

Penguins enjoy the bubble machine

✘ Keeping over 200 playful and intelligent penguins entertained can be a challenge, but the staff at Edinburgh Zoo are experts at penguin enrichment.

Today they treated the penguin colony to a shower of bubbles from the popular bubble making machine.

Bird Section Team Leader Colin Oulton said: “Penguins are inquisitive and intelligent birds, so it is important we offer them a variety of enrichment. We have a number of ways of providing enrichment, but the bubble machine always gets a good response. All three of our penguin species will chase the bubbles and try to catch them in their beaks.”

“Other ways of providing enrichment include scattering their food across the pool which encourages the penguins to catch food as they would in the wild. We also hang up CD’s which scatter patterns of light into the enclosure which they show great interest in, and during the winter we pile up snow for them to investigate.”

“During a snowfall our penguins will chase snowflakes and try to catch them, in much the same way as they do with the bubbles.”

Edinburgh Zoo is home to the largest outdoor penguin pool in Europe and the resident penguin colony includes three varieties of penguins—Kings, Rockhoppers and Gentoos and you can [watch all the action online by way of the Penguin cam.](#)

Rockhopper penguins are classed as endangered on the IUCN Red List following a rapid decline in the wild population, meaning

this species faces a high risk of extinction. Gentoo penguins are also under pressure from climate change, over fishing, marine pollution and habitat loss.