

# Isle of Anglesey Philatelic Bureau – Cinderella Stamps

## Puffin Island (Ynys Seiriol)

### Where is Puffin Island?

Puffin Island is a small, uninhabited isle located less than a kilometre off the South-Eastern coast of the Isle of Anglesey. Since 1984, it has enjoyed protected conservation status and is a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI). Natural Resources Wales has oversight of the land management of Puffin Island and continued conservation of the island.



Image source: <https://elodietravels.wordpress.com/2017/04/07/anglesey-north-wales-uk/>

The protected land documents from the website of Natural Resources Wales explains why the public authorities decided to designate Puffin Island as an SSSI<sup>1</sup>. Essentially, the reason for this status is because it is a site for nesting seabirds which breed either on the rock faces or on the grasslands of the Island. The birds that are present on the Island include: puffin, guillemot, black guillemot and razorbill; as well as eider duck, shag, fulmar, kittiwake, herring gull, greater black-backed gull and lesser black-backed gull.

However, there is one special feature of Puffin Island: it supports more than 1% of the breeding Great Britain population of cormorants (and 1% of the NW European population).

In addition to the bird life, Puffin Island is also home to a rare spider (*Meta bournetii*) and also to grey seals. This wildlife too are key components of the special interest of the site.

The breeding Puffin population, which formerly numbered several thousand pairs, has declined significantly to currently number less than a hundred pairs. However, old records suggest substantial

<sup>1</sup> <https://naturalresources.wales/guidance-and-advice/environmental-topics/wildlife-and-biodiversity/protected-areas-of-land-and-seas/find-protected-areas-of-land-and-sea/?lang=en>

population fluctuations in the past. The main reason for the decline in the population was the presence of introduced brown rats, which were successfully removed in 1998 in an eradication programme. A large gullery dominated by herring gull is also present on the Island.



Image source: [http://www.bbc.co.uk/wales/nature/sites/places/nw/puffin\\_island.shtml](http://www.bbc.co.uk/wales/nature/sites/places/nw/puffin_island.shtml)

## Cinderella Stamp Issues for Puffin Island

### Background

The Isle of Anglesey Philatelic Bureau<sup>2</sup> produces Cinderella stamps for a number of islands in North Wales and Scotland. The Bureau started to produce these Cinderella stamps in 2015 and amongst the collection, is a small range of stamps that feature birds. All of these bird stamps are in the name of Puffin Island.

I have included below images of these stamps from my recently acquired collection of these issues, which I bought because I liked both the designs and the quality of the stamp production. These issues are clearly intended as and marketed as Cinderella stamps, i.e., rather than being used to collect fees for local carriage, as a local (island) postal service.

### Puffin Island Birds - March 2016 Issue

The first issues for Puffin Island date from 20 March 2016 and consisted of four stamps featuring:

- A Cormorant (*Phalacrocorax carbo*)
- A Puffin (*Fratercula artica*)
- A Gannet
- A Razorbill (*Alca torda*)<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> <https://angleseystamps.com/>

<sup>3</sup> On 11 January 2021, La Poste (France), as part of a stamp set on island birds, issued a sheetlet of 15 stamps featuring the Razorbill (literally "Torda Penguin" in French).

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The four stamps are available in a strip of four, both in perforate and imperforate format. The imperforate set is from my collection.

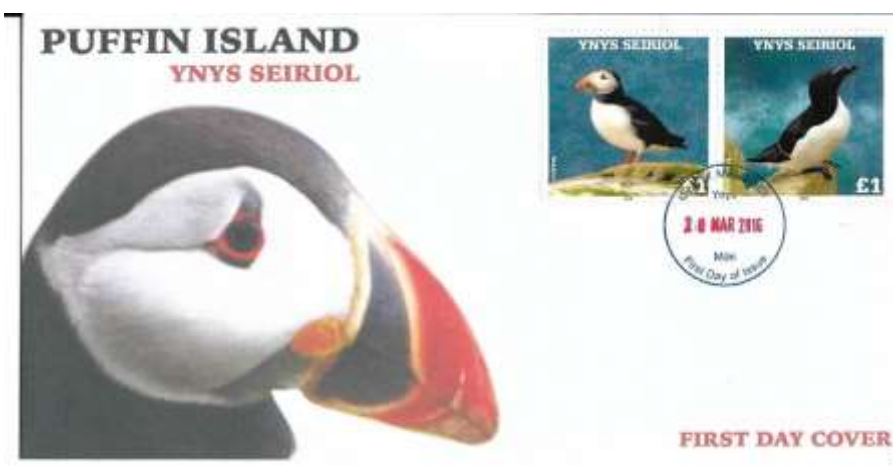


Image source: <https://angleseystamps.com/puffin-island/>

There are also two first day covers available, one of which I have included below, which shows two of the stamps (Puffin and Razorbill).



