Island

Rathlin Island è d'Irlanda del Nord solo in mare aperto abitata dell'isola. Situato tra la Scozia e l'Irlanda, l'isola a forma di L è la patria di una popolazione vivace di circa 100 abitanti che vantano un ricco patrimonio culturale e su cui stanno costruendo un futuro positivo e sostenibile per sé e per la future generazione! Visita il Centro Boathouse at Church Bay a leggere la storia di una vivace comunità che hanno vissuto qui sin dal Neolitico. Traghetti eseguirte tutti i giorni dalle Ballycastle Co Antrim - sulla Causeway Coastal Route. La prenotazione è sempre consigliata.



Rathlin Island Northern Ireland's only World Heritage Site, lies to the west just around the corner from Benbane Head on the North Antrim Coast. The island near to the shore is Sheep Island which is seaward of Carrick-a-Rede rope bridge. In 440AD, a fleet of 50 currachs led by Breacain, grandson of Niall of the Nine Hostages, who was King of Ireland was lost in the Rathlin rip tide. The tidal patterns of this area are unusual because of the Atlantic waters from the west narrowing to enter the North Channel. The position of Rathlin in the tidalway causes many variations therefore local knowledge and understanding is needed. At certain stages of the tide a turbulence occurs in the centre of the channel known as Slough na Mara "the hollow of husband Congal". King Donn of Rathlin lived at Doonmore with his daughter Taisie Taobhghéal. "She had clear blue eyes, long black tresses and a melodious voice". Fair Head is named after this beautiful Rathlin Princess. Glen Taisie, one of the nine Antrim Glens was home to Taisie and her husband Congal. Once out of Ballycastle Bay the ferry crosses the Sea of Moyle. On the North Eastern tip of Ireland is the imposing geographic feature of Fair Head. It towers 636 feet above sea level and marks the entrance to the Irish Sea. During the 1700s and 1800s salt works were also an important part of the economy and the rocks off the beach shore on the east coast are called the "Pan Rocks" - the site of the evaporation pans for the salt production. Ballycastle is the departure port for Rathlin Island. Now mainly a leisure port with a small local fishing fleet, it was once a busy industrial port exporting coal from the local mines to Belfast and Dublin. The breakwaters and marina were built in 1998 to make the harbour a safe haven for all vessels. Ballycastle beach and Golf Club are on your right as you leave the harbour. The Margy is the river that flows into Ballycastle Bay.



Rathlin Island es la única isla habitada fuera del Norte. Situada entre Escocia e Irlanda, la isla en forma de 'L', es el hogar de una población de más de 100 isleños que cuentan con un rico patrimonio cultural y quienes están construyendo un futuro positivo y sostenible para ellos y para las futuras generaciones. Visite el Centro Boathouse en Church Bay para leer la historia de una comunidad vibrante que ha vivido aquí desde la era Neolítica. Los ferries operan diariamente desde Ballycastle, Co. Antrim, en la ruta turística, Causeway Coastal Route. Es siempre aconsejable hacer reservación.



Rathlin Island est la seule île habitée au large de l'Irlande du Nord. Située entre l'Écosse et l'Irlande cette île en forme de L a une population d'environ 100 insulaires riches d'un patrimoine culturel sur lequel ils se construisent un futur positif et durable. Visitez le boathouse à Church Bay et découvrez l'histoire d'une communauté dynamique présente sur l'île depuis le Néolithique - un ferry relie quotidiennement Ballycastle, située sur la route touristique Causeway Coastal Route, à Rathlin Island. Il est conseillé de réserver.



