

Five things you need to know today



Edinburgh Canal Festival – Big Read at Ocean Terminal – Lothian Buses Family DAYTicket – Zoo news – Edinburgh Castle wants you to vote for them

The Edinburgh Canal Festival takes place today. If you want to catch the action then head for Cargo at Lochrin Basin around 12 to see the Lord Provost arrive on a boat with Richard Demarco. The pair will then officially declare the festival open and you can expect a variety of events and activities including:-

water-based: raft race | free boat trips | canoe polo | water walkers
wee boat flotilla | canoe taster sessions | international rescue display

land-based: stalls | bike assault course | bouncy castle
face painting | under 5s area | inflatable pole jousting | art exhibition
chair-o-planes | hands on science

tent

music & dance: Little Love and The
Friendly Vibes | Spells Tower | The
Ringos Matthew T Hicks | Lara's
Belly Dancers | Wounded Knee | The
Gorms
Tollcross Drummers | Piper Hamish
Moore

history of the canal: visual
timeline of the area's history:
contribute on the day by sharing
your story

grove community garden open
day: gardening workshops, massage,
traditional music, garden tours and
treasure hunt





Lothian Buses are launching their Family Day Ticket from
tomorrow. This will allow 5 of you to travel for £7.50.

More information on the [Lothian Buses website](#) where they explain the fare:-

From 7 July we will be trialling a Family DAYticket on Sundays allowing families of up to 2 adults and 3 children to travel on our day service buses all day for only £7.50. A saving of up to 42%.

Think of the fun you could have and the places you could go!

This month visitors to Edinburgh Zoo will have the opportunity to get hands on and learn more about some of the Royal Zoological Society of Scotland's key conservation projects with the RZSS Conservation in Action exhibition. Launching Monday 8th July and running until Friday 19th July, the exhibition will feature four in-situ conservation projects, both at home and abroad: The Scottish Beaver Trial, Highland Tiger project, Budongo Conservation Field Station in Uganda and the Pantanal Conservation and Research Initiative.

Free with zoo admission, the exhibition will include information explaining the story behind each conservation project as well as activities for all ages that will provide people with the opportunity to experience some of the crucial work that goes into each of the featured conservation field projects. Visitors will be able to see if they can distinguish between a Scottish wildcat and a feral cat, utilising the same identification markers used by field scientists or they can have a go at dam building, like a beaver. They will also be challenged to identify the Zoo's oldest chimpanzee, Cindy, as a researcher would identify a particular chimp in the Budongo Forest as well as guess the animal tracks found in the Pantanal wetland.

Polly Phillpot, Senior Education Officer at Edinburgh Zoo said:- "The RZSS Conservation in Action exhibition will allow

visitors both young and old to find out more about some of the important conservation work the Society is involved in around the world. Each of these four projects involves innovative science and research and we hope that this exhibition will increase awareness and help educate our visitors about the importance of global conservation projects. Located at the Budongo Lecture Theatre, there will be colouring in stations, informative videos about each project, feely boxes and more, all explaining how in situ conservation projects work.”

Highland Tiger

Started in 2008, the Highland Tiger project focussed research efforts in the Cairngorms National Park, which included monitoring the population of the Scottish wildcat within the area, assessing the effects of hybridisation and disease as well as working with land managers and cat welfare organisations. This part of the project finished in 2012 but the work of Highland Tiger has continued, with successful techniques developed in the Cairngorms to be rolled out across other parts of Scotland to help us to build a better picture of these animals in the wild. This information will help in developing a management strategy for the Scottish wildcat. Other work includes working on genetic tests and developing a new captive breeding programme.

Scottish Beaver Trial

The Scottish Beaver Trial started in 2009 and is the first official mammal reintroduction project of its kind in Britain. Beavers were once a native species to the UK until they were hunted to extinction in the 16th Century and as part of the Trial four beaver families were reintroduced back into a trial site located in Knapdale forest, mid-Argyll. This ground-breaking five year scientific study will explore how beavers can enhance and restore natural environments. It will also help determine whether or not the reintroduction of beavers in Scotland is feasible and beneficial to nature conservation as

well as assess the impact beavers' activities have on the local environment.

Pantanal Conservation and Research Initiative

Found in Brazil, the Pantanal is the world's largest freshwater wetland and in recent years it has become increasingly threatened by large development programmes and changes in land management practices. Since 2005, the RZSS Pantanal Conservation and Research Initiative has been conducting scientific research to create, implement and evaluate conservation actions and sustainable land management strategies. Results from the Initiative are used to promote conservation throughout Brazil and the rest of the world.

Budongo Conservation Field Station

The Budongo Conservation Field Station (BCFS) in Uganda combines research and conservation to ensure sustainable management and utilization of the Budongo Forest Reserve as a model for tropical rainforest management. The main focus of much of the research at BCFS has been the conservation and study of the habituated group of chimpanzees. Activities are now broadening to encompass other species, and to use this information to support policy development, conservation action and sustainable resource management. RZSS has been core funding the Budongo Conservation Field Station since 2005.

More information about the Royal Zoological Society of Scotland's conservation projects can be found at <http://www.rzss.org.uk/conservation-programmes>

Edinburgh Castle [want you to vote for them](#) so that they can be the UK's best Heritage attraction again this year.

The castle is home to the National War Museum where the current exhibition is Arctic Convoys 1941-45. The exhibition

runs from 24 May 2013 – March 2014 and it is free with admission to Edinburgh Castle.

Sailing from Scotland, Iceland and North America to ports in northern Russia, the Arctic convoys carried vital supplies to the Russian allies. As well as facing the constant possibility of attack from German U boats, the men who sailed on these ships faced some of the toughest conditions of the war: freezing cold, storms and treacherous fog. Thousands of British merchant and naval seamen lost their lives in this operation. Through photographs, letters, interviews and personal possessions, this exhibition tells the story of the courage and determination of these wartime heroes.

