

Movies & Languages 2017-2018

Fantastic Beasts and Where to Find Them

About the movie (subtitled version)

DIRECTOR	David Yates
YEAR/COUNTRY	2016 / UK, USA, Palestine
GENRE	Action / Fantasy
ACTORS	Eddie Redmayne, Katherine Waterston, Dan Fogler, Alison Sudol, Johnny Depp



PLOT

A prequel to the Harry Potter series, the story takes place during the 1920s, following a period when New York had been terrorized by a dark wizard, Grindelwald (now in hiding). The main character, Newt Scamander, is a lover of magical beasts and has done extensive research into their habits. The story opens as he arrives in New York, ostensibly to buy a birthday present for a friend, but with the actual aim of freeing a Thunderbird in its natural habitat (Arizona). Unfortunately, as he listens to the leader of an anti-magic sect (Mary Lou Barebone) in the street, a Niffler escapes from his case.

While attempting to recapture the Niffler in a bank, Newt meets aspiring No-Maj baker Jacob Kowalski and they accidentally exchange cases. Tina Goldstein (an ex-Auror working for MACUSA) notices Newt and arrests him for the damage caused by the Niffler. However, he is released as soon as the authorities see that his case contains baked goods. When Jacob gets back home, three creatures escape from the case he has taken.

After Tina and Newt find Jacob and the right suitcase, Tina takes them to her apartment, where a mutual attraction develops between her sister, Queenie, and Jacob. Later, Newt takes Jacob into his suitcase, where Jacob meets a number of fantastic beasts, and observes an Obscurus (see notes). Jacob agrees to help Newt recapture the beasts which have escaped.

They recapture two of the three and re-enter the suitcase, when Tina promptly returns it to MACUSA. Unfortunately, Senator Henry Shaw Junior has been struck dead and officials arrest them, believing Newt's creatures are responsible, while the Director of Magical Security (Percival Graves) accuses Newt of conspiring with Grindelwald. Tina and Newt are sentenced to death, but Queenie and Jacob rescue both them and the suitcase.

Mary Lou Barebone is also an abusive adoptive mother, with two rather strange adoptees amongst her "children". Percival Graves tries to persuade Credence, the second boy, to find a young girl responsible for an Obscurus, which he believes has been causing the destruction now current in New York, but ends up insulting him. Credence reacts by turning into an Obscurus himself and attacking the city. Aurors arrive, followed by Newt, and one of Newt's beasts captures Graves, who proves to be Grindelwald in disguise.

Newt releases his Thunderbird, which drops an obliterating rain over New York, while MACUSA magicians repair the destruction. Jacob is obliviated, but is left enough Occamy eggshells to start a successful bakery. Newt leaves for Europe, but promises to return to show Tina his book on magical creatures. The film ends as Queenie visits Jacob in his shop...

LANGUAGE

Standard British and American English.

HUMAN RANKS AND MAGICAL CREATURES WE ENCOUNTER IN THE FILM

MACUSA: Magical Congress of the United States of America = Ministry of magic in British English. Their President would just be the Minister of/for Magic in British English	No-Maj (Am. Eng.) = Muggles (Brit. Eng.): those who cannot perform or understand/see magic
Legimens: obviously, a mind reader	Auror: a specialist rank at the Ministry of Magic/MACUSA. They catch dark magicians and repair any damage done
(Appaloosa) Puffskein: the present Newt has ostensibly come to New York to buy his friend. The many types are all globular and furry. They love being cuddled and thrown around. They eat anything their long tongues can reach, but specialize in clearing away children's bogies (cleaning inside their noses) while the kids are sleeping	Niffler: resembles a platypus, but is very attracted by shiny things and cannot bear to be without any. Although it is affectionate towards its owners, it digs holes in anything, as its natural sleeping habitat is deep below the ground. Left without enough shiny things, it can be very destructive. British (see film)
Murtlap: the creature that bites Jacob. Rat-like, with sea-anemone antennae on its back. Originating from coastal areas of Britain, it eats crustaceans and anything that hurts it or gets in its way. Magicians pickle them and eat them, as they give a high resistance to charms and curses	Mooncalf: shy creatures that only come out of the ground around full moon. Big eyes, very thin legs and large, flat feet (see film). When they dance in courtship in the moonlight, they leave intricate patches in fields of crops, which some Muggles think are due to UFOs
Thunderbird: the creature native to Arizona that Newt has come to America to free. It creates storms as it flies and is so sensitive to magical danger that wands created with its feathers sometimes fire on their own initiative. In this film, a thunderbird helps Newt to save his reputation with MACUSA	Erumpent: the beast that attempts to rape Jacob in the film. It is an African beast weighing up to one tonne, and looks a bit like a rhinoceros. It is quite friendly, but, once provoked, very dangerous, as its horn can pierce anything and its skin is highly resistant to charms and curses alike. Its horn sets fire to anything it pierces
Occamy: Jacob is allowed to hold a little one in the film. They have snake-like bodies, two wings and two legs. They aggressively protect their eggs, which are made out of pure silver. Native to the Far East, the Occamy eats mainly rats and birds	Obscurus/Obscurial: a dark, destructive power caused by a child having to block his/her magical forces. Most of these children die before they are ten years old
Bowtruckle: Newt keeps his favourite one in his top pocket. A tree guardian, native to wooded temperate zones. It looks like a green leafy twig and is central to the story line as it can pick (open) any lock	Demiguise: the last beast to be recaptured in the film. It come from the Far East, looks like a sort of ape, and is peaceful and herbivorous. It can also easily make itself invisible, so we only catch a glimpse ☺

VOCABULARY

Apparate (mag.): to disappear and reappear in another place, much made use of in this film	Obliviate (mag.): make people forget recent events: this does not include films and newspapers, which have to be "doctored" separately
To wreak (wrought-wrought): Anglo-Saxon verb, meaning simply "to make". Used in "to wreak havoc" (a disaster) or "wreak vengeance"	Bugger: used as a verb (reg.) or noun when one is a bit annoyed with someone/something (Brit. Eng.)
To pilfer: to steal unimportant things	To scoff: to make annoyed fun of
Not to miss a trick: to notice every little detail/possible action in defense	You slay me: I think you are wonderful and funny
The odds are...: the probability is...	To balk at: to be frightened about doing something you should be able to do. Takes -ing
Why on earth...: "come mai..."; "why the hell" is more vulgar	Hoey (informal): ridiculous nonsense, as in "That's all a load of old hoey!"