

THE SCOTTISH UNICORN

A Special Issue



National
Unicorn Day –
April 9

*Celebrate Scotland's
National Animal*



Celebrating Scotland's National Animal on April 9th

Across Scotland's castles, city gates, and ancient coats of arms, one magical creature appears again and again — powerful, proud, and unmistakable: The unicorn, Scotland's national animal.

For centuries, it has stood at the heart of Scotland's national story. Fierce yet pure, independent yet loyal - the unicorn symbolizes qualities Scotland has long valued: strength guided by principle, authority rooted in legitimacy, and the quiet resilience of a nation that has always defended its right to stand on its own.

In this Special Issue, we celebrate and explore the remarkable journey of Scotland's national animal. From ancient legends and medieval bestiaries to royal heraldry, gold coinage, and the lion-and-unicorn arms of the United Kingdom, the unicorn's story reveals much about how Scotland has understood itself through the centuries.

But the unicorn is not only a symbol of Scotland's past. It continues to inspire artists, historians, storytellers, and communities around the world. In Edinburgh, this year's Tartan Parade celebrates the unicorn with newly created tartans inspired by Scotland's national animal. An Italian author has created a new work featuring two of Scotland's most iconic symbols: the thistle and the unicorn. We invited a group of young artists in Texas - whose teacher loves Scottish history and heritage - to offer their interpretations. And as always, we share Unicorn Sightings from around the world – and invite you to send us more: blyth@scottishunicornnetwork.org.

National Unicorn Day was introduced in Scotland just over a decade ago. It's become an opportunity to celebrate Scottish heritage, imagination and connection. We believe this tradition can and should be expanded around the world to create International Unicorn Day.

On April 9th, whether you're in Scotland, America, Australia, New Zealand, Canada or anywhere else in the world, we hope you'll take a moment to join in the fun and celebrate the unicorn— to wear it, photograph it, seek it out in art and architecture, share its story with others and simply wish your friends, family and colleagues a “Happy National Unicorn Day”. Wherever Scottish stories are told, the unicorn still ignites the Scottish spirit.



Blyth Douglas

Editor, *The Scottish Unicorn*

Website: www.scottishunicornnetwork.org

Facebook: www.facebook.com/scottishunicornnetwork

The Unicorn: Scotland's National Animal

Origins: The Unicorn Before Scotland

The unicorn did not begin its long life in human imagination as a gentle or decorative creature, nor did it originate in Scotland. References to unicorn-like beings appear far earlier and far beyond Britain, woven into the writings of ancient civilizations who believed such creatures inhabited distant lands.

One of the earliest known descriptions comes from the Greek physician and historian **Ctesias**, writing in the fourth century BCE, who described a powerful, single-horned animal said to roam India. Later Greek and Roman writers, including **Pliny the Elder** in the first century CE, repeated and embellished these accounts, attributing extraordinary strength and healing properties to the unicorn's horn.

By the Middle Ages, the unicorn had become firmly embedded in European thought through medieval bestiaries—illustrated manuscripts that blended natural history, legend, and moral teaching. In these texts, the unicorn was portrayed as swift, solitary, and fiercely independent—an animal that could not be captured by force. It was said to be strong enough to fell a horse, elusive enough to vanish at will, and dangerous to those who underestimated it.

The unicorn's horn, later known as the *alicorn*, was believed to neutralize poison, purify tainted water, and cure illness. In a world where disease and contamination were constant threats, this belief gave the unicorn profound symbolic power. Narwhal tusks, often mistaken for unicorn horns, were displayed in royal treasuries across Europe as objects of immense value.

Medieval bestiaries portrayed the unicorn as a creature of paradox. It was wild and untamable, yet also associated with virtue and moral purity. Legend held that a unicorn could not be trapped through strength or cunning, but would approach only one who was pure of heart. This was not submission, but recognition.

Unlike beasts that symbolized brute dominance, the unicorn came to represent **authority without cruelty** and **strength without conquest**. Long before Scotland claimed it as its own, the unicorn already stood for something rare: Power guided by restraint.



Scotland Claims the Unicorn: A Nation Reflected in a Myth

By the **12th century**, Scottish kings had already adopted the unicorn into royal symbolism, making it one of the earliest and most enduring emblems of the Scottish crown. This was not a decorative choice, but a deliberate one. What did the unicorn's image represent to Scottish people of that time?

Scotland was a small kingdom with powerful neighbors, repeatedly forced to defend its independence, its very right to exist. Its national identity was shaped not by imperial ambition, but by endurance and resilience. In the unicorn, Scotland found a creature that mirrored how it understood itself.

