



# Ròin Seals

**Pasgan airson Sgoiltean**  
Education Pack for Schools







## Pròiseact Dualchas na Mara

Tha am pasgan seo mar phàirt den phròiseact Dualchas na Mara bho Museum nan Eilean. Bheir am pasgan seo beagan fiosrachadh seachad air eachdraidh ionadail a tha a’ buntainn ris a’ mhuir. Tha ‘Ròin’ a’ toirt sùil air dualchas agus cultar na h-eileanan a tha a’ buntainn ri ròin.

Fhuair a’ phròiseact taic bho Bòrd na Gàidhlig agus Museums Galleries Scotland, agus tha Museum nan Eilean taingeil airson an taic sin.

## Heritage of the Sea Project

This education pack is part of the Dualchas na Mara / Heritage of the Sea project from Museum nan Eilean. The pack gives an introduction to local maritime history. The ‘Seals’ pack looks at the heritage and culture of the islands related to seals.

This project received support from Bòrd na Gàidhlig and Museums Galleries Scotland, and Museum nan Eilean are grateful for their support.

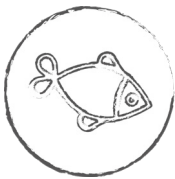




# Seisean air Ròin



Suas gu 1 uair a thìde ach dh' fhaodadh e a bhith nas fhaide



## 5- 25 mionaidean

### Bhideo:

**Tha dà bhideo de sgeulachdan le ròin air an t-sianal YouTube aig Museum nan Eilean:**

Mar a chaidh Baghasdal agus Cille Pheadair a' sgaradh le ròin (Gàidhlig a' mhàin)

<https://youtu.be/ZldoGwV6evM> (4.43mins)

'Se sgeulachd 'Tri-fhillte' le Jan Bee Brown bhon Thrive archive, air an eadar-theangachadh gu Gàidhlig le Museum nan Eilean.

Tha an sgeulachd Gàidhlig ri fhaighinn an t-sianail YouTube cuideachd: Tri-fhillte

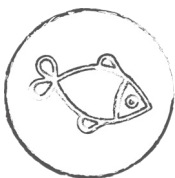
<https://youtu.be/je-k96uMxTI> (16.33mins)

Tha an sgeulachd Beurla, fuaim a' mhàin, ri fhaighinn air làrach-lìn an Scottish Gansey:

<https://scottishgansey.org.uk/news-and-events/herring-tales/>

Tha an sgeulachd Beurla 24 mionaidean

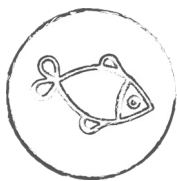
**Tha stuth eile ri fhaighinn air an làrach-lìn an Scottish Gansey mu tha sibh airson sùil a thoirt ris.**



## 15 mionaidean

Seisean fiosrachaidh – Oibseactan agus fiosrachadh air ròin ann an cultar na Gàidhlig. Leugh agus bruidhinn air an fhiosrachadh air duilleagan 6-7.





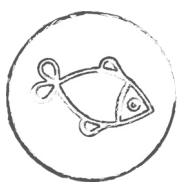
### 15 mionaidean

Ceangalan eile mu ròin a tha feumail:

Tha sgriobt aig Stòrlann stèidhte air an sgeulachd aig MacCodruim nan Ron:  
<https://www.storlann.co.uk/goireasan/macme-downloads/MacCodruim-nan-Ron.pdf>

Èist ri:

Òran an Ròn le Julie Fowles <https://youtu.be/1B4TB1xtYI>



### 15 mionaidean

Duilleag dath nan ròin – Faic duilleag 12.



Ròn acarsaid, Steòrnabhagh (Còirichean nan dealbhan le Museum agus Tasglann nan Eilean)



## Ròin ann an sgeulachdan traidiseanta na Gàidhlig

Tha ròin a' nochdadh gu math tric ann an sgeulachdan agus bàrdachd Gàidhlig. Tha dà ron ann a tha nàdarra do Alba agus 'se sin an ròn acarsaid agus an ròn ghlas. Ann an cultar na Gàidhlig, 'se beathach draoidheachd a th'anns an ròn aig a bheil comas tionndadh gu duine oir tha iad comasach a bhith beò air tìr neo anns a' mhuir:

“Se daoine fo ghleusa a th'anns na ròin”

Bha gu leòr a' creidsinn a' bheachd sin agus anns an sgeulachd 'Trì-fhillte' a tha sibh air èisteachd ris agus ann an iomadach sgeulachd eile, bhiodh na ròin a' tionndadh na riochd duine neo an taobh eile bha an duine a' tionndadh gu ròn.



