

Let's talk about the

# Red-billed Chough

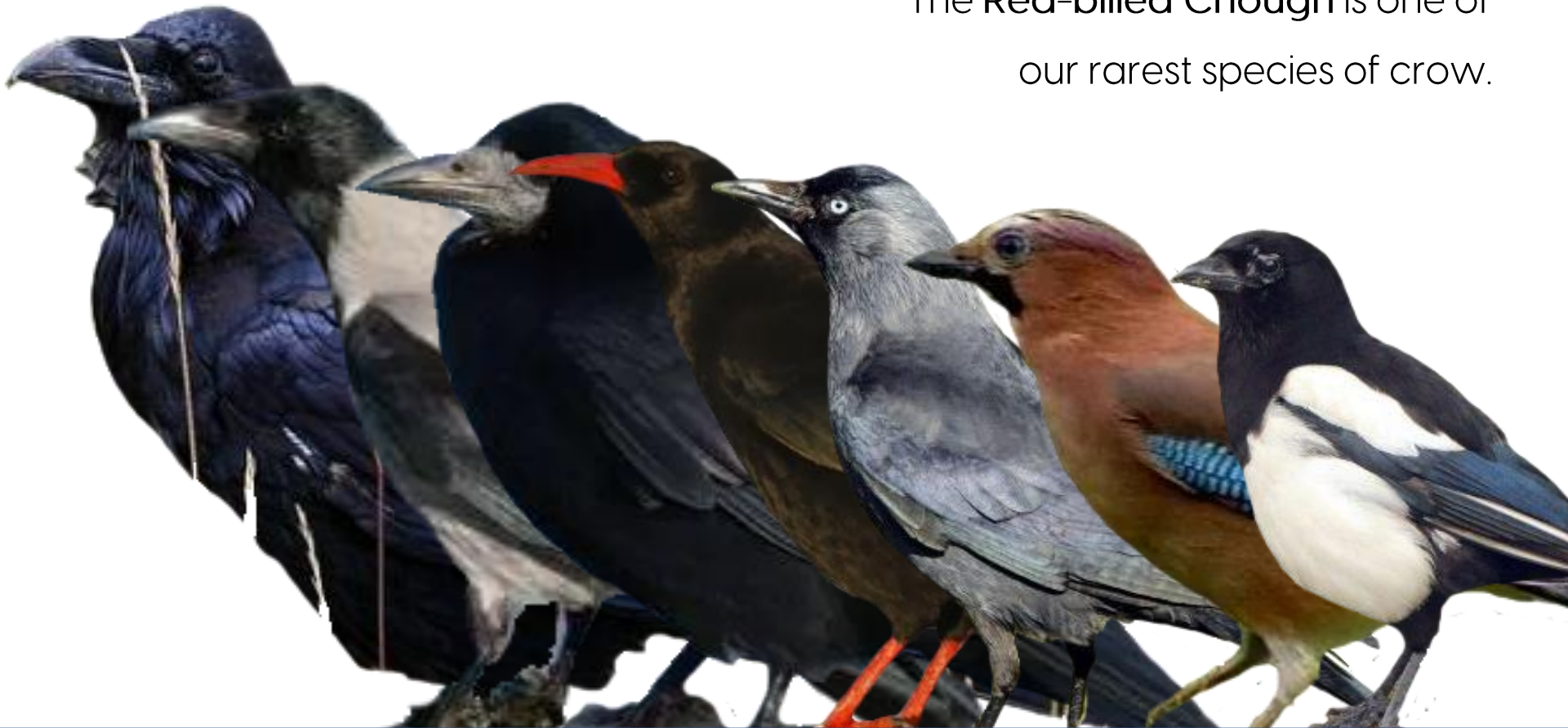
And why they call Iveragh home!



# What is a Red-billed Chough?

We have seven types of crow in Ireland.

The Red-billed Chough is one of our rarest species of crow.



Raven, Hooded Crow, Rook, Chough, Jackdaw, Eurasian Jay, Magpie

# AMBER STATUS



The Red-billed Chough is on the Amber Conservation List, which means its population or range has declined moderately in recent years.