Where the lion symbolized rule through dominance and expansion, the unicorn symbolized **sovereignty by right**. It could not be mastered or subdued. In choosing the unicorn, Scotland aligned itself with a vision of authority rooted in moral strength rather than military conquest. The unicorn was not chosen because it was a fantastical creature, but because it expressed an ideal: A nation that governed itself by principle, restraint and endurance.

In Scottish heraldry, the unicorn is famously shown **chained**. This detail is often misunderstood by modern viewers. The chain does not signify captivity or weakness. Instead, it represents discipline and responsibility. The unicorn's power is so great that it must be restrained—and not by force. The unicorn submits only to rightful authority, never to coercion. The inclusion of the unicorn in Scottish royal heraldry unmistakably conveyed the message that a Scottish king could restrain a unicorn's tremendous power through respect for his authority.

Margaret of Denmark and the Age of the Unicorn

The unicorn's symbolism in Scotland continued to evolve over time, particularly during the reign of **James III** and the arrival of his queen, **Margaret of Denmark**, in 1469.

Margaret brought with her a refined Northern European court culture in which symbolism, heraldry, and mythic animals played a central role in expressing royal identity. Queens in the 15th century were not passive figures. Through patronage, ceremony, and domestic court life, they helped shape how symbols were understood, displayed, and transmitted.

During Margaret's lifetime, the unicorn increasingly appeared not only as a symbol of kingship, but as one of moral authority, courtly virtue, and restraint. Under her influence, the unicorn's meaning softened without losing strength. It came to represent balance: Power guided by wisdom, authority tempered by conscience.



This refinement mattered. It allowed the unicorn to move beyond the battlefield and the seal into the cultural life of the court—woven into textiles, art, and ceremony. It became a symbol not only of sovereignty, but of legitimacy, order and purity of heart.

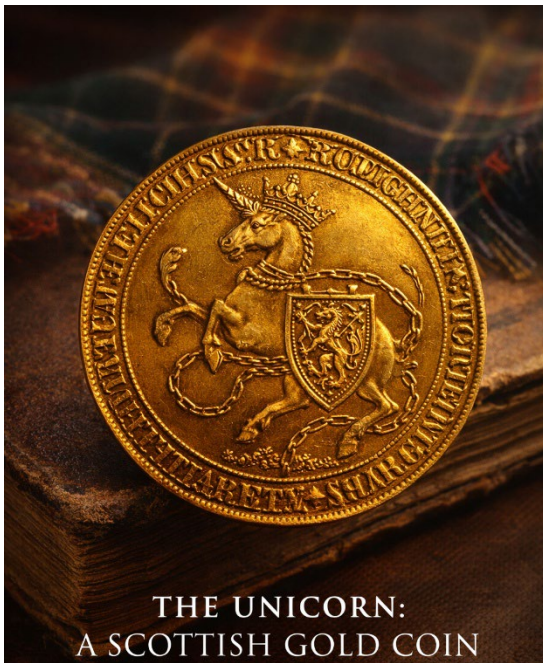
In this way, the unicorn evolved from a purely martial emblem into a fully national one—capable of expressing Scotland’s values as well as its strength. And in the closing decades of the 15th century, that idea was struck into gold.

The Unicorn in Gold: Scotland’s Unicorn Coin

Scotland minted a gold coin known simply as **the unicorn** around 1484, during the reign of **King James III**. The coin quickly became one of the most valuable pieces of money circulating in the Scottish kingdom.

The unicorn was worth **18 shillings Scots** when first issued — a substantial sum at the time. Rising gold prices later pushed its official value even higher. For merchants, nobles, and royal officials alike, the unicorn represented wealth, stability, and the authority of the crown.

But the coin was more than currency. It was a declaration of identity. The unicorn had already become closely associated with the Scottish monarchy by the fifteenth century. Unlike the lion — a symbol widely used across Europe — the unicorn carried a more distinctive meaning.



THE UNICORN:
A SCOTTISH GOLD COIN

Image: Illustration of the Scottish Unicorn gold coin, created using AI based on historical descriptions of coins minted during the reign of James III (c.1484–5).

In medieval symbolism the unicorn represented **purity, strength, independence, and untamed power**. It was believed to be a creature that could not be captured by force, submitting only to rightful authority. These qualities resonated strongly with Scotland’s own sense of national identity. A smaller kingdom surrounded by powerful neighbors, Scotland valued resilience, independence, and legitimacy rooted in right rather than conquest. Placing the unicorn on a gold coin sent a clear message: the authority of the Scottish crown rested on those same principles.

