



CASTLE LOCH  
local nature reserve



Sculpture  
Trail

Welcome to the Castle Loch Sculpture trail created with help from Peter Bowsher five times world champion chainsaw carver.

Starting in the bowling green car park, your challenge is to follow the trail through the woods to Lochmaben Castle, finding each of the ten sculptures and completing the quiz as you go.

If you don't know the answer each sculpture has a plaque with more clues on it and a pencil rubbing that you can do in the numbered blank spaces.

Good Luck!

1

From October to April large flocks of Pink footed geese come to Dumfries and Galloway. Many of them roost on Castle Loch at night and graze in the surrounding fields by day.

Where do the pink footed geese go in summer ?



Dumfries & Galloway  
COUNCIL





Surprisingly for such a big bird herons always nest in trees, normally with other herons forming a heronry. Herons can often be seen standing motionless, poised to strike in shallow burns and lochs.

## What's the herons favourite food?



2

3

Beech trees can grow to over 45m tall, but because they are often shallow rooted can be susceptible to strong winds as happened here. In spring they grow flowers which by autumn have turned into spiny fruits that may be eaten by squirrels.

## What are the fruits called and can you find any?

The tawny owl is Britain's most common woodland owl. They are sometimes called the Woodland Owl or the Brown Owl. They hunt by sitting on their perch before dropping down onto their prey. As they are mostly nocturnal you will rarely see them during the day however you do have a good chance of hearing their toowhit twowoo call.

## But what does Britain's most common owl eat?



4

5

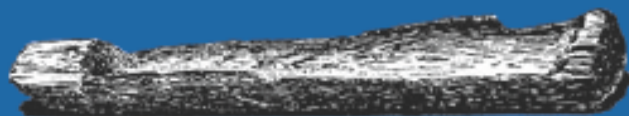
Otters can be found using many lochs, rivers and streams throughout Scotland. Dumfries and Galloway has a very healthy population of otters. Their territory can extend over several kilometres.

**What does an otter foot print look like ?**



The remains of an iron age log boat similar to this reconstruction were found in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, it would have been used for fishing and hunting on the loch.

**But where did the locals live 2000 years ago ?**



6

7

The Lochmaben Vendace were a distinct species only known to have occurred in Castle and Mill Loch. They lived mainly in shoals, occupying deep water and rising at dusk to feed near the surface.



In the 19<sup>th</sup> century local Vendace fishing clubs were formed that held an annual fair with fishing followed by "foot racing, leaping, wrestling and putting the stone by grown up girls and even stout dames". (The Scotsman 1855) The finale was a dinner of Vendace in the local inn.

**But what was the best way to catch Vendace ?**

9

These Nymphs hatch out of eggs laid in still freshwater, and live in the sediment on the bed of the loch. They move around by squirting water out of their abdomen and feed off water boatmen, snail eggs, shrimps and fish. They only come out of the water when they are ready to emerge as adults. Then on a sunny day they'll crawl up a reed stem where they'll emerge out of their old skin as... ?

**What does a nymph change into ?**

8

One of the signs of a healthy woodland is the presence of standing dead wood. This provides a home for a whole variety of insects and fungi. When food is scarce squirrels will eat the fungi whilst Woodpeckers will hollow out nesting holes in the trunks of the dead trees and feed off the insects.

**What insects will the woodpecker find ?**



10

Robert the Bruce was a great Scottish leader who's family were given lands in Annandale in the 1100's by the Scottish King David I. The politics of his time were complicated and Bruce started off on the side of the English king before changing sides to lead the Scots to victory. After an early defeat he was hiding from the English in a cave when something persuaded him that he should never give up.

**What was it that persuaded him to fight on ?**