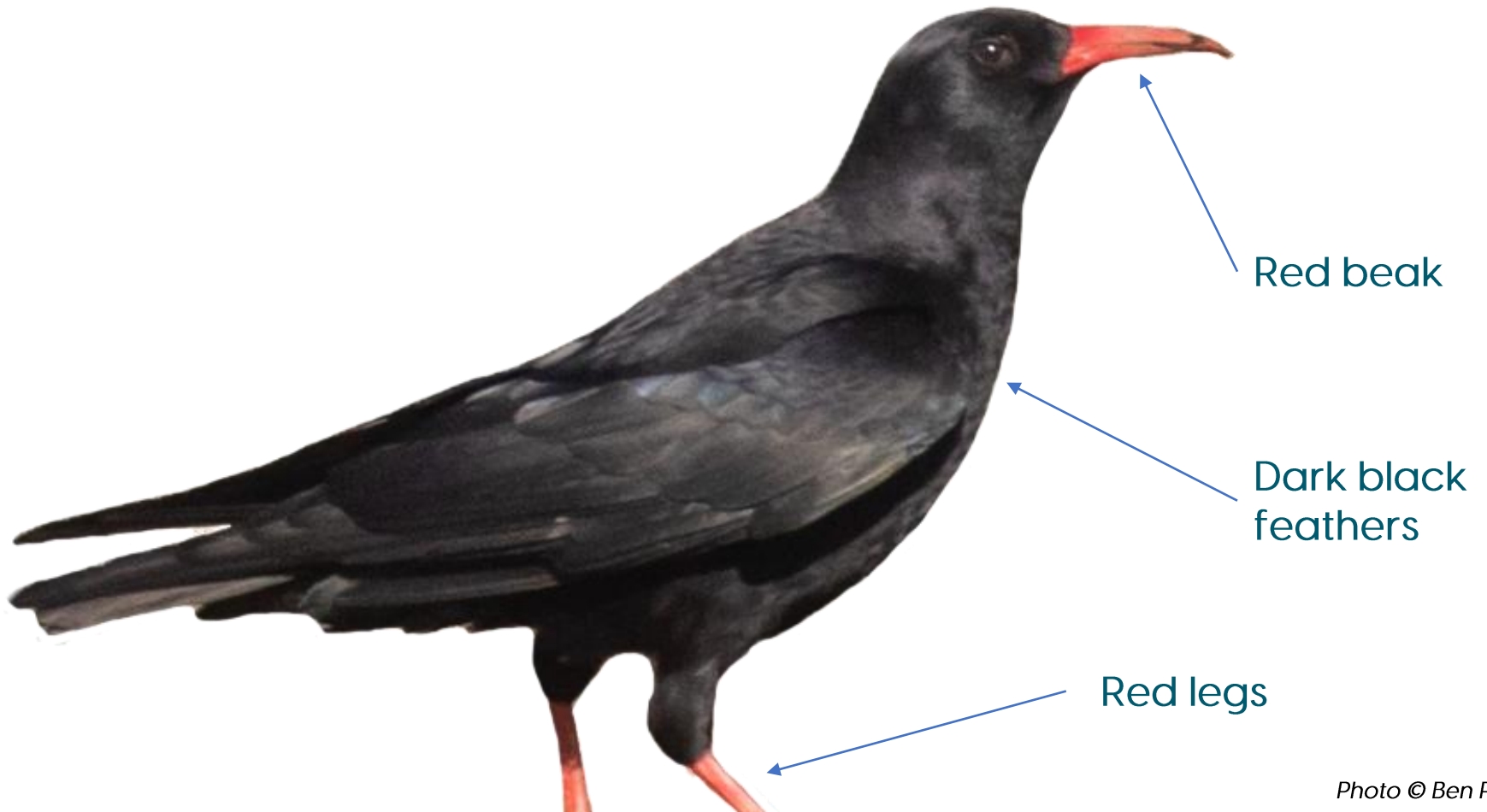
Red-billed Chough

Irish Name: Cág cosdearg

Scientific Name: *Pyrrhocorax pyrrhocorax*

# What does a Red-billed Chough look like?

The Red-billed Chough has dark black feathers – much like other crows. But what makes it different, and easier to recognise, is its bright red beak and red legs.



