

THE BIG 15

CHECKLIST

One of the most defining factors of Galápagos is the wide selection of animal species that are endemic to the islands. The “Big 15” animals are the most iconic breeds across the archipelago. During your trip to Galápagos, you are likely to encounter the majority of these animals.

Overview

Because the Galápagos Islands were undeveloped for millions of years, the animals across the region have no fear of humans. Because of this, travelers are able to have up close and personal interactions with a vast variety of species. From marine mammals to birds to reptiles, there are many extraordinary animals that have found a home in the islands that are covered in volcanic terrain. You will encounter many of these creatures during your expedition.

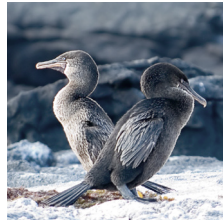




Galápagos Giant Tortoise

The Galápagos Giant Tortoise is an endangered animal that has the ability to live well over 100 years. Because of their extensive life

and endangered population, these animals are perhaps the most popular wildlife attraction found on the Galápagos Islands.



Flightless Cormorant

The flightless cormorants are small, strange birds. This animal is the only type of cormorant that cannot fly.

Because of their interesting heritage, the cormorant mating rituals are unique, commonly including a period of time where the females fight for male attention.



Galápagos Albatross

The Galápagos Albatross is somewhat difficult to encounter because it resides solely on Española Island. This is the

largest bird in the region, with a wingspan over eight-feet long and a weight of 11 pounds. These birds have unique mating rituals and extensive flight routes.



Galápagos Penguin

The Galápagos Penguin is an extremely unique species. This is the only type of penguin that can be found north of the Equator.

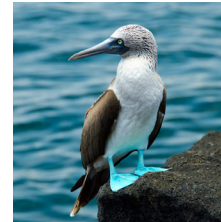
This endemic species thrives in tropical altitudes and lives alongside the tourists that are exploring off the shore and across the land.



Red-Footed Booby

The red-footed booby is much less common than the blue-footed and Nazca booby breeds. These active birds often

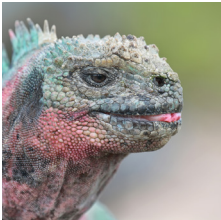
travel almost 90 miles in their search for food. Because they are nimble, these birds are agile and focused as they hunt for fish.



Blue-Footed Booby

Although blue-footed boobies are incredibly popular, they can sometimes be hard to catch a glimpse of. This species has bright

blue webbed feet that are jarring upon first glance. Their webbed feet only turn blue when they reach full maturation.



Marine Iguana

These color-shifting creatures search for prey above and beneath the surface of the water. Algae is the primary food source for this variation

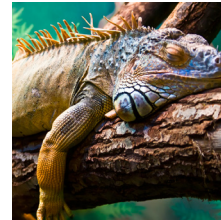
of iguana. This endemic breed is the only marine lizard species across the entire globe that spends time in the ocean.



Galápagos Sea Lion

Thankfully, you will likely encounter these adorable sea creatures on almost every one of the Galápagos Islands. Although

they spend much time basking in the sun, they have playful personalities. Depending on their gender, these creatures weigh between 200 and 600 pounds.



Land Iguana

These large reptiles can live up to 60 years, growing to stretch over three feet long. Because of their size, these lizards often travel and

bask in small groups. In general, this breed prefers to reside on the dry lowlands of specific islands.



Galápagos Flamingo

Because of their consumption of shrimp, these birds have some of the brightest features of any species. Although they can

be over 4 feet tall, they still only weigh roughly 6 pounds on average. These birds typically stand on one foot to conserve body heat.



Santa Fe Iguana

This lizard is constantly blending in with the natural habitat on Santa Fe Island. To much surprise, this

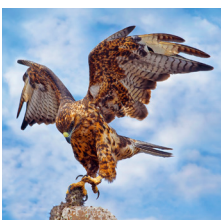
stocky lizard can grow to reach almost 200 pounds. Although these creatures can easily blend in with their environment, they typically have a yellow coloring.



Greater Frigate Bird

The greater frigate birds are distinctive because they have a large, red pouch that can be found on the underside of their neck. These

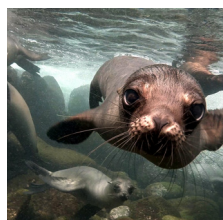
birds often have one mate for the entirety of their lifetime. In addition, they often travel large distances across Galápagos.



Galápagos Hawk

The Galápagos hawks are constantly preying on smaller birds, lizards, and turtles that are nesting around the islands.

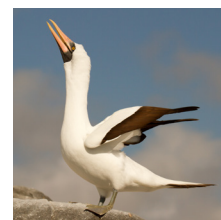
This dark colored bird has incredibly broad features. Because this species is endemic to Galápagos, it has a very small worldwide population count.



Galápagos Fur Seal

Galápagos fur seals are only born in litters of one. These small seals are social, but their population has decreased

steadily for multiple years in a row. Although they spend roughly 30% of their time on shore, fur seals prefer nesting in areas that provide partial shade.



Nazca Booby

The Nazca booby is not unique to the Galápagos Islands. Although these small creatures appear to be gentle, they often

take aggressive measures to ensure their survival. With a black monochrome body and an orange beak, this species is the largest of the booby family.