The Magazine of The Hunt Saboteurs Association Spring 2017 (Issue 114) £2 (free to members)

HOWL

Direct Action Against All Bloodsports www.huntsabs.org.uk



In the hunt, undercover

Shooting damaging ecosystems

Unmasked: Phillip Davies

Game bird factory farming









LETTER FROM THE CHAIR:

As I write this from the HSA tower, we are just six days from the general election which will decide the fate of our wildlife and how difficult it will be for hunt saboteurs to save lives. It's looking bad for the pro-hunt MPs but time will tell. A win for the Tories will see the promised 'free' vote on the hunting act and although even with a majority this is not a shoe-in victory, the side effect will be even less interest from a diminished police force, who have never taken much interest in crimes against animals (or hunt saboteurs).

The reality is that hunt sabs will still be the thin black line between hunters and their quarry regardless of which side wins. The hard won hunting ban has certainly helped saboteurs, driving coursing underground and making observed hare and mink hunting next to impossible. Fox hunters still get away with killing, but on a reduced scale. Plus, of course, it's always fun to see hunters in Court, when charities take on the burden of upholding the law which police and CPS refuse to do; which is a national disgrace.

So, as always, hunt saboteurs will stand alone in the killing fields, protecting our wildlife with our wits and our bodies until some day when we get a hunting act which ends the killing. That day is not near, so your support, as always, needs to be long term… and we, of course, appreciate and need it more than ever.

Not hitting the election campaign much is the Badger Cull. The Tories will continue and Labour will kill it. It has been a while since the fate of so many animals of one species relies on an election vote. It is, of course, not all doom and gloom; the percentage of people opposed to hunting is increasing, being reported between 84-86%, and higher when measured for hare and stag hunting. We won the hearts and minds of the populace decades ago and we need to ensure that the politicos follow the will of the people. If not in this election, then in a future one. It has never been a question of if we will win but just when!

There was a recent anti-hunt demo in London, and being out of the hunting season and before the badger cull many sabs made the trip, myself included. We were not that interested in listening to the many speakers, most of whom had never opposed a hunt in the flesh and never will, but it was great to meet up with sabs from other areas, and some we had not seen in years. The vast majority of the marchers knew what was what and hunt sabs and our now famous flag got the approval from them.

We may squabble at times and disagree on many things but when it comes to getting out and saving lives from blood junkies we are all of one mind. Those who know me can attest that I am not of a sentimental nature, but I will say I am proud to have sabbed and at times stood side by side in physical resistance to hunters with so many of you all over this country, and we will remain comrades to the end.

To quote Shakespeare (and excusing the sexism and nationalism):

From this day to the ending of the world,
But we in it shall be remembered-
We few, we happy few, we band of brothers;
For he to-day that sheds his blood with me
Shall be my brother; be he ne'er so vile,
This day shall gentle his condition;
And gentlemen in England now-a-bed
Shall think themselves accurs'd they were not here,
And hold their manhoods cheap while any speaks
That fought with us....



www.huntsabs.org.uk

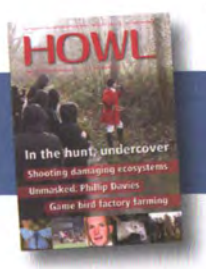
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The Hunt Saboteurs Association has been in existence for over 50 years, and is dedicated to saving the lives of hunted animals directly. Prior to the Hunting Act of 2004, hunt saboteurs used non-violent direct action (nvda) to prevent the horrific deaths of thousands of hunted animals every year. Post hunt ban the primary tool of hunt sabotage has switched from the hunting horn to the video camera, as saboteurs monitor hunts with the aim of capturing their illegal activities on film. This in turn can immediately save lives on the day, and can lead to police action against the hunt concerned. Our range of pre-ban nvda tactics remain in active service, and saboteurs will continue to use them should they be deemed the best way forward on the day for the hunted animal at risk.

