



Edinburgh Castle Animal Safari

Information for Group Leaders

This trail guides you and your learners on an animal hunt through Edinburgh Castle.

Using the Trail:

On each page you will find:



- Directions to each animal



- Suggested text to read to your group



- A challenge to set your group

Using the Bag:

- The bag contains seven soft toy animals; one for each of the six stops and one bonus animal, for one of the step free stops.
- You can hand out the animals at the start or after each challenge.





1

3

2

SF

4

6

SF

5



Introduction to read aloud

We're about to explore Edinburgh Castle!

Lots of real animals have lived here over the last few hundred years, but now most of our animals are pictures and stone sculptures.

We've been asked to find the animals hiding around the castle.

Let's see how many we can spot!

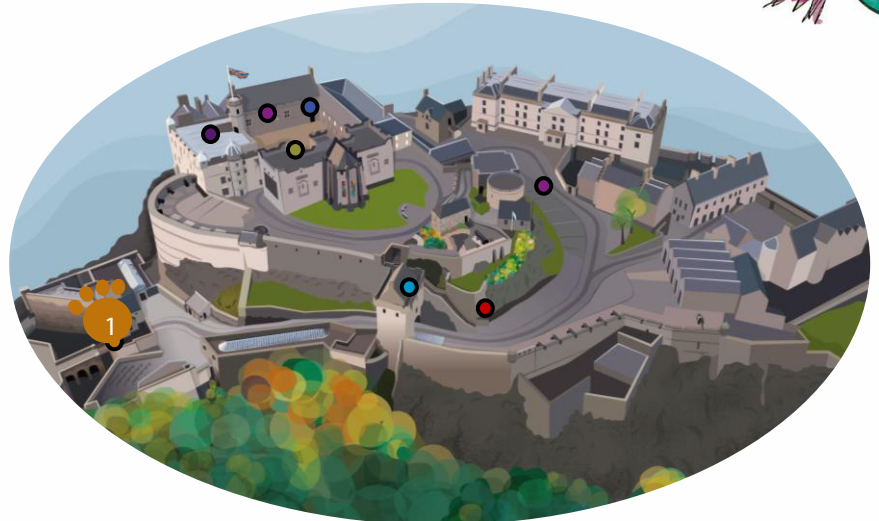




1 Outside the Castle



Stop outside of the ticket barriers, somewhere you have a good view of the castle main entrance.

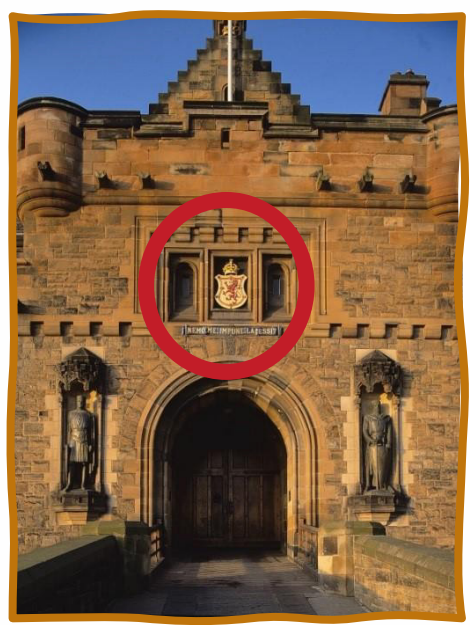


Let's look up at Edinburgh Castle: it's really big, with lots of different buildings inside the walls. For hundreds of years, it was the home of Scotland's kings and queens.

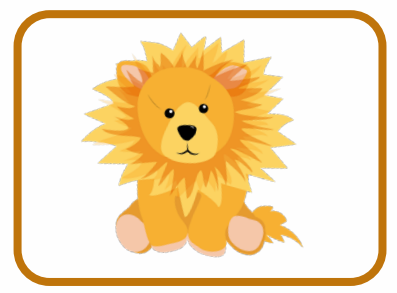


The Challenge

A lion guards the castle gate. Can you find them?
Roar and point when you see them!



