

Gannet

Morus bassanus

The Gannet is a large, light-coloured seabird. Adults are almost entirely white, with yellowish head and black wingtips. Younger birds are dark all over with light spots, they grow gradually lighter until they acquire adult plumage at four years old.

In Icelandic, the Gannet is often called the “Queen of the Atlantic” in reference to their grace. They often fly in small groups low over the surface of the sea, they have a powerful flight with large wingbeats. The Gannets dive with folded wings from a height of as much as 40 m. They are fairly agile swimmers. They are local breeder and largely migrant, depart in October through December.

The third largest colony of Gannets in the world is found on Eldey island in southwestern Iceland where 60% of Icelandic Gannets nest.



Jóhann Óli Hilmarsson. (2005). *Icelandic bird guide*. Reykjavík: Iðunn.

Image: Daniel Bergmann, taken from <https://www.ni.is/node/27100>