The HSA committee is made up of a maximum of 12 voting members, supported by as many non-voting members as is deemed necessary. As a member of the HSA your contribution is vital – thank you.

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EDITORIAL

We are at a time and place, politically, where things could change in many ways for those of us who care about the fate of our wildlife. In whichever direction the next few months leads us, there will be decisions to be made and actions to be taken.

Here at the HSA, it will be business as usual. We will not wait to see what awaits our wildlife, where the next Badger Cull Zone will (or will not) be rolled out and we will not rest on our laurels where any kind of animal abuse is apparent. We stand in awe of you, our supporters, who have always been, and continue to be, generous with your time, your money and your responses to everything we have faced.

In the past few weeks we have despaired at the huge extensions of the Badger Cull Zones as well as the continuing violence from hunts; only to be gifted vehicles, have repairs paid for and receive offers of help and support way beyond what we could have imagined. Increasing numbers of the public have come out against hunting, as well as being scandalised at the continuation of hare coursing and the (clearly nonsensical) Cull.

It doesn't end there; in these times when people are having to accept rising living costs, cuts in benefits, little or no wage increases and fees for the 'privilege' of helping their children get an education, you are still generous with your care and support of our wildlife and what we are doing to protect it. We are very grateful and using every single donation to stop animals being abused, tortured and harassed.

Thank you for giving us the means.



SUSTAINABILITY SHOT TO SHIT!

HOW THE SHOOTING INDUSTRY DAMAGES WOODLAND ECOSYSTEMS

A constant refrain of the shooting lobby is that they are heroes of conservation, tirelessly protecting wildlife habitats which would otherwise be destroyed (by them). Like everything else the Countryside Alliance says, it doesn't stand up to scrutiny when the facts are examined, which is surprisingly rarely.

There has been growing public awareness recently about the serious damage grouse shooting estates cause to moorland habitats, but lowland shooting estates also have huge ecological impacts resulting from the breeding, rearing, release and shooting of pheasants, partridges and quail.

The first stages, breeding and rearing, have similar environmental problems to any other kind of factory farming, but here we look at the ecological impact of releasing game birds for shooting.

When the birds are old enough (6-8 weeks for pheasants, 10-14 weeks for partridges), they are put into woodland pens, from which they are released about a month later, to roam around until some morons shoot them.

While it is true that the said morons don't cut down the trees because of shooting, a woodland is about much more than the trees and the shooting industry is destroying this on a frightening scale, largely unnoticed.



"The largest beetles are particularly hard hit, which includes the iconic and endangered stag beetle."

The few patches of semi ancient woodland left in the UK tend to be small and vulnerable to degradation, but many are ecologically very valuable, because plants and animals specialised to living in woods are now rare. In 2004, it was estimated 1 in 12 woodlands had a pheasant pen in it, and the game industry has ballooned since then.

The introduction of up to 5000 pheasants per hectare in a woodland has been shown to change the types of beetles found from some of the rarer woodland specialist ones, to common species normally found in fields.



Yellow archangel © Gillian Moy

The largest beetles are particularly hard hit, which includes the iconic and endangered stag beetle.

Similarly, plant species in a release pen change from woodland ones like yellow archangel, wood sorrel and tufted hair grass, to more common species from fields like stinging nettles and thistles. Perennial shade-loving plants declined from 45.7% to 28% on average in a pen. They're replaced by plants preferring brighter light and bare ground. There is also less diversity of plants, which reduces the resilience of an ecosystem to withstand challenges like drought. Gamekeepers cut back and thin trees to keep access tracks open and encourage pheasants, throughout the wood. This creates lighter, drier conditions at the forest floor, which adds to the effect the pheasants have directly.

While some wild birds do well in the more open woodlands and benefit from the extra food... guess what? The woodland specialists go into decline. Another concern with wild birds is the spread of diseases from stressed overcrowded game birds. Farmed pheasants and partridges have high levels of intestinal worms, and diseases which they may spread to wild birds.