The unicorn coin typically showed a **crowned unicorn**, often chained, reflecting the familiar imagery of Scottish heraldry. The chain did not signify captivity, but discipline — the idea that immense power must be governed responsibly. In some versions the unicorn carried a shield bearing the **lion rampant**, Scotland’s royal arms. Around the edge ran Latin inscriptions naming the king and affirming his authority: James, by the grace of God, King of Scots.

The result was both currency and propaganda: a small piece of gold that carried the symbols of Scottish sovereignty into everyday exchange.

The unicorn coin remained in circulation through the reigns of **James III and James IV**, with related coins such as the **half-unicorn** also minted. These coins were among the most prestigious in the Scottish monetary system and were sometimes presented as diplomatic gifts to foreign courts. Although the unicorn coin eventually disappeared from circulation in the early sixteenth century, its symbolism endured. For medieval Scots, the unicorn had become not only a creature of legend, it was a symbol of the nation itself - embedded into Scotland's gold coinage.

Union and Identity: The Lion and the Unicorn

In **1603**, James VI of Scotland succeeded Elizabeth I of England, uniting the crowns of the two kingdoms. With this union came a new heraldic arrangement: the Scottish unicorn and the English lion standing side by side on the Royal Arms.



The pairing was deliberate. The lion and the unicorn represented two distinct traditions of sovereignty—different histories, different philosophies of power—held in formal balance. The unicorn remained chained, as it had long been in Scottish heraldry, retaining its symbolic meaning of power by right and acknowledged authority rather than by force.

Rather than diminishing the unicorn's significance, Scotland's national animal now stood equal in stature as a supporter of the royal arms along with the lion —its identity intact, its symbolism unchanged.

The Unicorn in Art, Story, and Stone



Unicorn statue watching over Glasgow.

Photo credit: Wendi Coats

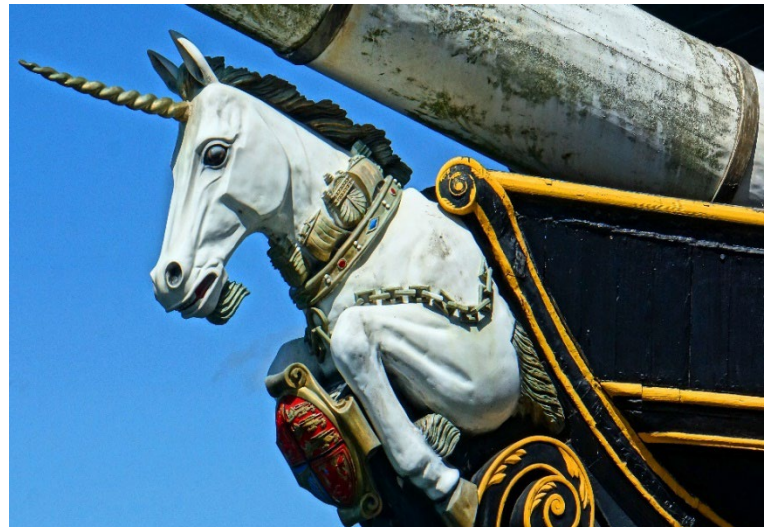
The unicorn did not remain confined to heraldry. In the late medieval period, it became the central figure in some of Europe's most celebrated works of art, most famously *The Hunt of the Unicorn* tapestries. The purity of a unicorn – who many believe symbolizes the figure of Christ in this series of tapestries – is an evident theme. The scenes are rich with symbolism: pursuit and resistance, capture and survival, violence and reverence held in uneasy tension.

Centuries later, the unicorn still commands attention, particularly in Scotland. At Stirling Castle, visitors can walk among modern recreations of unicorn tapestries, restoring the creature to its rightful place at the heart of Scotland's royal story. Across the country, unicorns appear in architecture, sculpture, seals, and public art—sometimes fierce, sometimes playful, sometimes regal and always unmistakable.

In more recent storytelling—from children's tales to modern fantasy—the unicorn continues to appear as a symbol of purity, integrity, and moral truth, themes familiar to readers of works such as **Harry Potter**, in which the villain, Lord Voldemort, sustains his weakening life force with unicorn blood. These modern echoes draw upon centuries-old ideas rather than inventing new ones, reflecting how deeply embedded the unicorn remains in the shared cultural imagination.

For the global Scottish diaspora, the unicorn has taken on an additional meaning. It has become a declaration of identity—an emblem of imagination, independence, and heritage carried far beyond Scotland's shores.

Scots from all parts of the world delight in Scotland's National Animal and increasingly celebrate **April 9th as National Unicorn Day** – a tradition initiated by Stirling Castle in 2015, inviting people everywhere to honor Scottish heritage, imagination...and the enduring magic of the unicorn.