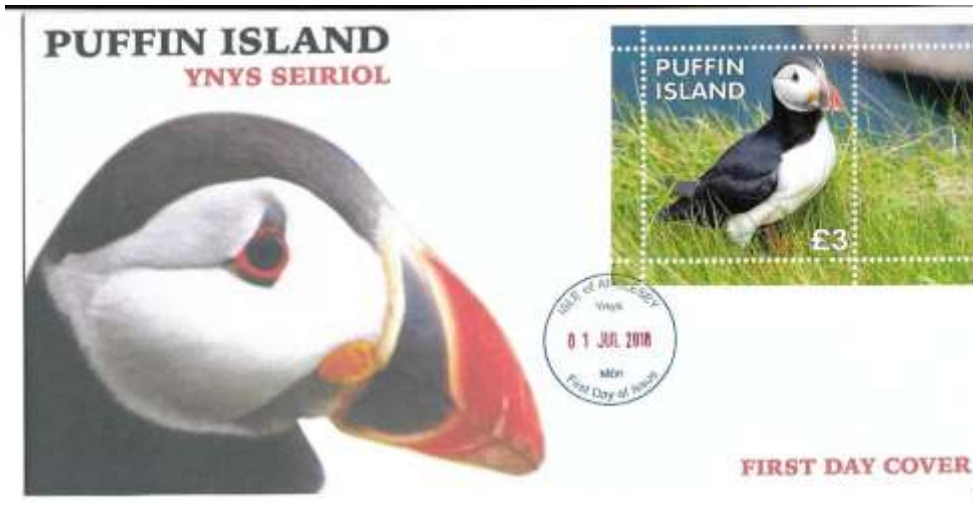
PUFFIN ISLAND



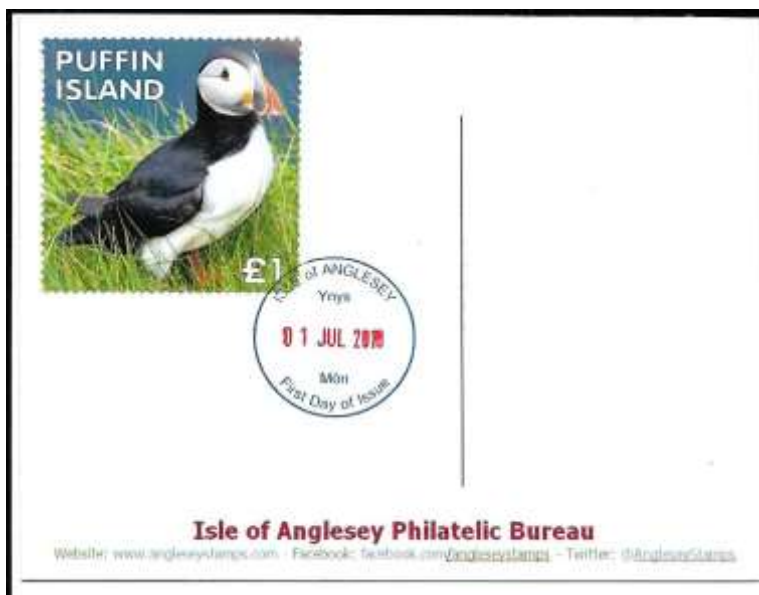
## 2018 Puffin Island – Puffin Stamp

In 2018, the Isle of Anglesey Philatelic Bureau issued two stamps featuring the same image of a Puffin, in the values of £1 and £3<sup>4</sup>. The £3 value is printed in stamp sheetlet format. On this occasion, the two identical stamps include reference to Puffin Island in English, in contrast to the earlier issue where the Island is named in Welsh. Both the stamps were available in perforate and imperforate format.

The £3 stamp sheetlet First Day Cover is illustrated below:



The £1 value was also available on a postcard, which displays the same image as the stamp on the front:



<sup>4</sup> The photographic images of the Puffin were by Terry Marsh ©

## 2021 Definitive Stamps

In January this year, Anglesey Stamps issued a set of 10 definitive stamps for Puffin Island, which unsurprisingly feature the Puffin in a single design but in four colours (Red, Blue, Green and Brown).

The higher values (£5, £2, £1) are slightly larger than the lower values, at 36mm high x 34 mm wide. The lower values are square, at 32mm each side.

Once again, these stamps are available in perforate or imperforate format.



The Visit Anglesey website states that:

*“Puffins were once common on the island, although they are today quite scarce. On the occasions when they breed here, they lay their eggs in cracks between the rocks, as the island’s craggy substrate prevents them from digging burrows in which to nest, as is their more common habit.”<sup>5</sup>*

The same website also states that the Puffin is common on Anglesey at South Stack, located 3 miles west of Holyhead in the North-Western part of the coast of the Isle, on Holy Island. Here, the Puffins feed on sand eels, their main source of food in this locality.

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.visitanglesey.co.uk/en/things-to-do/activities/wildlife-penmon-and-puffin-island/#.YBb6lOj7TIV>

The Isle of Anglesey Philatelic Bureau has issued some other stamps featuring birds, which are:

### 2019 Isle of Anglesey (Ynys Môn) – Christmas



Image source: <https://angleseystamps.com/anglesey-stamp-sets/>

### 2017 Isle of Anglesey (Ynys Môn) – Garden Birds

The four stamps (each at £1 value) feature:

- A Blackbird;
- A Blue Tit;
- A Great Tit; and
- A Robin