This degradation of woodland is clearest in the pens, but once the game birds are released, they continue to impact local wildlife in similar ways. For example hedgerows near release pens have less of the specialist ground plants, and less shrub seedlings.

Pheasants pecking out seedlings is particularly worrying because the next generation of shrubs won't grow to replenish the hedge. Although hedges are quite small areas, they can be really important for helping wildlife (and game birds) travel between patches of woodland. But hedges with pheasants in the area have more open ground, increasing the risk of getting eaten on the way.

All these effects are worse the more densely birds are stocked. Best practice recommends 700 birds per hectare but sometimes well over 5000 per hectare are released, in attempts to fatten profit margins.

As the birds roam onto neighbouring land they can affect other habitats for example released partridges may reduce rare Adonis Blue butterflies on grassland, though the only study looking at this wasn't conclusive.

These butterflies declined by 43% between 2005 and 2014 so anything that depletes them further deserves further investigation.

Planting 'cover crops' to encourage pheasants to shelter in a place that's convenient for shooting them, is a common practice, and one of the supposed benefits to conservation. A few shooting estates use a seed mixture which provides dense cover and food for wild birds but maize is the most popular cover crop and this contributes to soil erosion and water pollution.

There is very little research into the effects of game birds and their management on the local wildlife, and most studies have been funded by pro-shooting organisations. When even these show major degradation to woodlands caused by game bird release, there is very likely much more we don't even know about yet.

The UK already has one of the lowest proportions of woodland cover in Europe. We cannot afford to leave the shooting industry in control of our precious woodland ecosystems.



Adonis blue butterfly © Charlesjsharp



In the hunt UNDERCOVER

PART 1

In 2011 two animal rights activists volunteered to infiltrate a hunt in order to gain a better understanding of how they operate. The operation had 2 objectives, firstly to observe the methods used on the day of hunting and secondly to obtain intelligence on the methods used behind the scenes, with regard to the work of the terrier or country man and how a supply of foxes was maintained for the hunting days. We expected the infiltration to last 1-2 seasons but it eventually lasted until the opening meets in 2015 when we were confronted and had to exit the process.

Introduction

The operation began in January 2012 after attendance at the traditional Boxing Day meet in December 2011, at which we initiated conversation and wore suitable dress in order that we would not be total strangers when we started. We developed cover stories with regard to previous hunts we had followed and where we lived and worked, and why we were now out with this particular Hunt. The Hunt was local to both activists and so local knowledge about sports/politics and other issues were good to develop as diversions when needed.

The operation was split into 3 phases. Phase 1 was gaining the trust of the foot followers sufficiently to be introduced and questioned by the masters. Phase 2 was to get closer to 'dirty' work of the terrier men and phase 3 was to gather evidence of methods deployed.

As Hunt Saboteurs it was always the case that we would, wherever possible, interfere with the hunt and save as many foxes as possible. These actions could only take place out of the sight of the hunt and its followers, but we think that approximately 20-30 foxes were saved over the next few years.

> "This was pure and simple evil at its worst - just wanting to see; to see an animal in distress being ripped apart, and then to gain the bragging rights of seeing the kill."

So to start at the beginning, we turned up at our first meet complete with the correct attire, pro hunt propaganda and campaign stickers over the vehicle. One particular group of 2/3 people had spoken to us on Boxing Day and this was the initial way 'in' that was needed. Once we started speaking, with a few questions and a bit of listening, over a few weeks we learnt the names and roles of many hunt attendees and a few quirky bits of information, such as previous masters being better or worse as well as good hounds and bad. But we were still on the outside and we were stared at by some and ignored by the masters.

One of the things that did strike us was that the event for followers was not really a great social event, yes they bought a few sandwiches they sometimes shared and had the odd conversation, but for most it was simply being there watching in silence then moving on to the next covert or vantage point. The system had a clear hierarchical feel to it and we were at the bottom, unknown foot followers with few signs of in-breeding (in my case anyway).