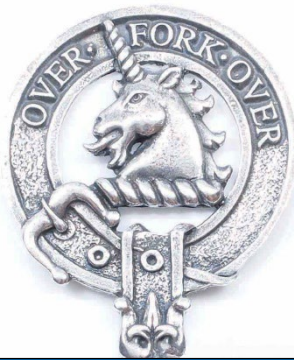
Figurehead of the HMS Unicorn, a 19th century frigate, now one of the most popular tourist attractions in Dundee.

Photo credit: Gordon Ferrier

Unicorns in Scottish Heraldry

In Scotland's heraldic tradition, the unicorn appears not only as the nation's symbol but also within the arms and crests of several historic clans. Clan crests are powerful symbols of identity and allegiance in Scotland, traditionally worn by clan members as a badge of loyalty to their chief.

While each clan crest is somewhat unique, many draw on heraldic imagery that reflects the values of strength and honor, with the unicorn being one of most striking and meaningful of all such symbols. It has been incorporated into the clan crests of at least four Scottish clans, each pairing the mythical beast with a distinctive motto.



Clan Cunningham

Over Fork Over speaks to resilience and perseverance



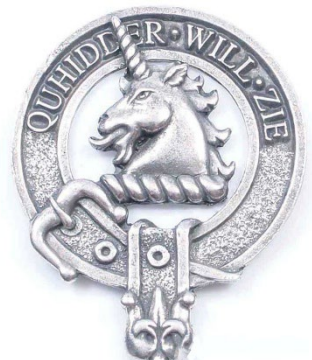
Clan Oliphant

Tout Pourvoir reflects foresight and provision



Clan Ramsay

Ora Et Labora emphasizes faith and hard work



Clan Stewart of Appin

Quihider Wil Zie captures a spirit of determination



Unicorn Kilt Pin: Designed, cast and finished in Glasgow using lead-free pewter, ScotlandShop's Unicorn Kilt Pin is designed to complement traditional Highland dress but can also be styled as a bold brooch, serving as both a practical accessory and a statement of Scottish identity.

ScotlandShop ships worldwide.

For more information on ScotlandShop's Clan Crest Collection:

<https://www.scotlandshop.com/us/scottish-gifts/by-theme/clan-crest>

For more information on the Unicorn Kilt Pin and other Highland accessories:

<https://www.scotlandshop.com/us/clothing/men/accessories/highlandwear-accessories/antique-kilt-pin?tartan=Unicorn>

Image Credits: With thanks to ScotlandShop for providing the images and product information featured in this article.

The Unicorn Takes the Lead in Edinburgh’s Tartan Parade

Edinburgh’s Tartan Parade celebrates Scotland’s national symbol with two new unicorn-inspired tartans and a procession down the historic Royal Mile.

On **Saturday, May 9, 2026**, the streets of Edinburgh will once again fill with the sound of pipes, drums, and marching feet as the **Edinburgh Tartan Parade** winds its way down the historic Royal Mile.

But this year, a particularly magical symbol will take center stage: The **Unicorn** — **Scotland’s national animal** — will lead the celebration.

The parade begins at the **City Chambers near the Mercat Cross**, itself crowned by a unicorn, where The Right Honorable Lord Provost of Edinburgh welcomes participants from Scotland and around the world. From there, pipe bands, dancers, heritage groups and tartan enthusiasts proceed down the Royal Mile in a celebration of Scotland’s heritage and living traditions.

And in 2026, that celebration will feature something entirely new: **two tartans inspired by the unicorn itself.**



A Modern Tradition with Global Roots

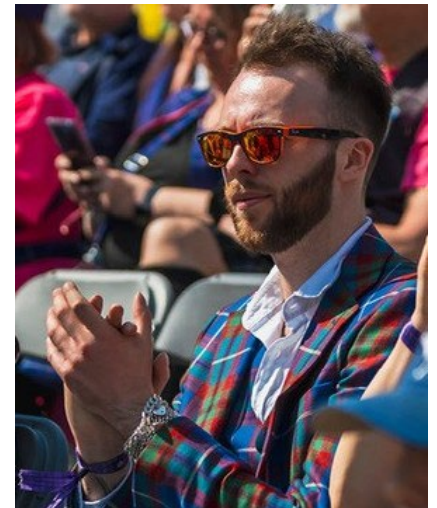


The Edinburgh Tartan Parade may feel timeless, but it is actually a relatively new tradition.

The event traces its origins to **2017**, when founder **Tania Pramschufel** launched a parade in Edinburgh to celebrate the unveiling of **World Fair Trade Tartan**. The event took place on **World Fair Trade Day**, bringing together people from across Edinburgh, a celebration of Fair Trade and the launch of World Fair Trade tartan.

