

NATIONAL TRUST FOR SCOTLAND

MEDIA RELEASE

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Claws are out for first ever Scottish Animal World Cup

- **32 Scottish animals go head to head three times a week**
- **Public vote to name Scotland's favourite animal**

The National Trust for Scotland is on a mission to find Scotland's favourite animal and is asking people to vote for their favourite, in the inaugural Scottish Animal World Cup, starting this week.

The world cup style competition will see a total of 32 Scottish animals from land, sea and air vie with each other in a series of head-to-head social media polls to take the title of Scotland's Favourite Animal.

The first knockout stage will kick off tomorrow (Wednesday) with a clash featuring the formidable basking shark going up against the adder, Scotland's only native snake. Then on Friday, the Soay sheep goes toe to toe with the Kingfisher.

Later rounds - held every Monday, Wednesday and Friday on the conservation charity's Facebook page - will feature such pairings as the Highland midge vs the small tortoiseshell butterfly and everyone's favourites, the bottlenose dolphin against the Shetland pony.

Over the next ten weeks there will be two knockout rounds, a quarter final, a semi-final and a final on June 10 when Scotland's favourite animal will be crowned.

Michael Terwey, Head of Heritage Services & Consultancy at the National Trust for Scotland said: "Most people know that Scotland's national animal is the unicorn but you don't see so many of them about the place. So, we thought we'd get the Scottish public to help us find the species that encapsulates Scotland's diverse fauna and name it Scotland's best.

"Although we've had to temporarily close our properties, we wanted to celebrate the incredible variety of animals that we share these lands with. That's why we're asking the public to get involved and vote for who they want to win. We love them all (even the midge) so we couldn't possibly decide so an online poll seemed like the best idea.

“Pitching a Highland cow against a damselfly or an Atlantic puffin against a Scottish wildcat would have been a logistical nightmare anyway, so keeping it virtual makes things a lot easier.”

The first bout is open for voting from 10:30am this Wednesday at the National Trust for Scotland’s Facebook page at www.facebook.com/NationalTrustforScotland/

To find out more about Scotland’s wildlife, visit www.nts.org.uk/what-we-do/countryside-and-wildlife

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The National Trust for Scotland is the charity that celebrates and protects Scotland’s heritage. It relies on the support of its members and donors to carry out its important work of caring for the natural and built heritage of Scotland for everyone to enjoy.

From coastlines to castles, art to architecture, wildlife to wildernesses, the National Trust for Scotland exists to protect the national and natural treasures we all love. To plan your visit today, enter your postcode at www.nts.org.uk.