It's a Lion in the coat of arms above the entrance.



A coat of arms is a badge which tells us who this castle belongs to. This castle belonged to the Stewarts, the Scottish royal family.

Does your nursery, school or club have its own badge?



2 By the Lang Stairs



Enter the castle and head up the hill. Stop by the red information boards on your left.



The small cobbles on this path were laid to help horses' hooves grip better when carrying things in and out. What jobs do you think horses had in the castle?



The Challenge

Look high up on the wall, can you see a white stag hiding in a shield?
When you see it, hold up both your arms like antlers.



It's a stag in a coat of arms!



This coat of arms belongs to Thomas Randolph; he helped Scotland get the castle back from invaders.

He chose a stag to represent him as it made people think of money and power.

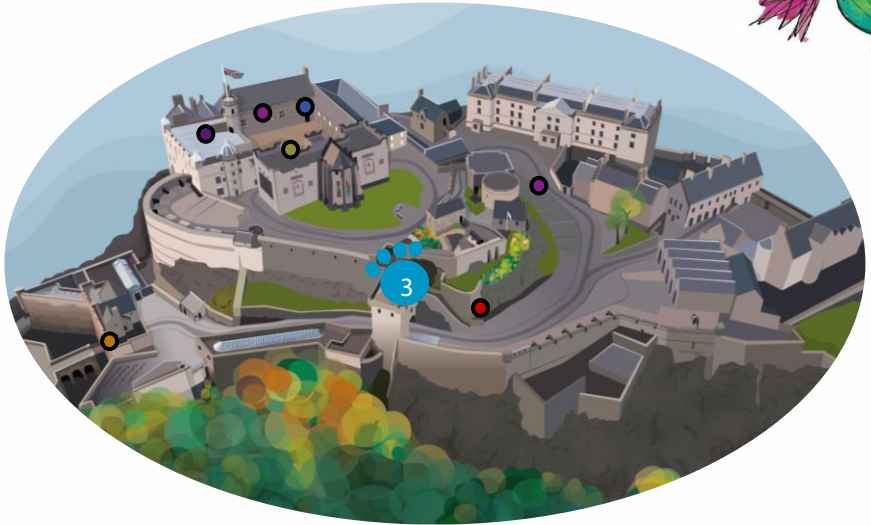


3 Inside Argyle Tower

For step free route skip this stop and turn to the next page



Head up the Lang Stairs and go into the tower on the left halfway up the stairs.

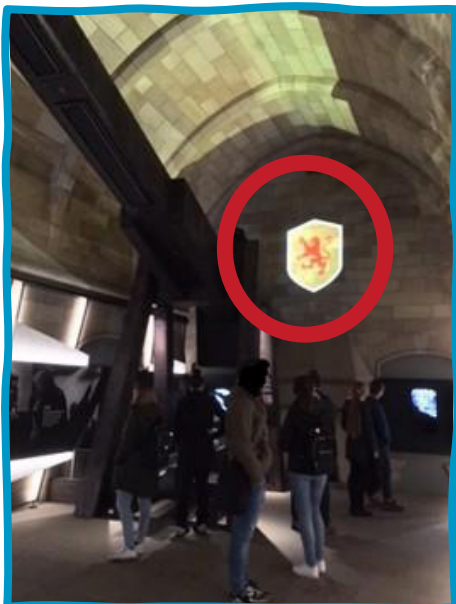


Edinburgh Castle has been attacked about 50 times! One way they would attack was launching big stone balls from enormous wooden trebuchets like the model here in the room.



The Challenge

Watch the cartoon projected on the wall behind the big trebuchet. It shows lions fighting over the castle but what other animal can you spot? Make its noise when you see it.



**It's a Sheep!
A sheep goes
Baa.**



The animation tells the story of many years when the Scottish and English fought over the castle. But for about 20 years, in the middle of all this fighting, the castle was a ruin and only sheep lived here.