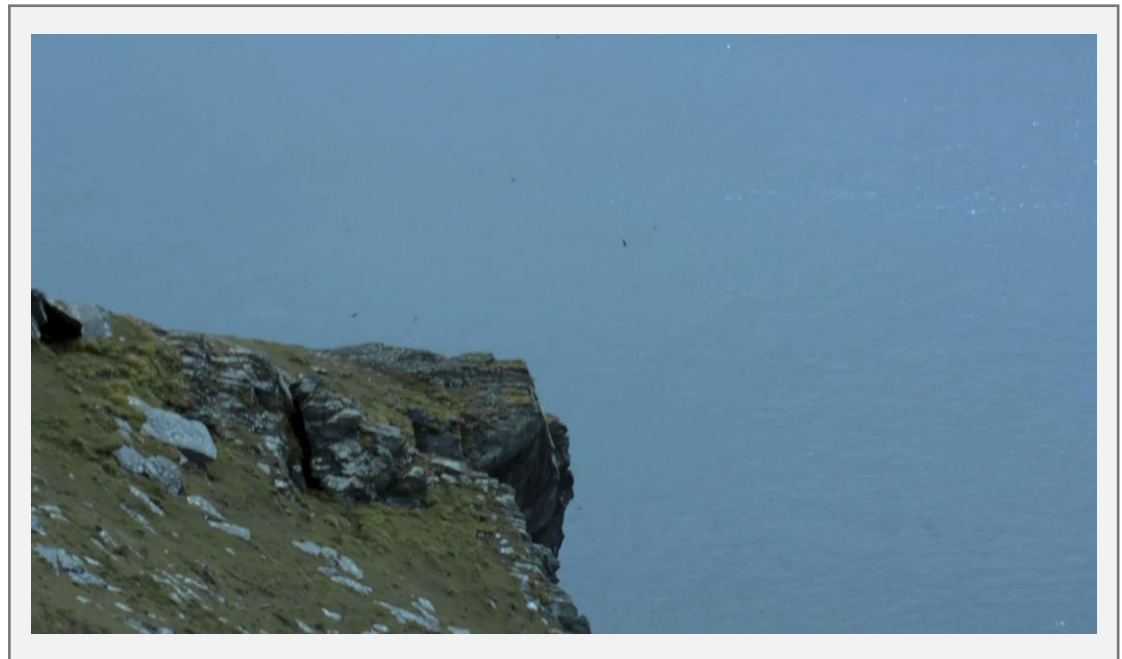
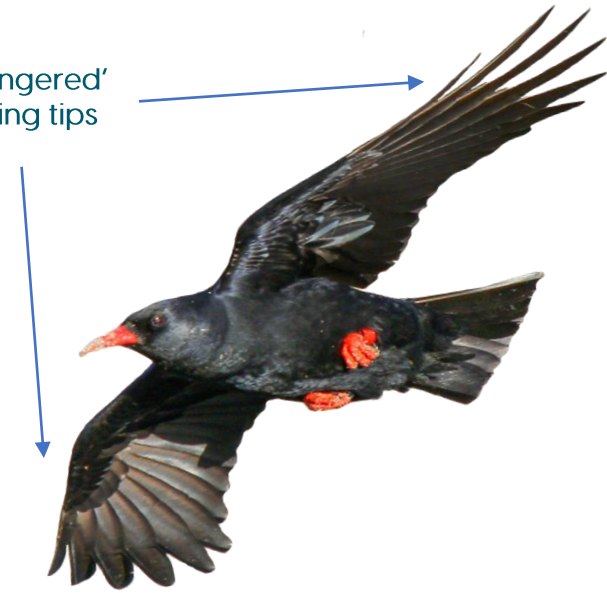
# Aerobatic fliers!

The Red-billed Chough can also be recognised by its 'fingerted' (clearly separated) wing tips.

Choughs frequently swoop and soar in updrafts around cliffs, just for fun.

So skilled are these natural stunt pilots that they will sometimes even fly upside down and perform barrel rolls.