*Is fhada bhon uair sin bhon a bha cluas air ròn*

*It's been a long time since the seal had ears*

Ròin ghlas, Baghasdal, Uibhist a Deas (Còirichean nan dealbhan le Museum agus Tasglann nan Eilean)

Tha an seanfhacal ag innse an diofar a bh' ann eadar na ròin agus an 'sea lion', tha cluasan air na 'sea lions' ach bha na Gàidheal a' tuigsinn mar a bha na beathaichean càirdeach.

Bha e cuideachd mi-fhortanach ròn a' marbhadh gu h-àraidh tè gheal. Dh' atharraich seo nuair a thàinig goirteas agus cha robh mòran sa bith aca ri itheadh. Thoiseach na h-eileanaich an uairsin a' sealg na ròin airson feòil, ola agus an craiceann. Bha iad ag itheadh an fheòil, a' dèanamh aodaich agus ròpaichean bhon chraiceann agus a' cleachdadh an ola ann an seann lampaichean. Cha robh sian air fhàgail.

Chaidh sporran a dhèanamh le leathair agus craiceann ròn anns na cruinneachaidhean aig Museum nan Eilean.

Tha feadhainn de luchd-eòlach den bheachd gu robh daoine a' creidsinn gun robh ròin a' tionndadh gu riochd duine a' dol air ais nuair a bhiodh na Sami, daoine bho Nirribhidh a chaidh am fuadach air falbh bho an dùthaich aca fhèin agus gun do lean iad na Lochlannaich gu Alba agus na h-eileanan ann an caidheagan. Tha feadhainn den bheachd gur e na Sami-mara a bha na h-eileanaich a' faicinn agus gur ann às a seo a bha na sgeulachdan mu dheidhinn na maighdeannan-mhara, na selkies agus na ròin a' Ròin





ghlas, Baghasdal, Uibhist a Deas (Còirichean nan dealbhan le Museum agus Tasglann nan Eilean) 7 tighinn. Bhiodh na caidheagan aca a' suidhe anns an uisge gu math ìosal mar a bhitheas na ròin fhèin agus bhiodh craiceann ròin timcheall orra airson an cumail blàth agus gus cuideachadh le fleòdrachd san uisge. Nuair a ruigeadh iad tìr, bhiodh iad a' toirt dhuibh na craiceann, agus coltas duine orra. Tha luchd-eòlach eile cuideachd den bheachd gun robh crois ròin aca a bhiodh iad a' cleachdadh airson taomadh a' chaidheag. Nan toireadh cuideigin sin air falbh bhon Sami, cha bhiodh e comasach dhuibh a dhol air ais gu muir.

Seo far a bheil an sgeulachd MacCodrum nan Ròn a' tighinn a-staigh (Faic an lionc chun an sgrìobt drama aig Stòrlann airson an sgeulachd seo.)

Èist ri Òran na Ròn le Julie Fowlis an seo <https://youtu.be/1IB4TB1xtYI>

An sgeulachd air cùlaibh an t-òrain:

Bhiodh gillean òga uaireigin a' sealg air eilean Heisgeir, faisg air Uibhist a Tuath. Airson a' mhòr chuid den latha aca, bhiodh iad a' leaghadh geir an ròin airson ola a chur anns na lampaichean aca. Air an oidhche bhiodh iad a' còcaireachd an fheòil anns a' bhothan. Aon oidhche ge-tà, nuair a bha iad a' dèanamh seo, chuala iad guth a' caoineadh agus a' seinn an t-òrain seo air na creagan air taobh a-muigh a' bhothan.