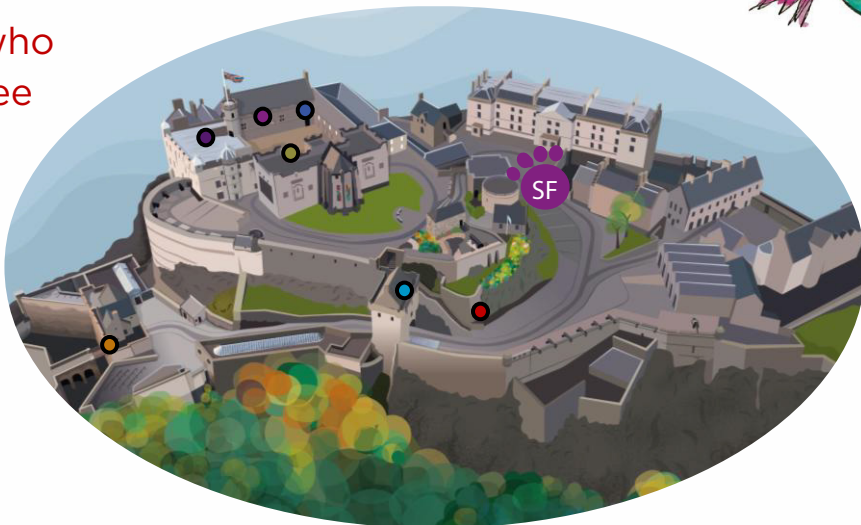


Step Free: Hawk Hill

This stop is for those who wish to use the step free version of this trail



Head straight through the castle up the slope to your left. Stop to take in the view!



This steep slope is called Hawk's Hill. Its name gives us a clue about the history of this area as it may have been used for falconry: hunting with birds of prey such as hawks or falcons.



The Challenge

Falconry was a favourite sport of kings and queens. Can you flap your wings like a hawk or another bird of prey?



It's a bird of prey!



Today people still train hawks and falcons for important tasks. Liam and his hawk Jill visit the castle regularly to scare away seagulls that cause trouble for our human visitors.

Jill's job is to fly around the castle showing seagulls how they need to behave while visiting, or else!

4

Scottish National War Memorial



Head to Crown Square. Find the War Memorial, the building with the large Lion and Unicorn statues outside.



This building helps us remember the soldiers who have fought in wars. There are lots of animals protecting the memorial - including the big unicorn and lion at the front.

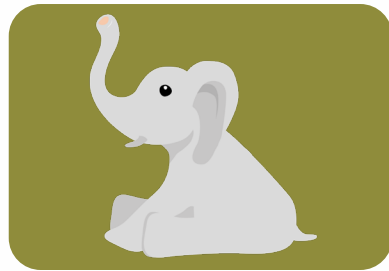


The Challenge

There are so many animals carved into the stone of this building. What animal can you spot?



It's an Elephant. There is also an eagle, monkey, snake, bull, lion and lamb.



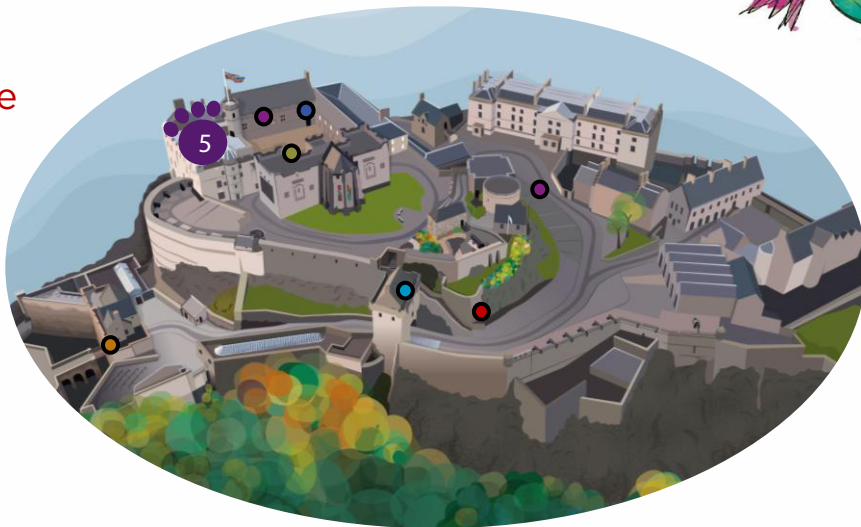
Around 200 years ago some soldiers took an elephant from India and brought it to live at Edinburgh Castle.