“It was wonderful,” Tania recalls, “People all dressed in World Fair Trade tartan coming down the Royal Mile. Tartan is such a distinctive Scottish design and recognized worldwide — it gives a sense of identity and belonging. Wherever you are in the world, when you see tartan, you think of Scotland.”

In 2018, Tania connected with **Kyle Dawson**, president of the well-known **New York Tartan Day Parade**, to explore development of a similar event in Scotland. Kyle, delighted to hear of Scotland's plans to host a tartan parade, was happy to become involved. The project paused during the COVID years, but the planning returned with renewed energy in 2023 and 2024.



Tartan Parade Scotland, a voluntary team with six members was born to organize this magnificent event. The inaugural **Edinburgh Tartan Parade** took place on **Saturday, May 10, 2025** with **1600 participants in the parade, itself.**

The second annual parade in **2026** again coincides with **World Fair Trade Day**, as well as with **Europe Day** this year, reinforcing the event's spirit of heritage, community, and global connection.

A Gathering of Tartans from Around the World



The parade has quickly grown into a truly international celebration. Registrations for the 2026 event include:

- **22 pipe bands**
- **20 drumming and dance groups**
- cultural participants from **Switzerland, Australia, Bulgaria, Italy, and France**
- and even a **Viking group from Shetland**



Alongside traditional clan tartans, new designs will also appear in the parade — including tartans created to support **Autism Acceptance** and the **Samaritans charity**.

For Tania and the organizing team, this mix of history and modern purpose is exactly the point. The parade celebrates Scotland’s heraldic traditions while reflecting the diversity of the global Scottish community. For more information, please go to: www.tartanparade.scot



Photo Credits: All parade images are courtesy of **Tania Pramschufer, Founder, Tartan Parade Scotland**, and photographed by **Tommy Slack**, official photographer of Tartan Parade Scotland.

Logo: Tartan Parade Scotland logo reproduced with permission.

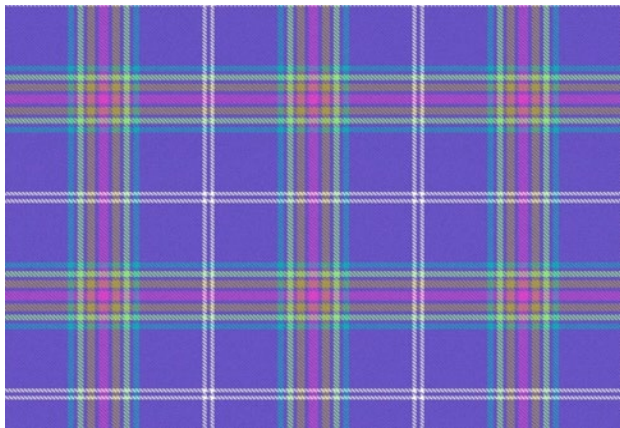
Tartans for the Unicorn

Two new tartans created by parade organizer, Tania Pramschufel - Magic of Unicorn and Auld Magic of Unicorn - will make their debut during the 2026 Edinburgh Tartan Parade.

For Tania, the unicorn carries deep symbolic meaning. She sees the creature as representing **integrity, resilience, and the power to overcome challenges** — while also embodying imagination and wonder. In other words, the unicorn represents exactly the spirit the parade itself hopes to celebrate.



Magic of Unicorn Tartan



The **Magic of Unicorn** tartan offers a vibrant, modern interpretation of the mythical creature. Its bold palette includes **Turquoise, Purple, and Pink** — an unusual but striking color combination that reflects imagination, creativity, and positive energy. It captures the unicorn not just as a heraldic beast but as a symbol of **magic, optimism, and possibility**.

Auld Magic of Unicorn Tartan



The **Auld Magic of Unicorn** tartan draws inspiration from Scotland's medieval past. Its colors evoke a quiet Scottish forest where the unicorn might roam: **Cream and gold** represent the unicorn itself. **Green** reflects the surrounding woodland. **Blue** symbolizes the sky and Scotland's Saltire. The result is a tartan that feels both ancient and timeless.

Following their debut in the parade, the **Magic of Unicorn** and **Auld Magic of Unicorn** tartans will become available for kilts, sashes, and other personal items. A dedicated website is currently being developed, and inquiries can be sent to: info@magicofunicorn.co.uk

As tartan lovers gather on the Royal Mile in May, one thing is certain: **In 2026, Edinburgh's Tartan Parade will celebrate Scotland's most magical symbol - the unicorn leads the way.**

Image Credit: Tartan designs reproduced with permission of Tania Pramschufel, creator of the Magic of Unicorn and Auld Magic of Unicorn tartans.