'Fingerted'  
wing tips



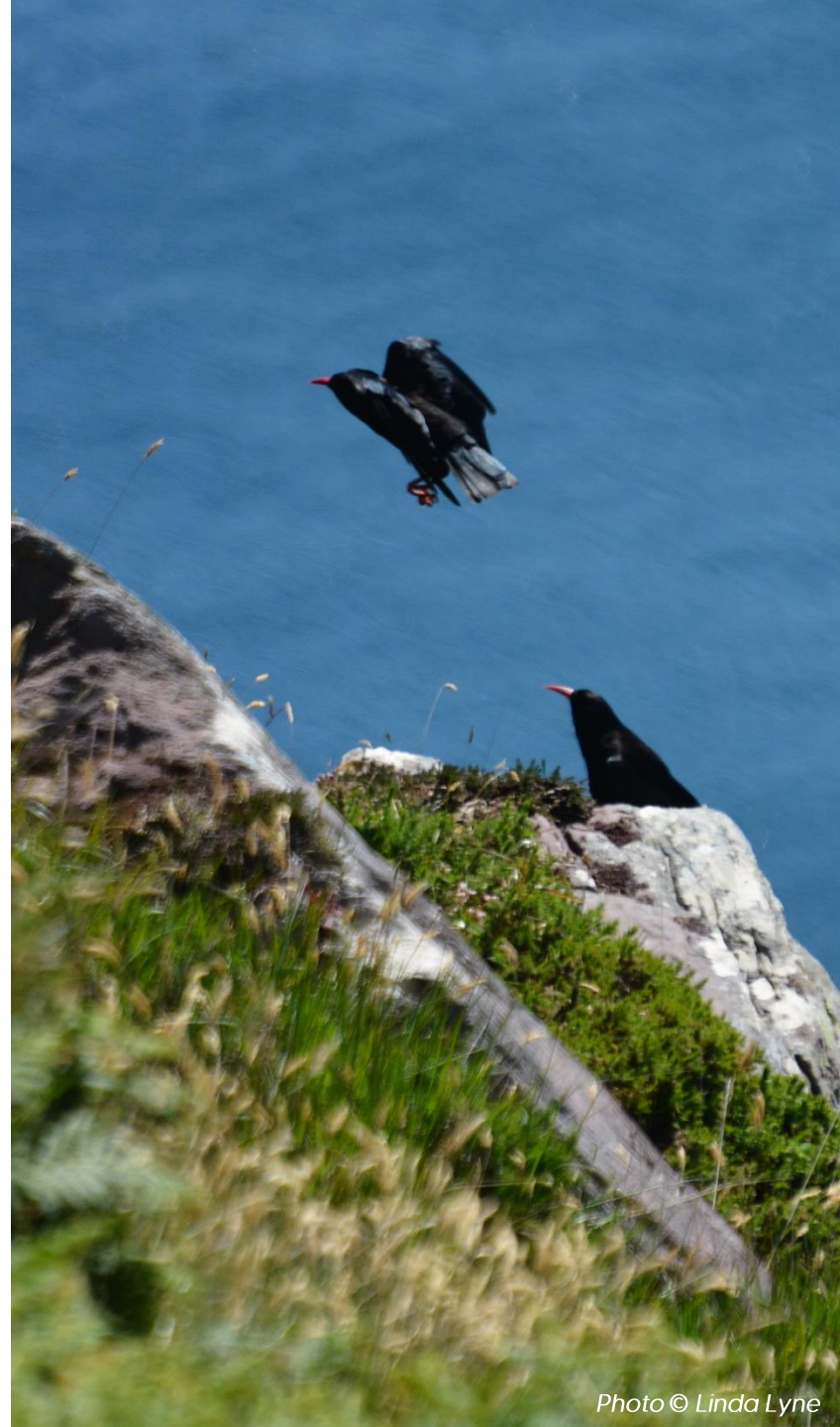
*Click on the picture and press play*

# What does a Chough sound like?

Choughs have a very distinctive voice

‘key-aww – key-aww – key-aww’

Have a listen to the chough sound here:



# How big is a Chough?

A Chough can measure up to 40cm in length from beak to tail.

That's the length of 1 and a half normal school rulers!



# Choughs love company!

Choughs are very social birds.

They are often found in flocks where they will forage and rest together.

Even juvenile choughs stay together in large flocks during autumn and winter.





# Chough Family Life

Like many other species, choughs are monogamous.

This means that choughs find a single partner when they are young - and they stay together for life.

These pairs will also use the same nest site year after year.



# Chough chicks

Choughs usually have between two and four chicks each year.

Their chicks will usually leave the nest sometime in June or July.



# Where do Choughs like to live?

Red-billed Choughs live on three continents – Asia, Africa, and Europe.

In south and central Europe, they live in Greece, Italy, France, Spain and Portugal.