The first time the hounds went into cry was a revelation. Supporters would become animated and excited. This really did strike us as very cold. They changed from being a collection of mainly quiet, reserved groups of 1, 2 or 3 people into a frenzied collection all trying to get the best view of the chase and eventual kill. It was disturbing to see humans behaving like this, even for seasoned hunt saboteurs, and doing so only because sabs were not present and they were free to act exactly as they wanted to. They couldn't claim that they were involved in pest control or riding to hounds in challenging conditions - though they are bad enough. This was pure and simple evil at its worst - just wanting to see; to see an animal in distress being ripped apart, and then to gain the bragging rights of seeing the kill. After which they returned to the silent, reserved and withdrawn bunch waiting for the next kill.

Being accepted

A few weeks in and we were out with the hunt, still only a handful of supporters would say hello or even acknowledge us. On this particular day the hounds were following the scent well, and they had pursued a fox for around 15 minutes when they checked in a hedgerow near the road. As we arrived with other followers to the scene, the huntsman seemed to be at a loss as to where the fox had gone, whether it had gone to ground or crossed the road. The hounds were in and out of cry, but staying put at the hedge.

One supporter, who we later learnt used to build false earths within the territory for hunt in his younger days, explained that there was a drain running along the hedgerow with only a very small opening near to were the hounds were marking, it ran for about 10 metres to a second opening further up the road, near to where we were standing.

The Huntsman blew for the terrier men, three toots several times and eventually resorted to his phone that had no signal. Eventually a second supporter who had around 6-8 terriers in his car offered his services. He opened his car door and grabbed two terriers by the scruff, and put them both at the entrance, this is slightly unusual because 2 terriers can sometimes fight over the quarry should they find. We were positioned near the 'exit' with several others. The atmosphere immediately changed to one of a cold, remembrance type silence as the terriers entered the drain. Around 10 supporters had positioned themselves near the exit so we moved slightly away to provide some kind of an exit route if it was needed by the fox. The field master was holding the field about 30 meters away and they were all well aware what was happening: don't let anyone ever say that the field are just out for a ride, they were hoping for a tired, exhausted animal to be forced back into running for its life so that they could continue to enjoy their day.

Suddenly a hat was raised at the exit, one thing we learnt about this hunt was that we were always asked not to holla until the fox was well away so that the chase was worthwhile, usually a field away, but in this instance a simple raised hat was enough. Because around 200 people were waiting for the poor thing to run.

The huntsman bought the hounds around and the support adopted their wide eyed and excited stance. The chase could start again.

The fox had run straight passed us, being positioned a few extra metres up the road at a point where the hedgerow crossed with another, It was wet, tired and running low to the ground, The Hounds didn't get the scent to well at the exit and he bought them up, at this point we were spoken to for the first time by the huntsman who asked if we had seen the direction. We pointed to the opposite hedge that crossed the one the fox had has taken and explained that it had run back up the hill along that hedgerow – in the direction it had come from, because this can often happen, with a fox eventually circling back towards territory it knows, it was believed and the huntsman took his hounds around and back into the field to the hedge. The hounds spoke, but it would have been old scent and we can only hope that by diverting the hounds, the fox was strong enough to have made it away and gain some ground.



However, our belief that we had now been accepted onto the next level, and trusted, was short lived. Once the hounds had lost the scent and moved on, a couple of foot supporters, backed by the whip approached and asked who we were, were we lived, what hunts had we followed. Other supporters remained nearby looking on, it seemed that this was a planned interrogation.

The cover stories we had kicked in, but we were caught on the back foot and didn't have time to fully prepare, this afterwards we realised was the intention, and many months later we would witness the same thing happening to other 'newcomers', and we would be the ones looking on ready to attack with other hunt supporters if it turned out the people were anti's. However we had to get through this interrogation now and we were doing ok, we asked questions back and tried to turn it into a 2 way conversation. One fundamental error was the mispronunciation of the village we lived in. One supporter jumped on this and said how could we live there when we don't know how to say it! One of us explained that that was a bit of a running joke in the Crown (the public house in the village we were supposed to live in) particularly with the pub manager Alex (we had deliberately frequented the pub to get to know the landlord and a few faces).