The Thistle and the Unicorn

A Journey to Scotland—From the Heart of Rome

There is something about Scotland that calls to people who have never set foot on its soil. For one Italian author, Rodolfo Martinez, that call began in childhood, with dreams of mist, mystery, and the legendary Loch Ness Monster. From those early imaginings grew a lifelong fascination with Scotland's history, spirit, and storytelling traditions—shaped by films like *Braveheart*, *Highlander*, and *Rob Roy*, and the enduring influence of Sir Walter Scott. “I began to understand how much strength, determination, and pride the Scottish people possess,” he reflects.



That admiration eventually found its way onto the page in his novel, *The Thistle and the Unicorn*—a story born not from travel, but from imagination, longing, and a deep emotional connection to a place he has yet to visit.

At the heart of the book are Scotland's two most iconic symbols: the thistle and the unicorn. Opposites in nature, yet inseparable in meaning, they represent a powerful duality. “The thistle stands for strength, resilience, and protection,” he explains, “while the unicorn represents magic, guidance, and mystery.”

These qualities are embodied in the novel's two protagonists. Andrea, a guarded and cautious young man, reflects the protective nature of the thistle—not only in character, but even in name, chosen as a homage to St. Andrew and the Saltire, Scotland's national flag. Scott—named in honor of Sir Walter Scott—represents the unicorn: open, passionate, and driven by magic, courage, and a desire to truly live.

Together, they embark on a journey to Scotland that becomes far more than a physical trip. It is a transformation—a movement from fear to courage, from hesitation to embracing life fully.

What makes the story even more compelling is that the author himself has never been to Scotland. Instead, he created his vision through careful study and imagination, immersing himself in the country’s landscapes, traditions, music, and poetry. “I spent endless hours at night studying Scottish places, traditions, music, and poetry,” he shares. “For months, I truly traveled through my imagination.” The result is a richly imagined Scotland: sleeping on the misty shores of Loch Ness, running through the Highlands in the rain, arriving on the Isle of Skye by boat to the sound of *The Skye Boat Song*, or sitting in Edinburgh’s Elephant House café where the world of Harry Potter first took shape.

For Rodolfo Martinez, Scotland’s global appeal goes far beyond its landscapes or history. It speaks to something deeper and more universal. “What unites people from all over the world in their passion for Scotland is a longing for freedom—both mental and spiritual—and a craving for magic,” he says. It is, in many ways, a place that feels as though it belongs to everyone—a shared emotional homeland that draws people together through imagination, identity, and story.

Even the novel’s cover carries symbolic weight. Departing from the traditional white unicorn, Martinez chose black—his favorite color—seeing it not as something dark, but as something powerful and positive. For him, the black unicorn represents a journey still unfolding, an unresolved path that must be completed. Like the characters themselves, it reflects a state of transformation rather than a finished destination.



Rodolfo Martinez – Author, *The Thistle and the Unicorn*

Ultimately, *The Thistle and the Unicorn* is not simply a story about Scotland. It is a story about becoming. It reflects the balance between strength and openness, protection and possibility, reality and imagination. “My hope is that when readers finish the book, they feel that something inside them has changed,” he says, expressing a wish that a part of both the thistle and the unicorn remains within them.

For now, the novel remains available only in Italian, though the author hopes one day it will be translated into English—and perhaps even adapted into animation. Yet even in its current form, it stands as a powerful reminder that Scotland is more than a place on a map. It is a place of the heart, capable of inspiring journeys long before they are ever taken.

All images courtesy of Rodolfo Martinez.

How Children See the Unicorn

In celebration of National Unicorn Day, we reached out to art teacher Wendi Coats and invited her young students to share their own visions of Scotland's most magical symbol.

What they created is as imaginative and varied as the legend itself.



Olivia, Age 7

Several are mounted on Texas Bluebonnet tartan, offering a subtle connection between the students' school community and the Scottish traditions they are so imaginatively bringing to life.

Together, these works capture something essential about the unicorn: not just a symbol of strength and purity, but of creativity, wonder, and possibilities.

And perhaps most importantly—they remind us that the magic of the unicorn is still very much alive.

From bold, modern interpretations to delicate sketches and storybook scenes, these unicorns reflect something deeper than artistic style—they reveal how imagination takes shape in the next generation.

Some artists were inspired by Scotland's landscapes and flag. Others focused on color, movement, or personality. Some named their artworks; others didn't.



Evelyn, Age 10



"I drew my unicorn like this because I got inspired to use chalk - because you can blend the colors like a rainbow soars through the sky."

-Stormie, Age 10





The Scottish Unicorn would like to sincerely thank Wendi and her students for sharing their creativity in celebration of National Unicorn Day.