*“Hò i hò i hò o hò i  
Hò i hò o hò i i  
Hò i hò i hò o hò i  
Cha robh mi 'm ònar a-raoir.  
'S maing san tìr seo, 's maing san tìr  
'G ithe dhaoine 'n riochd a bhìdh;  
Nach fhaic sibh ceannard an t-sluaigh  
Goil air teine gu cruaidh cruinn.*

*‘S mise nighean Aoidh mhic Eòghainn,  
Gum b' eòlach mi mu na sgeirean;  
Gur maing a dhèanadh mo bhualadh  
Bean uasal mi o thìr eile.  
Thig an smeòrach, thig an druid  
Thig gach eun a dh'ionnsaigh nid;  
Thig am bradan thar a' chuain  
Gu Là Luain cha ghluaisear mis”<sup>1</sup>*

Tha an t-òran air a sheinn bho sùilean an ròin, as dèidh dha fhaicinn na daoine a' marbhadh na ròin, mar a tha e a' faireachdainn agus ged mar a chaidh air a dhèanamh, nach fhàg e na creagan sin. Bha na ròin air an dìon an toiseach le daoine, chaidh iad an uairsin am marbhadh airson feòil is ola agus chaidh an t-òran a' sgrìobhadh a chionns gun robh iad a' faireachdainn ciontach mu dheidhinn.

An-diugh ge-tà, tha na ròin air an glèidheadh tron lagh seach an creidsinn a bh' ann uaireigin gur daoine fo ghleusa a bh' unnta. Tha seo furasta a thuigsinn nuair a chi thu na sùilean aca.



Sporran le craiceann ròin (Còirichean nan dealbhan le Museum agus Tasglann nan Eilean)

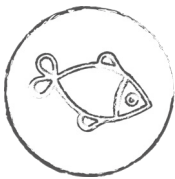
<sup>1</sup> BBC Alba (2015) 'Òran an Ròin' from Bliadhna nan Òran [online] available from [http://www.bbc.co.uk/alba/oran/orain/oran\\_an\\_roin/](http://www.bbc.co.uk/alba/oran/orain/oran_an_roin/)



# Activities running order



Total time = 1 hr



**5- 25 minutes depending**

**Video:**

**There are two videos available that have seals included in the story on the Museum nan Eilean YouTube channel:**

Mar a chaidh Baghasdal agus Cille Pheadair a' sgaradh le ròn  
How a seal divided Boisdale and Kilphedar (Gaelic only)

<https://youtu.be/ZldoGwV6evM> (4.43mins)

The second video is a new story 'Tri-fhillte / Three-ply' written by Jan Bee Brown, the Thrive archive, translated into Gaelic by Museum nan Eilean

The Gaelic version of the story can be found here:

Tri-fhillte

<https://youtu.be/je-k96uMxTI> (16.33mins)

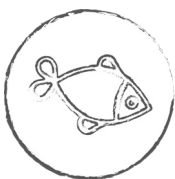
The English audio version can be found on the Scottish Gansey website:

Three-ply

<https://scottishgansey.org.uk/news-and-events/herring-tales/>

English version is audio only and is 24mins long.

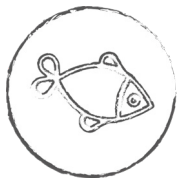
**This website also has other activities should you wish to take a look.**



**15 minutes**

Information session – objects and Gaelic culture related to seals. Read and discuss the information on pages 10-11.





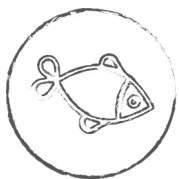
**15 minutes**

Other links you may wish to explore related to seals:

Storlann have developed a script based on MacCodruim nan Ron story  
<https://www.storlann.co.uk/goireasan/macme-downloads/MacCodruim-nan-Ron.pdf>

Listen to:

Òran an Ròn by Julie Fowlis <https://youtu.be/1IB4TBixtYI>



**15 minutes**

**Seals – colouring in page on page 12.**



Harbour Seal, Stornoway (Copyright Museum & Tasglann nan Eilean)



## Seals in traditional Gaelic stories

There is one theme in Gaelic tradition, and especially in Gaelic oral tradition, that appears quite common in stories and in poetry and that is the seal. Native to Scotland are two kinds of seal, the harbour seal and the grey seal. In Gaelic culture, seals are magical creatures with the ability to transform into humans due to their ability to be both in the sea and on land:

“The seals are people under spells”

Many people believed this to be true and in the Three-ply story you will have listened or watched and in other seal stories, the seal changes into a person or the person changes into a seal.