This seemed to work and quick change of subject meant we all parted on good terms, but still hadn't exchanged names or shook hands, which would happen in 2 weeks' time with a second challenge, this time by the masters. But the first barrier was down and the on looking support drifted back to cars to catch up with the hounds. They actually did us a real favour in allowing so many to see we were not anything to worry about.

PART II

NEXT ISSUE

In the following weeks and months we will meet with the masters, witness behaviour of the hunt that was shocking in the extreme, tolerate racism, sexism, and see the effect of hunt sabs turning up from the hunts perspective while getting to grips with the dirty side of hunting as we aim to strike up a relationship with the terrier men.



SUPPORT ANIMAL RIGHTS PRISONERS

Please write cards or letters to the following prisoners. Even if you just send a card with a brief message, receiving a message of support from the outside world can make a huge difference to the prisoner. Remember all correspondence is read by prison staff. Also don't expect a reply as there is a limit to the number of letters each prisoner can write.

Marius Jacob Mason (formerly Marie Jeanette Mason, 04672-061)
FMC Carswell, Federal Medical Center, P.O. Box 27137, Fort Worth, TX 76127, USA.
Marius was sentenced on 5th February 2009 to an outrageous 21 years and 10 months imprisonment for ELF/ALF actions.
www.facebook.com/supportmariusmason/ and http://supportmariusmason.org, In July 2014, Marius announced that he would no longer be using the name Marie, and will be using male pronouns. Until his name is legally changed, mail sent to Marius in prison will need to be addressed to "Marie Mason."

Walter Edmund Bond, #37096-013
USP Marion CMU, PO Box 1000, Marion IL 62959, USA
Walter Bond is serving a total of 12 years for his actions as the ALF Lone Wolf. www.SupportWalter.org
Birthday:16th April

Joseph Buddenberg #12746-111
FCI Victorville Medium I, Federal Correctional Institution, P.O. Box 3725, Adelanto, CA 92301, USA.
In early 2016, Joseph Buddenberg and Nicole Kissane signed non-cooperating plea agreements in which they pled guilty to Conspiracy to Violate the Animal Enterprise Terrorism Act. Joseph and Nicole were accused of releasing thousands of animals from fur farms, and causing damage to associated businesses in 2013. Joseph was sentenced to two years in prison. Nicole was sentenced to 21 months in January 2017.

Nicole Kissane #20651-111
MCC San Diego, Metropolitan Correctional Center, 808 Union Street, San Diego, CA 92101, USA.

Brian Vaillancourt #M42889
Danville Correctional Center, 3820 East Main Street, Danville, IL 61834, USA
In February 2014, Brian was sentenced to nine years in prison for a McDonald's arson.

sabgroupnews



Beds & Bucks Hunt Sabs

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www.twitter.com/BedsBucksSabs

We've had a pretty crazy season. Once again we've been weapons-grade pains in the arse to the Oakley who once again resorted to calling in the thugs but we face these challenges head on and crack on regardless. Their attendances have fallen as a result and their new huntsman, "Calamity Jack Harris" is actually helping us by being utterly incompetent. We regularly take the hounds off him but even without our help he seems to lose them. We often see hounds heading back to the meet on their own!

We're trying to work with Bedfordshire police and our liaison officer and results have been mixed. When our liaison is present it's been a huge help but, unfortunately, not all officers are quite so helpful or competent. We hope to improve this situation as we go forward and will be meeting with senior officers over the summer.

We've joined forces with other local groups and visited other hunts as well. Notable effective operations have been against the Cottesmore (which made national news for the hunt violence) and the Fitzwilliam where we saved several foxes in one day despite the lack of reasonable policing and hunt violence. Speaking of the Fitzwilliam, they should have been in court regarding the kill on New Year's Day 2016, however, frustratingly, this has now been delayed until August but we hope for a conviction.

