



JUNIOR RANGER TRAIL



Suitable
for kids
6-12 old

Duration: 45 minutes

Take care:
you are responsible for the
safety of yourself and your
party. **Respect Covid-19**
social distancing and
group gathering guidelines.

Respect
any ancient
monument and
remember to put
your rubbish in a
bin or take it home
with you.

On behalf of Colchester
Borough Council, welcome to
Colchester's Castle Park.
Please enjoy your visit.



The park is located at the edge of the town centre and the nearest **car parks** are
Priory Street, **Britannia** and **Leisure World Colchester**: colchester.gov.uk/parking.

If you don't want to drive why not catch the bus to Colchester High Street?

Please check Castle Park **opening hours** prior to starting the trail colchester.gov.uk/parks

Recycle this sheet if you printed it out at home

INTRODUCTION

We need some help to spot all our wildlife so need you to be a **Junior Ranger** and get wildlife spotting! Follow the map and keep a record of the number of animals you see as you go. This is a circular walk and you begin at the Civil War Obelisk, at the rear of Colchester Castle.



1 Civil War Obelisk

This is the spot of some fairly gruesome history but it's also a good spot for seeing **squirrels**.

-----> How many can you see? If you can't see any from here, walk around the back of the castle and keep your eyes peeled! Keep a record of how many you see here and anywhere else you go in the Park today!

Did you know that these grey squirrels are cousins of the native red squirrels that used to live across the UK. The **grey squirrels** were brought in from North America and carried a disease called Squirrel Pox that wiped out the **red squirrel** populations. They eat nuts and seeds, tree bark and even small bird chicks and eggs if they need to!



2 Bailey Wall

These trees along this walkway are called **London Plane trees**. Have a close look at their bark, do you notice the different colours and patterns? It's almost like army camouflage colours. This type of tree can grow to **35m tall** and live for **several hundred years**.

-----> From up here you can see across the Park, can you count how many birds you can see?



3 Sensory Garden



This is called the sensory garden and is designed to be a nice quiet place with lots of lovely smelling plants. Those plants don't just smell nice to us though, they look and smell lovely to all sorts of **bees** and **butterflies** too!

→ How many bees and butterflies can you count as you walk through the garden? 

Did you know that there are more than 250 types of bee in the UK alone and 57 types of butterfly? All of them have seen drastic reductions in their populations so need our help in planting as many pollinator-friendly plants as we can.



4 Snake Steps

These twisty steps are called the Snake Steps - not because there are snakes here but because they twist like a snake's body. It's a great place to listen out for **birds**. You might not always see them but how many bird calls or songs can you hear as you walk down the steps?

The Park sees lots of blue tits, magpies, blackbirds, great tits, sparrows, starlings, long-tailed tits and even some woodpeckers so keep your eyes and ears open for them.



We'd love to see photographs taken on the trail. Why not share your pictures with us at [@YourColchester](#) [@EnjoyColchester](#) or [@Better Colchester](#) using [#ColchesterCastleParkTrail](#) 

5 Boating Lake

This is where birdwatching gets easy – there are always **ducks** on the boating lake and sometimes you'll see **swans** and **seagulls** too.

-----> How many different birds can you see? Can you identify which is which? Record the number of different birds in each species.



6 Cricket Pitch Bridge



Now it's time to look in the river. There is a small green bridge that connects the Park to the Cricket Pitch, if you stand on the bridge can you see any **fish**? You might need to be patient and still – fish have good eyesight and will hide if they see you. Keep a note of the number you see.



While you're here, you might be extra lucky and see a **kingfisher**, **otter** or a **water vole** so keep your eyes peeled!



So you've covered the upper and lower Castle Park as a Junior Ranger, you can add up all the animals you've seen and **be very pleased with yourself** or you might want to walk along the river to East Bay and on this walk you could see dragonflies, cormorants, lots more birds and maybe even muntjac deer – if you do, make sure you write down how many you've seen.

Thanks for your help, **Junior Ranger!**



We hope you enjoyed this trail. Why not check out what else we have to offer at colchester.gov.uk/parks