

Great Auk



- Last flightless bird in the Northern Hemisphere
- Referred to as Penguins
- Closely related to Razorbills, Murres and Puffins
- No relation to Antarctic penguins
- About 1 m tall and weighed about 5 Kg (12 pounds)
- Funk Island was largest known colony
- Beothuk canoed to Funk Island to collect their eggs
- Basques used them as indicators of New World fishing banks
- Exploited for food and bait from 1500s through 1700s
- Slaughtered for down for mattresses and quilts in late 1700s
- Gone from Newfoundland about 1800
- Extinct in 1844 when last known breeding pair killed in Iceland
- Today Great Auks are international conservation symbols

