

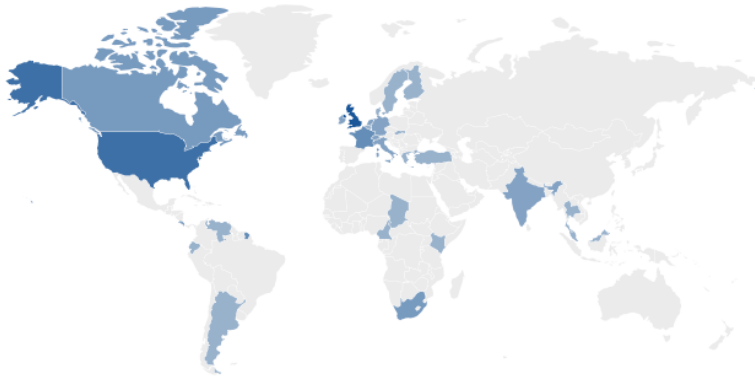


Edinburgh Conservation Film Festival

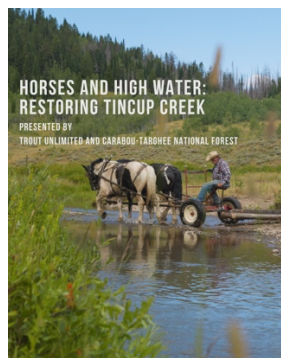
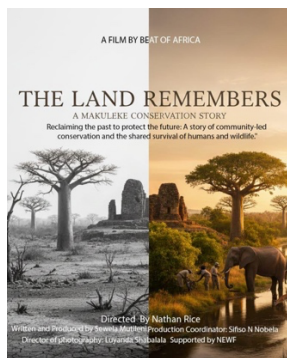
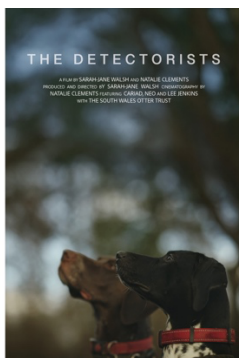
2026

Saturday 11th April, National Museum of Scotland.

This year's Edinburgh Conservation Film Festival was once again a huge success, with a sold-out auditorium at the National Museum of Scotland in Edinburgh (capacity 220). This year we accepted films of up to 12-minutes in length that documented, inspired, and enthused about the possibilities and realities of successful biodiversity conservation around the world. We had 87 entries from 30 different countries representing conservation topics from soils to sniffer-dogs.



These 87 films were gradually narrowed down to the 8 films selected for screening; 2 from Scotland, 4 from elsewhere in the UK, 1 from the USA, and 1 from South Africa.



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The topics covered by the films were; wildlife detection dogs; community conservation regaining and managing land for conservation following colonial land acquisition; the use of horse teams to restore river ecology; the restoration of peatland; the value of volunteers in museum based conservation programmes; work to eradicate invasive species from a Scottish island; using running as a medium for public engagement with the plight of wild Salmon on their annual migration; and a conservation programme run by children on Scotland’s West coast at Ulapool.





The 8 films representing the official selection were sent to our independent panel of judges to determine the winning films, with cash prizes awarded to the top three. Our judges this year were:

- Julian Hector – Ex-Head of the BBC’s Natural History Unit
- Beccy Angus – Director of Discovery and Learning at the Royal Zoological Society of Scotland
- Nicola Brown – Impact Producer and Director specialising in natural history, conservation, science, social injustice, short-form and digital strategy.
- Ashleigh Whiffin – Curator of Entomology at National Museums Scotland.
- Mat Larkin – Co-founder and Head of Visual content at the rewilding charity Scotland the Big Picture.

The judges said of the films;

“All films were praised for the pride with which the film makers and contributors told their stories. The judges enjoyed the breadth of ambition, from covering an event, to telling the story of generations of endeavour to save a landscape. There are many young voices too amongst the nominees, which added to the authenticity and vision running through all the films.”

The winning films were:

 Overall Winner	-	The Living Layer	-	£700
 2nd Place Winner	-	The Land Remembers	-	£500
 3rd Place Winner	-	The Detectorists	-	£300
 Specially Commended	-	The Museum is Alive		

The results were kept embargoed until the screening where they were announced by Professor Rob Ogden, Chair in Conservation Science at the University of Edinburgh.



This year, we added a new panel-discussion component to the event. After the awards ceremony, the director of the Film Festival, Dr Simon Dures, was joined on stage by two of our judges, Beccy Angus and Mat Larkin, as well as Fergus Gil, celebrated wildlife cameraman from Mara Media based in Glasgow. The panel discussion ran for 20 minutes, asking the question, *“How does storytelling inspire environmental restoration and protection?”*. As well as the panellists, the audience also engaged in questions related to storytelling, filmmaking and conservation impact and, by the time the films and discussion were over, the audience and everyone involved left with the conversation still buzzing.

The Edinburgh Film Festival will now be going on tour. We have current screenings confirmed at the Highland Wildlife Park and the North Devon World Surf Reserve and several others planned both around Edinburgh and further afield in Scotland.

A huge thank you to our lead sponsor Safari Gateway! It is a privilege to be able to run this event and observe its impact grow and spread, amongst the audience and amongst the filmmakers and networking that occurs as a result. Collaborations continue to evolve between the featured projects, research scientists and filmmakers who are featured in, and come to this event, and we hope it continues to have impact beyond the screenings.



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