WHERE TO STAY	
Coolnagrock B+B: 028 2076 3983	Hay Loft: 07801 098 690
Kinramer Bunkhouse: 028 2076 3948	Manor House Guesthouse: 028 2076 3964
Puffin Cottage: 07773 944 339	Rathlin Cottages: 07565 871 319
Rathlin Island Hostel: info@rathlinhostel.com	Soerneog Hostel: 028 2076 3954
WHERE TO EAT AND DRINK	
Emma's Chip Ahoy: 07795 282 881	Harbour Cafe: 079 5535 9837
McCuaig's Bar & Bruce's Kitchen Cafe: 028 2076 0011	Posh Picnics: 07565 871 319 (advance booking essential)
TAKE A BIKE	TAKE A HIKE
Soerneog Cycle Hire: 028 2076 3954	Tom McDonnell: 07723 087 668 (advance booking essential)
	Rathlin Walks: 07745 566 924 (advance booking essential)
TAKE A BUS	
Bert's Puffin Bus: 07740 586 898	Puffin Bus: 07752 861 788
VISITOR CENTRE AND SHOPS	
Boathouse Visitor Centre: 07708 869 605	RSPB Seabird Centre: 028 2076 0062
Island Treasures Gift Shop / Post Office: 07868 663 283	Rathlin Co-Op Grocery Shop
Rathlin Island Seafoods: 07717 028 169	
WORKSHOPS	
Photography: Tom McDonnell 07723 087 668	
LOCAL HISTORIAN & AUTHOR	BOOK PUBLISHERS
Gusty McCurdy: 028 2076 3909	Rathlin Island Books: 07783 968 826
RATHLIN DEVELOPMENT AND COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION	
Tel: 028 2076 0079 / 07850 327 456	www.rathlincommunity.org



Rathlin Island

- Northern Ireland

A world away for a day...

Daily ferries from
Ballycastle
Co. Antrim



- Belfast to Ballycastle 56 miles/90 km.
- Dublin to Ballycastle 160 miles/260 km.
- Derry to Ballycastle 60 miles/96 km.
- Coleraine to Ballycastle 23 miles/37 km.
- Ballycastle to Rathlin 6 miles/9.5 km.

Imprescindible reservar PRE
Reservation indispensable avant
PRE Reservierung erforderlich

For all booking enquiries contact our
Ballycastle Terminal Office

Pre Booking Essential

Tel: 028 2076 9299 Fax: 028 2076 9298

Email: info@rathlinballycastleferry.com



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www.rathlinballycastleferry.com

Rathlin Walks



BALLYCONAGAN TRAIL

1.3 miles / 2km

This National Trust trail leads you through a mosaic of different habitats including mire and fen and heathlands that are home to hares, damsel and dragon flies, skylark, meadow pipit, reed bunting and linnet.

You will pass through the walls of an old settlement at Crockranagh. The path climbs up to an old Coastguard Look Out that was built in 1941. Follow the way markers on your return journey past some of Rathlin's many ponds.

EAST LIGHT WALK

2 miles / 3.2km

This gentle walk passes by the two churches on Rathlin Island - The Church of the Immaculate Conception (Roman Catholic) and St. Thomas's Church (Church of Ireland) and the local primary school, St. Mary's.

The East Lighthouse is the oldest Light built in 1856 and cost £17,140. It became automatic in 1995. Marconi established a radio link between East Light and Ballycastle in 1898.

KEBBLE SOUTH TRAIL

1.25 miles / 2km

This walk will reward you with spectacular sights through the seasons. In Spring-time carpets of purple and heath spotted orchids, in summer lady's bedstraw, tormentil and eyebright. The autumn heath comes alive with scarlet, yellow and pink waxcap fungi.

Spring bird species include chough and lapwing. Peregrines, puffins, kittiwakes and gulls in summer. Regular winter visitors include snow bunting, twite and linnet.

KINRAMER NORTH TRAIL

1.5 miles / 2.5km

For the more intrepid rambler, sections follow rough terrain and involve ascending and descending of rock faces. Orchid species can be found among the wet and dry heath habitats including the lesser butterfly orchid and heath spotted orchid. Patches of thin peat soils and early bog formations provide species such as the yellow bog aspidodel and insectivorous butenwort.

From the cliff edge seals, jelly fish and cetaceans may be spotted in the waters by the more patient observer!

KINRAMER PERMISSIVE PATH

1.4 miles / 2.1km

This moderately challenging hiking route through botanically rich organic meadows, rough pasture, heath land, cliffs and by boggy 'mosses' is signposted, but the way is not defined by a clear path.

Visitors will discover basaltic similar to the Giant's Causeway, a stray boulder marooned in the Ice Age melt and pre-famine Potato 'rigs', evidence of former habitation. The cliff edge is unprotected. Caution is required.

RATHLIN TRAIL

4 miles / 6.5km

This walk gives you the best idea of Rathlin's geography, geology and wild life. The West Lighthouse was constructed between 1912 and 1919 at a cost of £400,000. It now houses the RSPB Seabird Centre.