*Is fhada bhon uair sin bhon a bha cluas air ròn*

It's been a long time since the seal had ears

Grey seals, North Boisdale, South Uist (Copyright Museum & Tasglann nan Eilean)

The seanfhacal or proverb explains the main difference between a seal and a sea lion which is the sea lions have ear and shows that Gaels understood how the animals were related.

It was considered unlucky to kill a seal especially a white seal. This only changed during famine when there was nothing else available for islanders to eat but the seals around them. The islanders would use the skin for many different things including making rope and clothing to keep warm as it was waterproof. They would also use the fat to make oil for their lamps. Nothing would be wasted.

Within the collections at Museum nan Eilean, there is a sporran or kilt purse that is made from seal skin and leather.

Some experts say that seals being magical creatures goes further back in time to when the Sea-Sami people would travel in their kayaks to Scotland and the islands following the Norsemen to trade and settle in new lands after being forced to live on the shores





of Norway. Some say it was the sea-Sami people that islanders were seeing and that the stories of mermaids and selkies around the islands were perhaps encounters with the seal-people or Sami-people. The Sami-people's kayaks would be low in the water and with the Sami-people wearing seal skins to keep them warm and to help with buoyancy, the Sami looked like seals coming ashore and becoming human once they removed their skins. Some people think that a seal belt would be used in the kayaks to act as a bilge and once taken from the Sami would stop them from being able to return to the sea. This is where the story MacCodrum nan Ròn comes in. (Please see the link to the drama script in the running order)

Listen to Òran na Ròn (the Song of the Seal) by Julie Fowles through the link <https://youtu.be/1IB4TB1xtYI>

This is the story behind the song:

A group of young men would go hunting on the island of Heisgeir, near North Uist. Most of their day was spent melting the seal fat and once they entered their bothy to cook the seal meat they heard this voice sing this melancholy song from the rocks outside:

*“Hò i hò i hò o hò i  
Hò i hò o hò i ì  
Hò i hò i hò o hò i  
Cha robh mi ‘m ònar a-raoir.  
‘S maing san tìr seo, ‘s maing san tìr  
‘G ithe dhaoine ‘n riochd a bhìdh;  
Nach fhaic sibh ceannard an t-sluaigh  
Goil air teine gu cruaidh cruinn.*

*‘S mise nighean Aoidh mhic Eòghainn,  
Gum b’ eòlach mi mu na sgeirean;  
Gur maing a dhèanadh mo bhualadh  
Bean uasal mi o thìr eile.  
Thig an smeòrach, thig an druid  
Thig gach eun a dh’ionnsaigh nid;  
Thig am bradan thar a’ chuain  
Gu Là Luain cha ghluaisear mis”<sup>1</sup>*

The song is sung from the point of view of the seal, having witnessed humans killing seals and how it feels and despite what is being done to it, it won't leave. Seals have gone from being protected by the islanders to being killed for their oil and meat to sustain the islanders because the islanders felt guilty about having to resort to killing seals to survive the story and the song were written.

Today though, seals are protected through law rather than through the belief that seals are humans under spells, it's understandable to see why islanders believed this when you look into their eyes.