Do you think it's fair to take an animal away from its home?

5

Inside the Palace (Antechamber)

For step free route skip this stop and turn to the next page



Head through the door that says '1566' over it. Walk through the room with the paintings into the antechamber and stop in front of the large cabinet.



This cabinet is full of replicas of embroideries, sewed pictures, made by Mary, Queen of Scots.

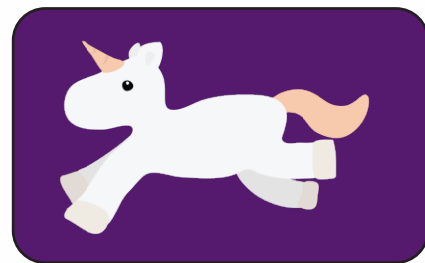


The Challenge

Look at the embroideries, can you find the one of a Unicorn? The national animal of Scotland!



It's a Unicorn!



In the past they thought unicorns were real animals!

Take a look at the other embroideries. There are lots of real animals mixed with mythical monsters. Which is your favourite?



Step Free: Outside Great Hall

This stop is for those who wish to use the step free version of this trail



Turn around to face the outside of the Great Hall. Look for the large coat of arms in the centre of the wall.

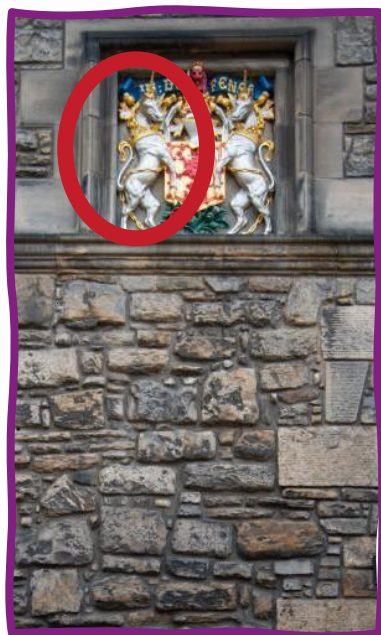


Crown Square is the heart of the castle, where kings and queens would eat, sleep and enjoy themselves. It is decorated with symbols of royalty including unicorns.



The Challenge

Look at the coat of arms on the outside of the great hall. What animals can you spot on it?



It's a unicorn.
There is also a lion!



The unicorn makes people think of grace and royalty - it has been the national animal of Scotland for 700 years!

The lion makes people think of royalty, strength, power, bravery.

Which animal would you choose?



Great Hall



Enter the Great Hall, through the door in the southwest corner of Crown Square.



The Great Hall would have been used for big parties; with fancy food, music and dancing. The windows show the coats of arms of lots of different families who have links to the castle.

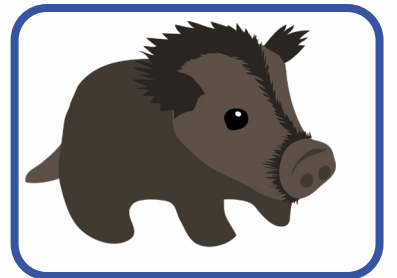


The Challenge

Pick an animal from all the windows. Can you pretend to be it using sound and movements? Can the rest of the group guess the animal?



You could be a wild boar, dolphin, lion, bird or stag.



You have completed your animal hunt!

What was your favourite animal you saw today?