Lying right on the Firth of Forth, Edinburgh is a coastal city. Venture beyond the city centre to explore the Port of Leith with its excellent bars and restaurants, or enjoy the beaches in areas such as Cramond or Portobello.

It’s a city in which it’s easy to get close to nature, especially along the famous Water of Leith walkway, or the small lochs adjacent to the famous Arthur’s Seat.

Just a few minutes from Edinburgh, East Lothian was the childhood home of celebrated naturalist and father of the National Parks, John Muir. The area has beautiful beaches and abundant wildlife - seabirds, seals, dolphins, and even the occasional minke whale or basking shark can be spotted.

In Midlothian, hear the gentle babbling sounds of the River Esk as you wander through the enchanting Roslin Glen, near Rosslyn Chapel. You can board a barge at the Canal Centre at Linlithgow, West Lothian, and sail out along the Union Canal, constructed over 200 years ago. When linked with the Forth and Clyde Canal, this provided the opportunity for the people of the time to traverse right across Scotland by barge.

Today the impressive and unique Falkirk Wheel – the world’s first revolving boat lift – carries boats between the two canals, using less power than it takes to boil a kettle of water! Be sure to make time to stop off to see The Kelpies, two giant equine sculptures which dominate the landscape.

The Forth Rail Bridge, designated as a UNESCO World Heritage Site is an awe-inspiring example of Victorian engineering. Stop off in the charming coastal town of South Queensferry to admire the view of it, plus the Forth Rail Bridge and the impressive Queensferry Crossing covering the expanse of the Firth of Forth.

Visit the city of Stirling to trace the path of the River Forth from one of the city’s highest points such as Stirling Castle or the Abbey Craig. Further north, you will find the Lake of Menteith – the only ‘lake’ in Scotland, since all other similar waterways in Scotland are known as ‘lochs’.

The Scottish Borders have a number of fascinating coastal nature reserves, where visitors can enjoy the unspoiled natural environment as well as spotting the rich and varied wildlife attracted to these areas. The region also has numerous sparkling rivers which offer unlimited opportunities to enjoy pursuits such as wildlife watching, cycling, walking and exploring the history of the surrounding areas.
Please note some attractions have seasonal opening hours. Please check opening times with the attraction.

For more ideas and contacts go to www.visitscotlandtraveltrade.com or email traveltrade@visitscotland.com