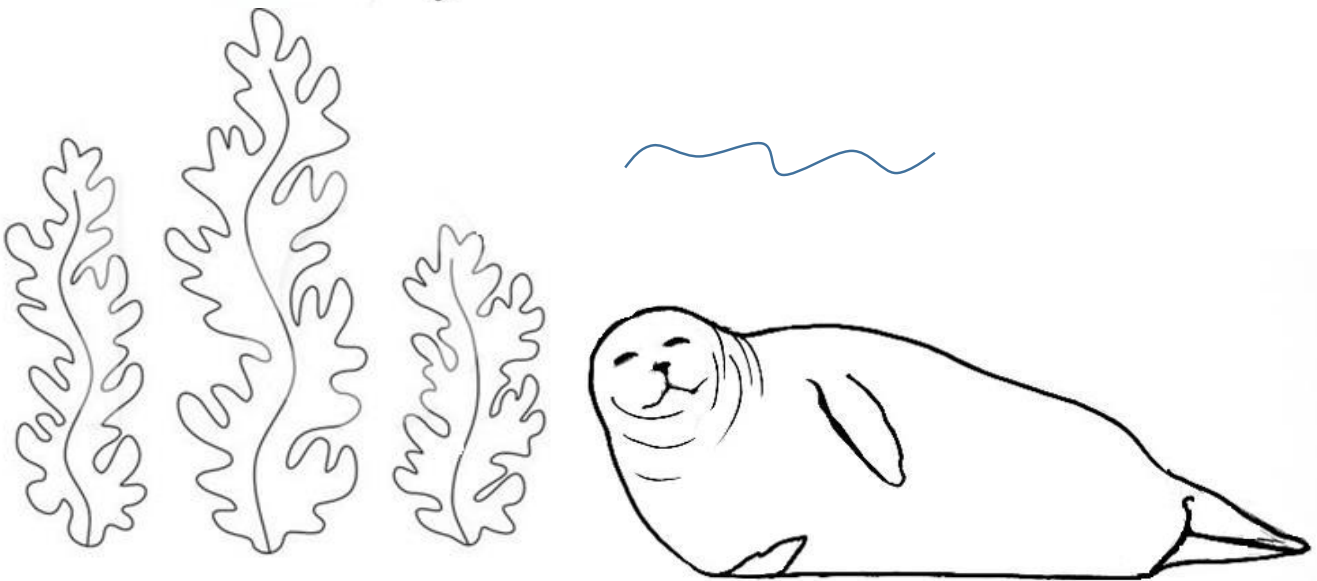
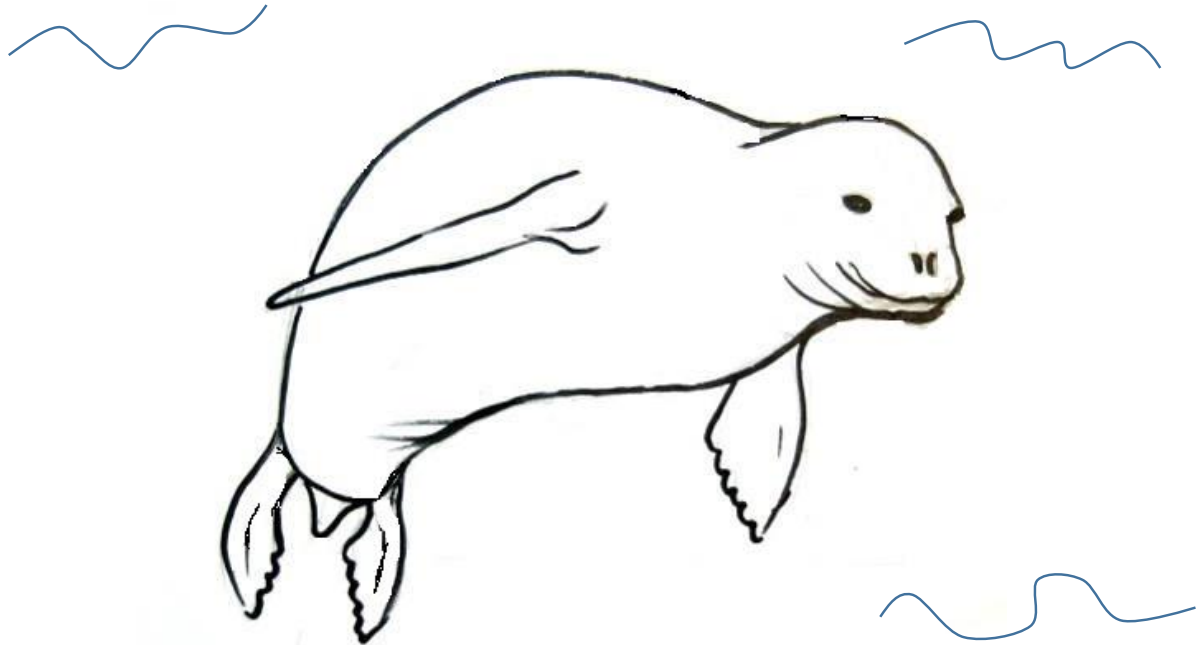