In northwest Europe choughs are very rare – except in coastal regions of Ireland, the UK, and northwest France.

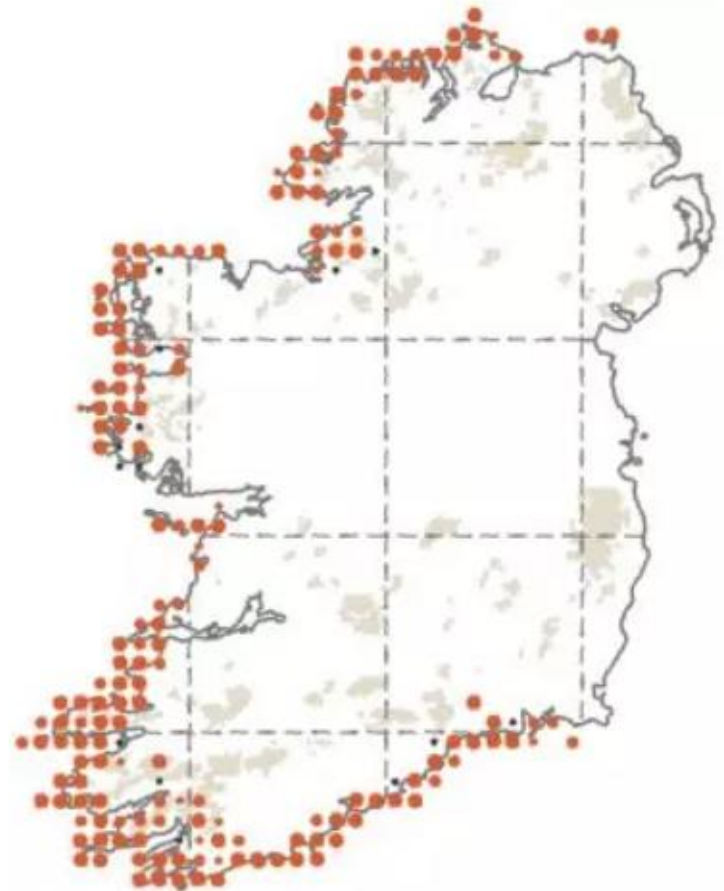


# Where do Choughs like to live in Ireland?

Red-billed Choughs live in Ireland year-round.

They are only found in coastal regions of Ireland.