As you approach the viewpoint in summer, you'll become aware of the sounds, sights and smells of thousands of seabirds in their struggle for survival on the ocean's edge.

ROONIVOOLIN TRAIL

4 miles / 6.5km

The loop trail at Roonivoolin Reserve skirts the cliffs offering panoramic views towards the hills of Donegal and the Mull of Kintyre. There are excellent opportunities to view a wide range of coastal, lakeland and grassland birds such as peregrine, little grebe, skylark, lapwing and, occasionally, the rare crough. Visitors rejoin the road just above Ushet Port, a favourite haunt for common and grey seals, and can continue south towards the Rue Lighthouse.

The Island



Black and white is the image of Rathlin as you approach it from the Rathlin Sound - a "drowned magpie" was the description by Charles Kingsley in Westward Ho (1855). The island sits on a bed of chalk but basalt is the main rock type on the island. In Mesolithic and Neolithic times the porcellanite, which was used to make the axe heads, was formed from volcanic heat on basalt. Doon Point, on the east coast of the island, has basalt columns similar in structure to the Giant's Causeway. The "back of the island" from the East Light to the Bull Point has very spectacular cliffs which are teeming with birds who nest in the many crevices on the cliff face. A boat trip around the island is the best way to view these sights.

Rathlin Island Ferry do round island trips during the summer period subject to weather and other conditions.

Dry Stone walls and round pillars.



Rathlin stone walls and round pillars are a strong feature of the landscape. Legend has it that the fairies like to dance on the top of these pillars so the Rathlin fairies are very nimble to be able to dance on the pointed tops.

The Kelp Store, Demesne, Church Bay.



The 18th Century kelp drying walls on which the seaweed was dried and the remains of 84 kilns in which it was burned is evidence of its economic importance on Rathlin between 1700 - 1940. However, the most impressive monument to that time is the Kelp Store which was built by the landlord (Gage) to keep the weed dry. Seaweed was a natural resource both as a fertiliser for crops and the means to pay the landlord. In 1784, kelp harvesting brought in an income of £525 - the rent for the island was £600.

Seal Colony



Mill Bay is a safe paradise for the seals. It is a common sight to see dozens of seals sunning themselves on the shore line. Remember that they are wild animals and are easily scared while resting on land, so please do not disturb them. It is best to view the seals from the road.

Facts about Rathlin

- Population 107 in 2011.
- St. Mary's Primary School
 - 8 pupils,
 - 2 classroom assistants
 - 1 teacher.
- Area of the island 3,500 acres.
- Nearest point to Scotland: 13 miles from Mull of Kintyre
- Ferry from Ballycastle: 6 miles
- Nearest point to Ireland: Fair Head to the Rue is 2.5 miles
- Highest Point is 447ft
- East Light to Rue is 3 miles
- East Light to West Light is 4.5 miles
- Narrowest point is Kinkeel at .5 miles
- Widest point is 1.25 miles
- Post office and 6 Day postal service
- Two Churches
 - St Thomas (Church of Ireland)
 - Church of the Immaculate Conception (FC)
- One burial ground at St Thomas's churchyard.
- RSPB Seabird Centre at West Lighthouse
 - Contains all facts of Rathlin's Seabird Colonies
- Health Service – Permanent District Health Nurse
- Emergency Services – Coastguard, Fire Service, First Responders – in case of emergency please ring 999
- Electricity supply by undersea cable

Community and Local Government

- Rathlin Development and Community Association
- Rathlin Co Operative Group
- Moyle District Council
- Evidence of inhabitants since Neolithic times.
 - Brockley Axes
 - Viking Burial
 - Mass Rocks
 - Kelp Kilns
 - WWI graves from shipwrecks
- Main livelihoods –
 - Farming
 - Fishing
 - Ferry
 - Tourism
- Crafts & Businesses –
 - Pottery
 - Soap making
 - Photography
 - Candles
 - Book publishing
- Local publications:
 - Augustine McCurdy - Rathlin's Rugged Story
 - Wallace Clark - Rathlin, Its Island Story
 - Phillip Watson - Rathlin, Nature and Folklore
 - Ian Wilson - HMS Drake, Rathlin Island Shipwreck and many more...



These walks have been awarded Quality Short Walk status by Outdoor Recreation Northern Ireland. Rathlin Island is located within the Antrim Coast & Glens Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. More information can be found at: www.ccglt.org T. 028 2075 2100