<sup>1</sup> BBC Alba (2015) 'Òran an Ròin' from Bliadhna nan Òran [online] available from [http://www.bbc.co.uk/alba/oran/orain/oran\\_an\\_roin/](http://www.bbc.co.uk/alba/oran/orain/oran_an_roin/)

A seal skin sporran  
(Copyright Museum & Tasglann nan Eilean)

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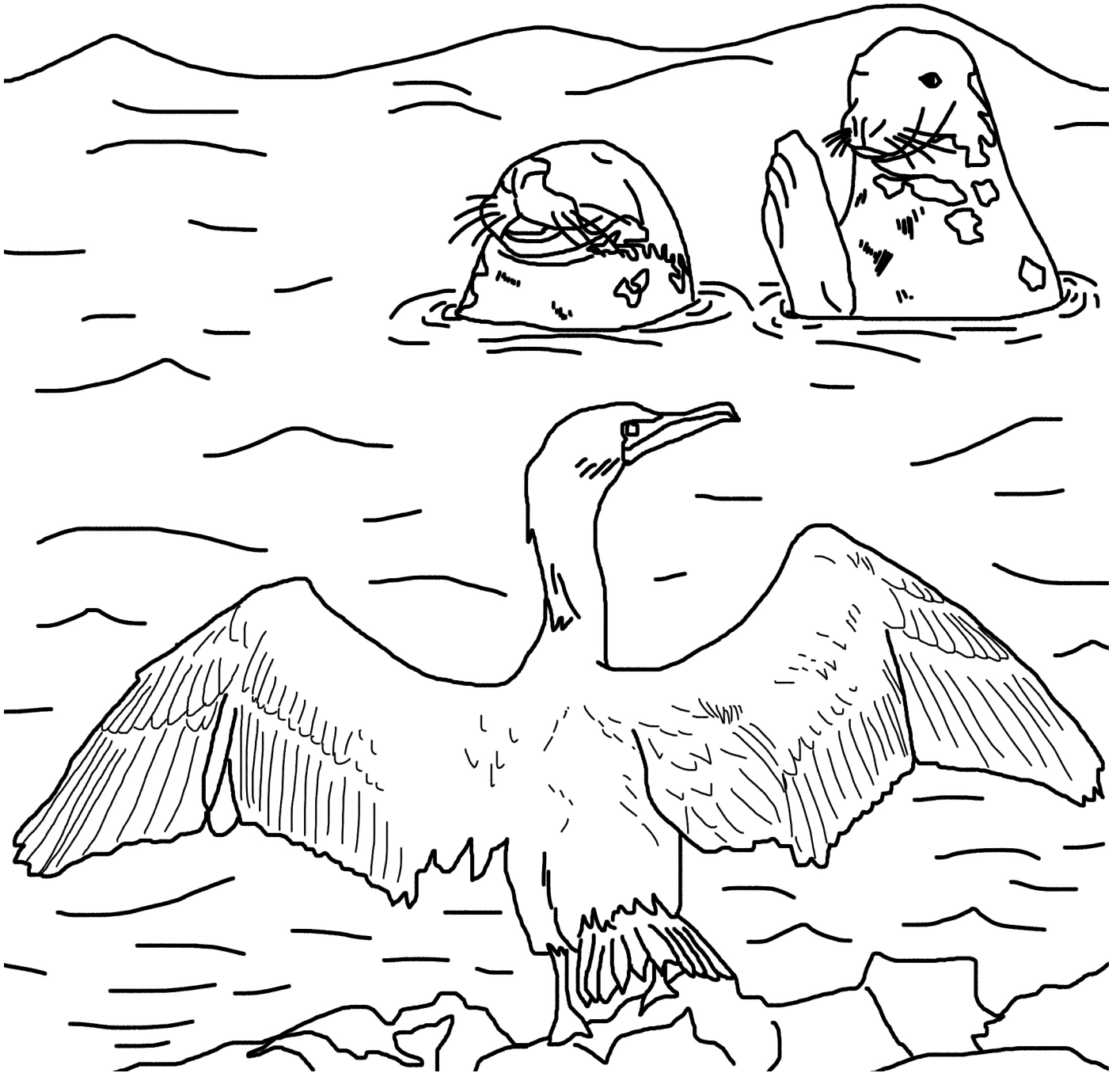
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# Ròin

## Seals



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