



# WALES

With its majestic mountains and breathtaking coastline, Wales has no shortage of incredible creatures and outdoor adventures! So hold your breath and cling on tight, gang, as we dive into the ocean to meet a super-playful swimmer, and soar through the sky to find some of the country's fab flyers...

## High brown fritillary

If you head to the Alun Valley, in South Wales, you may catch sight of this beautiful butterfly. The high brown fritillary is usually seen fluttering over the tops of bracken (a type of fern) and in open spaces around woodland. Fast flyers, they have orange and black wings with reddish-brown and silver markings on the the underside.

## Battling for butterflies!

Once common across England and Wales, this colourful critter is now the UK's most endangered butterfly. "Loss of habitat has meant that the high brown fritillary can now only be found in 50 sites in the UK," expert Sam Ellis tells NG Kids. "Conservation projects, such as those in the Alun Valley in Wales, have allowed populations to increase in certain areas. But, sadly, overall numbers are still in decline". Visit [butterfly-conservation.org](http://butterfly-conservation.org) to see what YOU can do to help save this brilliant bug!



## Brown long-eared bat

With its large ears that are almost as long as its body, this furry flyer certainly lives up to its name! Taking to the skies at night, the brown long-eared bat is a nocturnal mammal, mostly feeding on moths, midges and other flying insects. They like to live, or 'roost', in holes in trees, caves and even the roofs of old buildings. Sadly, one problem that these little guys face is that old barns — perfect for roosting, as they're nice and dark — are increasingly being converted into homes for people.



## Bottlenose dolphins

Swimming, jumping and somersaulting out of the water off the coast of Wales, bottlenose dolphins travel in groups called 'pods', communicating with each other using squeaks and clicks. Cardigan Bay is thought to have a resident population of up to 200 of these incredibly social and intelligent creatures! Sadly, though, thousands die every year after accidentally getting caught in fishing nets. "Dolphins, whales and porpoises are all protected by law," explains Danny Groves, from Whale and Dolphin Conservation. "But more work is needed so that we can protect these amazing animals."



## Manx shearwater

These brilliant birds are well suited to life at sea. Fearless flyers with long, thin wings, they glide over the ocean's surface and even skim through waves! Their feet are positioned far back on their bodies, making them super-efficient swimmers, too. But on land, Manx shearwaters are slow, clumsy movers and easy prey for pesky predators. Between February and July, these winged wonders can be found on offshore islands off Wales. But as autumn draws closer, they bid a chirpy 'chao' and migrate to South America, where they spend the winter!



## DID YOU KNOW...?

The islands of Skomer and Skokholm, off the coast of Wales, are home to the world's largest population of Manx shearwaters!

## Wild things to do in WALES!



### Go wild for waterfalls!

**Brecon Beacons National Park, South Wales**

Love exploring all that nature has to offer? Then this is the place for you! Located in the beautiful hills of South Wales, you'll get to follow tree-lined rivers as they wind down deep gorges and plunge over fast-flowing waterfalls. It's wild! [breconbeacons.org](http://breconbeacons.org)



### Have a crack at coasteering!

**Pembrokeshire, the Gower and Anglesey**

Are you a thrill-seeking young daredevil? If so, there's no better way to explore the incredible Welsh coastline than by *coasteering*! In this exciting adventure sport, you get to climb rocks, swim through sea caves, jump into deep pools and discover hidden coves. Awesome! [coasteeringwales.org.uk](http://coasteeringwales.org.uk)



### Travel back in time!

**Conwy, North Wales**

This mighty stone fortress is a must-see for any budding young historian! Located on the Conwy Estuary on the north coast of Wales, Conwy Castle was built by King Edward I more than 700 years ago. Take a trip back in time as you walk round the soaring medieval walls and explore the castle's majestic halls, chapel and haunting towers! [conwy.com](http://conwy.com)