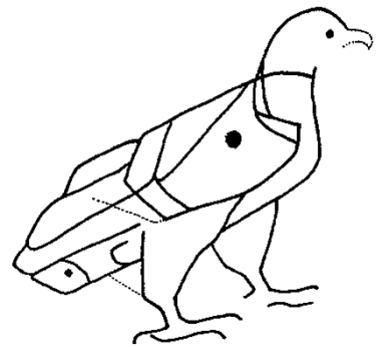


Elgin Museum: Animals as Art

In addition to our Natural History specimens, animals and other creatures feature elsewhere in the Museum. These are some of the decorative images that are used on objects in the collections:

Pictish stones

Birds and animals are often carved on symbol stones from the Early Historic period:



Eagle carved on the Dandaleith stone (with interpretative sketch for clarity)
(ELGNM: 2014.26)



Hands prising apart the jaws of a lion on an early Christian symbol stone
(ELGNM:1855.1.14 (Drainie 16))



Cast showing one of the Burghead Bulls carved on a Pictish symbol stone
(ELGNM: 1892.1 (Burghead 5))

Early Nineteenth Century Silver Bowl

Silver dragon bowl from the collection of Mrs Janet Taylor Levack, possibly made in Hong Kong (ELGNM: 2011.25).



Victorian tea cosy

Embroidered 'bird of paradise' on a Victorian tea cosy, designed to be placed over the teapot to keep the contents hot. (ELGNM: 2004.30.1)



Snuff boxes made from shells

No fashionable Victorian man would be without his snuff box. These ones in the collection are made from various shells set with silver:



(ELGNM: 1919.3; ELGNM: 1978.714; ELGNM: 2008.5; ELGNM: 1907.4)

Tortoiseshell combs

Elaborate Victorian hair combs were carved from tortoiseshell; the shell of the tortoise was boiled in salt water to allow it to be pressed into a mould and later carved, a practice that is outlawed today under international law. Even in Victorian times, tortoiseshell was expensive, and copies were made in celluloid and other man-made materials, allowing ladies to follow fashion for a more modest price (ELGNM: 1971.14; ELGNM: 1977.158). The tortoiseshell patterned comb at the front is set with glass stones (ELGNM: 1978.1371).