Kerry is an important place for Choughs



## Breeding Distribution

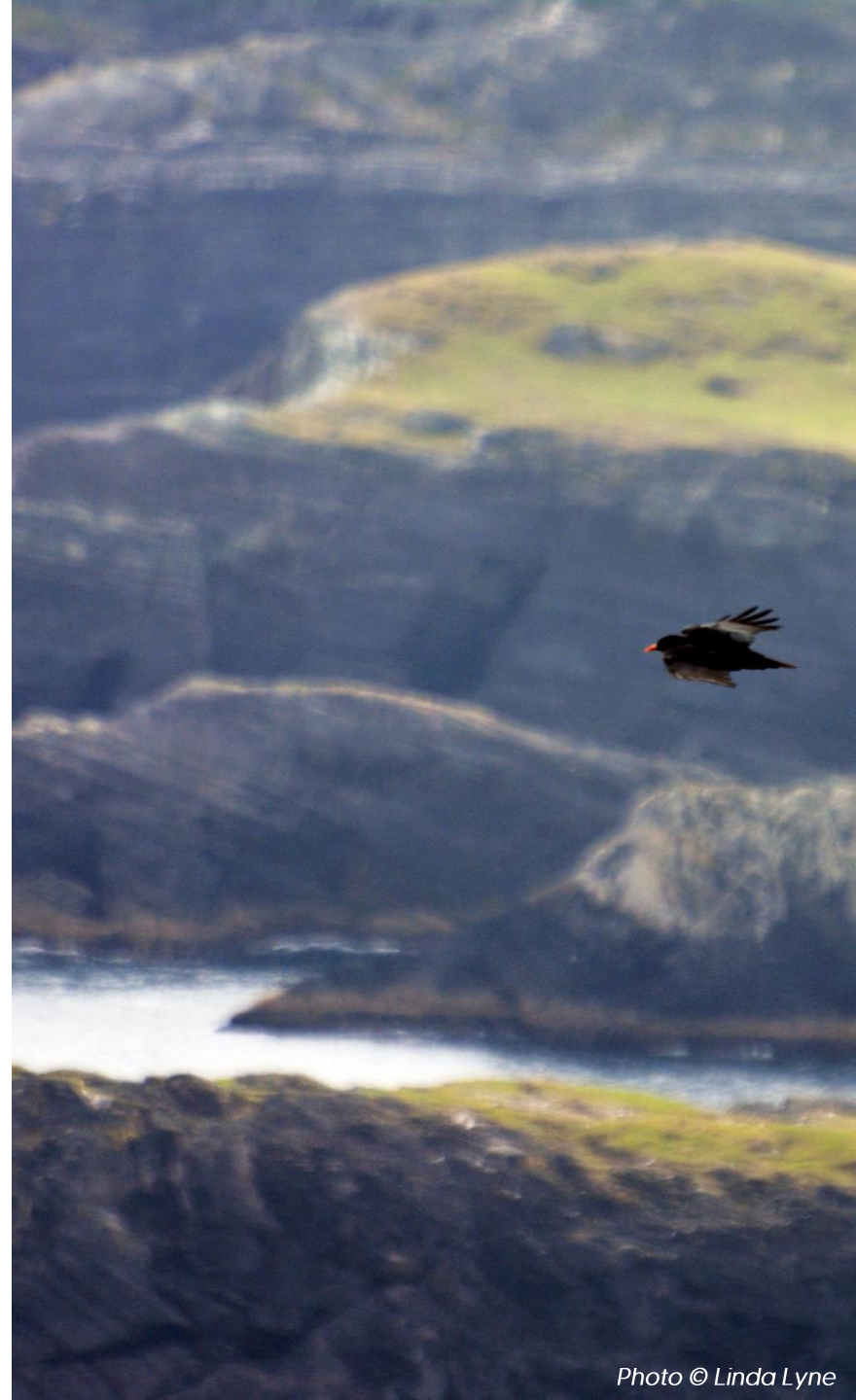
- Non-breeding
- Possible
- Probable
- Confirmed

# Where do choughs like to nest?

In northwest Europe, choughs like to nest in caves and crevices found along sea cliffs.

In parts of continental Europe, Africa and Asia, they nest in mountainous cliff faces further inland.

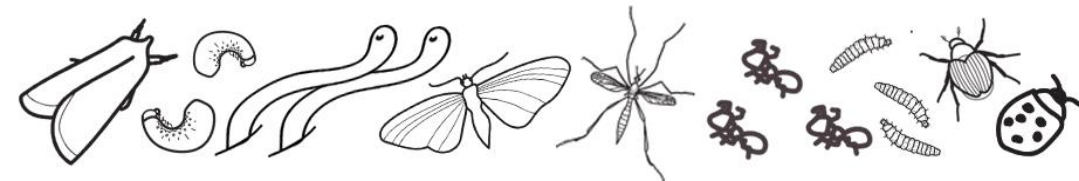
They also sometimes nest in ruined buildings, farmhouses, mines and quarries.



# What do Choughs like to eat?

Choughs like to eat the larvae of different insects such as beetles, flies, moths and crane flies. They use their curved bills to dig them out of the soil.

They will also eat adult beetles, ants and earthworms.



# Choughs in Kerry

Choughs like to forage in the coastal areas and farmland of the Iveragh Peninsula in Co. Kerry.

They forage in well grazed fields – with grass of around 5cm in height.

They also love field boundaries; grassy and earth banks, as well as old stone walls covered in grass.

They also look for food in small hills, hillocks, and ant hills.



# What threats do Choughs face?

In the past, choughs were threatened by shooting and hunting.

Today, choughs are mostly threatened by changing land use.

Increased use of machinery, pesticides, and fertilizers - and less cattle and sheep grazing means fewer bugs in the soil, and food is difficult to find.





# How can we help Irish Choughs?

The Irish landscape has unique features that are very important to choughs.

Low intensity livestock farming, with traditional grassy banks and drystone walls, can all help choughs find a stable food supply close to their nest sites.