Here, Wendi shares her own interpretation of Scottish lore and legends alongside that of her young students.

How to Celebrate National Unicorn Day – April 9th



You don't need to be in Scotland on April 9th to celebrate National Unicorn Day.

Scotland's national animal may appear in royal heraldry and castle carvings, but its spirit travels wherever Scots, their descendants and all those who cherish Scotland call home.

National Unicorn Day is not about fantasy. It is about identity — about resilience, imagination, and the enduring symbol Scotland chose to represent itself.

Here are a few ideas to celebrate on April 9th— and we'd love to hear about some innovations of your own!

Wear the Unicorn

Wear a unicorn pin, brooch, kilt pin, tartan accessory, or even a unicorn-themed t-shirt on April 9.

A small emblem can carry centuries of meaning. Whether it is an heirloom piece, a museum find, or a modern design, wearing the unicorn is a quiet declaration of connection.

Take a photograph and share it. Let others know why you are celebrating.

(See also: our ScotlandShop Unicorn Pin feature in this issue.)



Share Something Sweet

Celebrate with unicorn-themed cookies, cupcakes, or pastries. Offer tea or coffee in a unicorn mug. Add tartan napkins for a subtle Scottish touch.

National pride does not need to be solemn to be meaningful - a little joy goes a long way. After all, April 9th is a day to celebrate the national animal of Scotland. The celebration should be fun!

✉ Send Unicorn Day Greetings

National Unicorn Day is the perfect reason to reach out.

Pick up a blank greeting card featuring a unicorn — or create one of your own — and write inside:

- **Happy Unicorn Day – April 9**
- **Celebrate the National Animal of Scotland**
- **Wishing You a Day that Ignites Your Scottish Spirit**

Send it to a friend, especially a fellow Scot or someone who loves Scotland’s history and imagination. Or to anyone who loves history and heritage – and would love to learn more about this Scottish tradition.

You don’t even need a stamp. On April 9, send a simple text or email with a 🦄 emoji and a note wishing someone a Happy Unicorn Day.



🏰 Go on a Unicorn Hunt

Look for unicorns in:

- Architecture
- Heraldry
- Civic buildings
- Museums
- Gravestones
- Gates and public art

Across Scotland — and far beyond it — unicorns appear in the most unexpected places.

Make it a challenge. Who can spot the most surprising unicorn?

Tell the Unicorn's Story

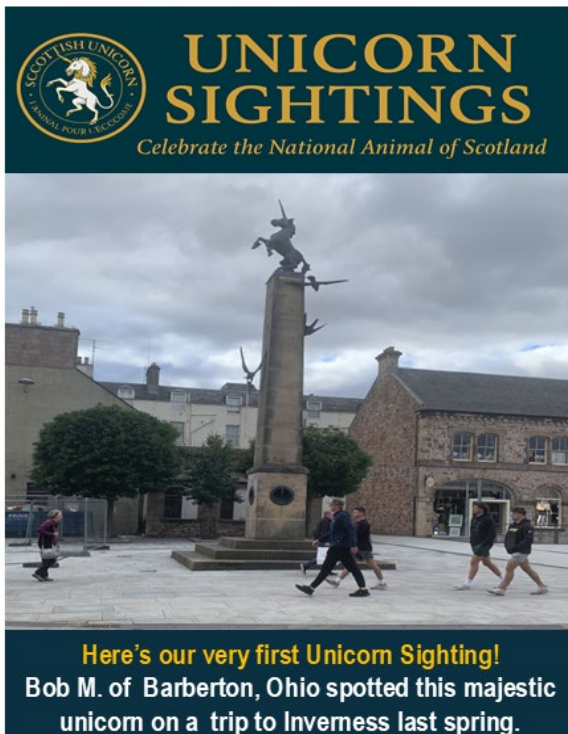
Share with your friends, family and others how the unicorn became Scotland's national animal. There's plenty of details in this issue that you can reference to make the story come to life and provide some great insights:

- Describe what the unicorn represents — sovereignty, moral authority, purity and integrity, strength guided by restraint.
- Explain why it is often shown chained.
- Provide some background on the lion and the unicorn - why the unicorn was added to the Royal Coat of Arms in 1603 to represent Scotland when James VI of Scotland became James I of England.



Every time the story is told, the symbol lives on.

Share Your Unicorn Sightings



If you discover a unicorn — carved, painted, sculpted, stitched, or hidden in plain sight — we would love to see it.

Selected photographs will appear in our special **Unicorn Sightings** feature and may be featured in future issues and on our website and Facebook page.