We've even had the odd day off work to catch the North Bucks Beagles out. They rarely get sabbed so seeing them pack up the moment we arrive is very rewarding. It means lots of hares saved and time for a quick shandy in the pub! We've had plenty of interest from people wishing to get involved and had some new sabs in the field. We'll be running a training day over the summer and raising funds with a stand at a local Lush as well as an upcoming vegan fair in Milton Keynes.

The future is certainly rosy for B&BHS.





Cambridge Hunt Sabs

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Our second full season ended with tip-off after tip-off over local hunt, the Fitzwilliam's whereabouts, so we were able to target them effectively with the help of other groups. With their court case moved yet again, they were very nervous, and we actually shut them down by 2pm one afternoon – giving us time to go off with South Cambs and Beds and Bucks to see the Oakley ended their day kill-free too.

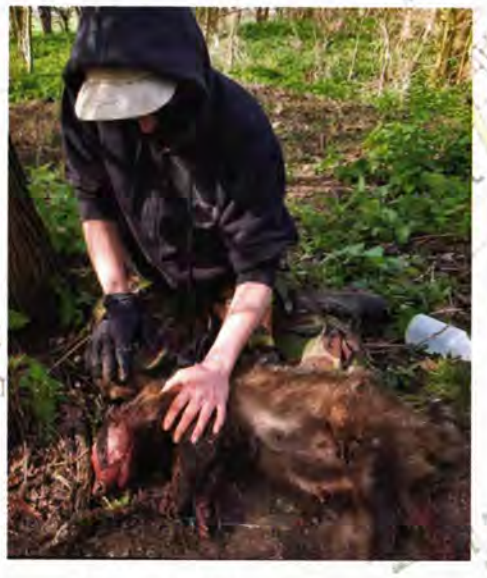
Much to the Fitzwilliam's annoyance, we also hit their final meet of the season, frustrating them beyond belief – and reopening several filled in badger setts before the day got going! Desperate for the police to arrest us, they became further annoyed when the police stuck around to hear claims of illegal hunting.

Although the Fitz don't resort to the use of stewards, they do instruct the field to manoeuvre their horses into sabs – which made walking by them on public bridleways very dangerous – but we all know hunts don't care about any animals, so using their horses as weapons should come as no surprise!

We ended the season with trips to the Pytchley and Woodland Pytchley hunts – both pretty violent bunches. The latter's hunt at Drayton Manor saw the worst policing of a hunt we have encountered so far. Northants police were more concerned with a Section 60AA forcing us to remove our face coverings than they were with preventing assaults.

The thugs piled in on the drive to the Manor – which is a public bridleway and attacked several sabs during the day – huntsmen used their horses as weapons and also whipped sabs. To us, such violence proves we are being effective and that the hunts are frustrated at being forced to hunt within the (weak) law and are unable to kill.

We are always looking for new sabs and supporters.



South Cambridgeshire Hunt Sabs

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www.instagram.com/scambshuntsabs

It's been a busy season, with sabs out twice a week throughout and with some hunts in the area continuing until mid-April. We were once again without a vehicle due to mechanical issues, and would like to thank the wonderful North Cambs group for helping us to remain out in the field for the final couple of months of the season.

Leading up to the end of this season, we've seen increasing violence and aggression from hunts, the most serious of which have been from the Cottesmore and Woodland Pytchley Hunts. Various hunt thugs are under investigation by the police. We believe this is testament to our success, with many hunts clearly growing more and more frustrated with successfully being prevented from their bloodlust.

The persecution of badgers has continued outside of the allocated cull periods and zones. We have spotted badger sets being blocked by the Fitzwilliam terrier men, and also found men badger baiting, having just killed a badger, prior to a Woodland Pytchley meet. This has all been reported to the police and is under investigation. We also continue, along with Beds & Bucks Hunt sabs, with the court case relating to the fox killed by the Fitzwilliam Hunt on New Year's Day 2016, as the court date has been moved several times.

