

Norway's Puffin chicks lack food

July 17 2007

Very few puffin chicks born this year on the Norwegian island of Rost are expected to survive due to shortages of the birds' food source.

Adult puffins are leaving their chicks on the island, where about half a million puffins nest every summer, and traveling to other locations because of a shortage of herring, Aftenposten reported Monday.

"The herring has completely let them down," ornithologist Tycho Anker-Nilssen of nature research agency NINA said. "The parents have no food to give their young."

Anker-Nilssen, who has long studied the puffins on Rost, said the nesting season of 2007 is shaping up to be one of the worst in years. He said he did not know why the herring are avoiding the island.

"It could be because of strong northerly winds that have sent the herring spawning out to sea," he said.

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