Send your photo to our editor:
blyth@scottishunicornnetwork.org.

Wherever you are in the world, take a moment on April 9th to celebrate the National Animal of Scotland.

While the unicorn stands in Scotland's heraldry, its spirit travels wherever Scottish stories are told.



UNICORN SIGHTINGS

Celebrate the National Animal of Scotland

For this Special Issue celebrating National Unicorn Day, we have two wonderful Unicorn Sightings, both from Scotland, from two incredible local photographers:

The Spirit of Scotland



Photo Credit: Neil Henderson

Neil captured the joy of David Powell's willow and metal sculpture, *The Spirit of Scotland*, at Helis Park, Falkirk in the afternoon sunshine of a snowy day. The artwork was installed in December, 2020.

Kings College, Aberdeenshire



Photo Credit: Gordon Ferrier

Standing guard at the entrance to Kings College, Gordon perfectly framed this stately unicorn, looking up at the Crown of King's Tower. Kings College was built pursuant to a Papal Bull issued in 1495.

PLEASE send in your photos of Unicorns from around the world – especially any snaps you might take on April 9th, National Unicorn Day. Whether Scotland's National Animal is depicted in stately statues or cozy coffee mugs, we'd love to see them! Send them to our editor along with your Name (first name and first initial of last name), where the photo was taken and approximate date: blyth@scottishunicornnetwork.org.



Other Scottish Unicorn Publications

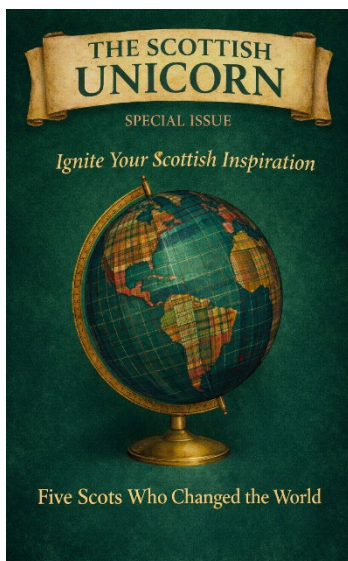
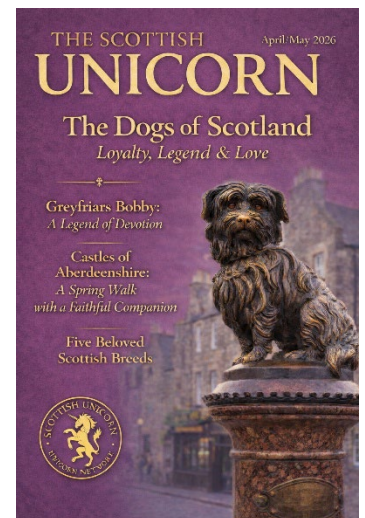
As we close this Special Issue celebrating Scotland's National Animal, we invite you to enjoy other recent *Scottish Unicorn* publications. We hope you'll visit our website (www.scottishunicornnetwork.org) to explore these two publications and others, read our blog posts and subscribe - or email our editor: blyth@scottishunicornnetwork.org to do so.
Scots are famously thrifty, so don't worry – they're all free!

And don't hesitate to email this copy to a friend who might enjoy it – or to members of your Clan or Scottish Society. They may just buy you a wee dram for sharing.....

April/May Issue: *The Dogs of Scotland*

From royal courts to Highland hills, Scotland's dogs have long been more than companions. They are a unique and enduring part of Scotland's heritage – and in many cases, legends in their own right.

In this issue we explore some of Scotland's most iconic breeds, each with its own story to tell. Now beloved around the world, their origins remain deeply rooted in Scotland's landscape, history and way of life. Two beautiful legends underscore the tremendous loyalty and love of Scotland's dogs: the story of the Skye Terrier of Mary, Queen of Scots and Greyfriars Bobby, the little dog from Edinburgh whose devotion still captures hearts. We round out the issue with a journey through three of Aberdeenshire's most famous castles – with a charming local four-legged companion.



Five Scots Who Changed the World

Ignite your Scottish inspiration with the stories of five remarkable Scots whose imagination, innovation and perseverance altered the everyday lives of millions — how we speak, how we measure, how we power the world, how we heal, and how we imagine what is possible. Their influence is so deeply embedded in modern life that we rarely stop to ask where it began — or who paid the price, took the risk, or followed an uncertain path to make it real.

This issue is an invitation to slow down and look again at names we think we already know: Alexander Graham Bell, Andrew Carnegie, James Watt, John Napier and Alexander Fleming. To see the people behind the achievements. And to recognize that world-changing ideas often begin not with ambition, but with attention — to a problem, to a person, to a possibility others have overlooked.

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