

British Hills Knowledge Base: Scotland

In this video, we will be discussing Scotland, with a brief overview of the country's history and a short quiz.



The Scottish Flag



Scotland in the UK

Scotland is a country in the United Kingdom, a nation in north-western Europe. The capital city of Scotland is Edinburgh, though the capital of the UK is London. Scotland has a population of about 5.5 million people, about 10% of the total UK population of 56 million people.

The history of the British Isles of course extends back into prehistory. Much of today's Britain was an important province of the Roman Empire 2000 years ago. However, most of Scotland was not part of the Roman Empire.

The Kingdom of Scotland is said to have formed in 843, though it was not until the 12th century that most of the region was united under a single ruler. For centuries after this, the Kingdom of Scotland existed alongside the Kingdom of England, and the two countries were often at war. However, in 1603 the Scottish King James was named King of England, and in 1707 the two countries became the Kingdom of Great Britain. This would become the United Kingdom in 1801, when Ireland also joined.

Scotland at this time was an extremely strong commercial and intellectual power. It was one of the most successful trading nations, though this created inequality in the population that caused many uprisings. During this period, the population of the Highlands significantly decreased, and many Scots moved abroad to the Americas or elsewhere in the British Empire.

Each of the countries of the UK have a national flower. The national flower of Scotland is the thistle. It is said that an invading army was defeated when an enemy soldier stood on a thistle and screamed, waking the Scots who then stopped the invasion.



A thistle

English is the major language of Scotland, but there are also 1.5 million speakers of Scots. Scots is sometimes called a "sister language" to English.

The Scottish also take pride in their history as inventors. Many of the most important inventions of the industrial revolution were born in Scotland, from the steam engine and television to refrigeration.

You will find places of both natural beauty and cultural significance all across the nation. Maybe you'll even find the Loch Ness Monster!