# Chough Activity Sheets!

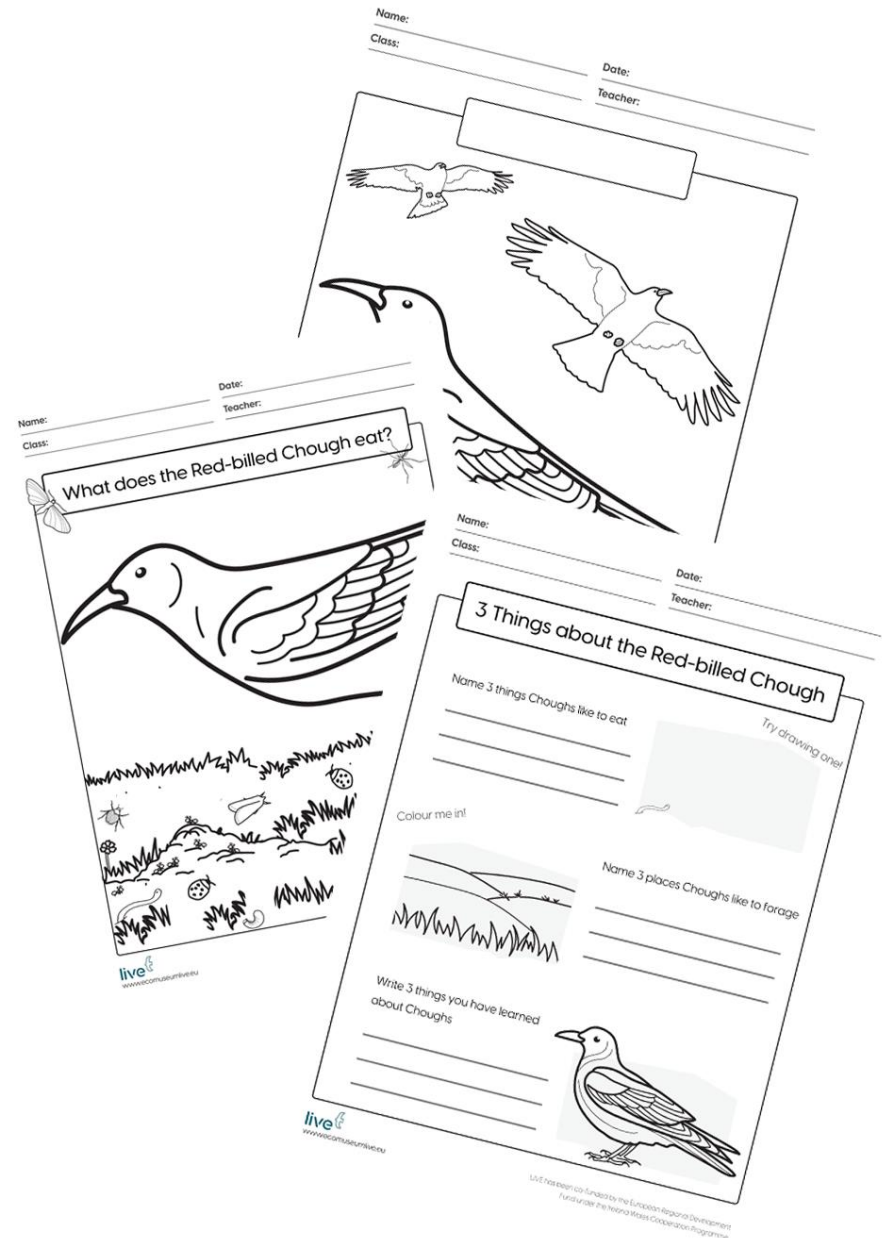
Have some fun using our Chough worksheets. Simply download from our website:

[www.ecomuseumlive.eu/choughs](http://www.ecomuseumlive.eu/choughs)

We would love to see your work!

You can email them to [live@ucc.ie](mailto:live@ucc.ie) or post them on your social media channels.

Use the hashtags [#IveraghChoughs](#), [#EcomuseumLive](#) or tag us [@ecomuseumlive!](#)



# Llŷn Iveragh Ecomuseum

This Chough Presentation was developed as part of The LIVE Project's environmental education programme, using research carried out by Knowledge Gatherer [Fiach Byrne](#), [Dr. Fidelma Butler](#), and [Prof. John Quinn](#) of UCC.

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For more information about The LIVE Project, visit our website [www.ecomuseumlive.eu](http://www.ecomuseumlive.eu)



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