

Nesting rings signal start of Gentoo breeding season at Edinburgh Zoo

The first images of nesting rings being placed at Edinburgh Zoo's Penguins Rock have been captured by the Royal Zoological Society of Scotland (RZSS) marking the start of penguin breeding season.

Staff at the wildlife conservation charity kick-start the annual mating season by placing nesting rings and pebbles in the enclosure, which is home to three species and over 100 individuals. Penguin pairs then collect as many pebbles as possible for their nest rings, where the females will lay their eggs later this month.



Decisions, decisions....

Dawn Nicoll, senior animal keeper at Edinburgh Zoo, said, "Penguin breeding season is the most exciting time at the zoo, and we are thrilled we have been able to reopen our gates and share this magical time with our visitors once again.

"This year the gentoo penguin nest site can be seen on our live webcams, so people will be able to witness the pebble pinching firsthand, even if they can't visit us in person.



House hunting Gentoos

"Pebble pinching is a huge part of the breeding season. This is when a penguin sees the most perfect pebble in another couple's nest and decides to take it back to their own nest. However, it remains a happy environment and it's amazing to watch them couple up and choose their nest rings together."

Edinburgh Zoo recently reopened to City of Edinburgh

residents, with a host of added safety measures. Visitors hoping to spot the penguin breeding behaviours must pre-book zoo tickets before their visit www.tickets.edinburghzoo.org.uk.