The group has already begun fundraising with stalls at local events and more activities are planned throughout the summer, with hopes to raise enough funds to purchase a more reliable vehicle and prepare for the upcoming badger cull and new season. If you would like to join or support us, please get in touch via email or social media.

Cirencester Hunt Sabs Illegal Hunt Watch

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www.facebook.com/Cirencester-Illegal-Hunt-Watch-1412863682324287/
PayPal: www.paypal.me/cihwatch

The season started off with most of our group heading down to the Dorset cull zone, working alongside the wonderfully dedicated Dorset Hunt Sabs to prevent many wildlife deaths.

We have now expanded our core group and for the majority of the season have had sabs out in the field twice a week. A heartfelt thanks to all our kind and generous supporters, without whom we would not be able to afford the additional fuel and running costs that this generates!



It's been an excellent start to the season and we have started to see the results of our work. Our local hunt, the Cambridgeshire Hunt with Enfield Chace, broke years of tradition and went on a short hack on Boxing Day instead of hunting, due to sab presence.

Our regular mid-week support sabbing the Waveney Harriers has seen their field numbers start to decline. It has been our privilege to continue to work with and learn from other experienced sab groups in the area.

We hope 2017 sees our group continue to improve and expand so that we can put more pressure on our local hunts. If you would like to join or support us, please get in touch via email or Facebook.

Croydon, Brixton & Kingston Hunt Sabs (South London Wildlife Group)

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As always, we have had the pleasure of joining up with sabs from South Coast, South Downs, West Sussex and Guildford at various times through the season. We were also joined by four visiting sabs from Ireland.

The hunts in the South-east have been behaving very strangely, with early morning and afternoon meets replacing the traditional 11 o'clock. The Old Surrey, Burstow and West Kent seem to be in deep trouble, with the field down to a dozen riders on many outings.

Some long stake outs and frantic cross country scrabbles kept the group busy through the second half of the season, with the OSBWKFH, Crawley and Horsham, Southdown and Eridge and Surrey Union all receiving the usual attention, and even a rare visit to the notoriously aggressive East Sussex and Romney Marsh.

As with last year, the final Saturday proved lively, this time on the Crawley and Horsham. Two journalists from the Huffington Post were treated to a barrage of abuse and aggressive behaviour from the Red Coats which is now being investigated by Sussex finest, along with some wildlife crime from an earlier week. Don't hold your breath, however. Our landy being rammed by a tractor the previous year turned out not to be a crime according to plod!

Devon County Hunt Sabs

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Since January we have visited the Atherstone and Pytchley Hunts, as well as more locally the Taunton Vale, Torrington, Eggesford, Modbury, Lamerton and South Devon. Tempers flared at the Chairman's meet of the Eggesford in January as we called them off several foxes and prevented a dig-out when a fox went to ground. We have sabbed them repeatedly since and witnessed them blatantly hunt foxes on every occasion. At the end of one meet huntsman Gary Boon even boasted on camera about the two he claimed he'd caught that day. Several of our sabs were assaulted by Eggesford members this season, including a female sab who was punched in the face by a male hunt follower through an open car window. A reckless sense of impunity seems to pervade the ranks of this hunt. Perhaps the recent conviction of Master Graeme Holmes for embezzling hunt funds will teach them a lesson!

The Lamerton were sabbed a couple of times, including on the land of one of their Masters near Bratton Clovelly. They called the police after we entered the land to stop hounds chasing a fox. Apparently trespass is the most heinous of acts, but not so when the hunt themselves were caught trespassing on an anti-hunt farmer's land. Huntsman David Lewis made quite a fuss when he and his pack were escorted off by the landowner!

We also sabbed all of the Saturday meets of the Taunton Vale Foxhounds. The closing meet proved the most challenging. Together with Somerset Hunt Sabs we thwarted two separate dig-out attempts by the terrier men and witnessed hounds chase several foxes. The first one slipped away thanks to the power of citronella. However, hounds came within a hair's breadth of the second one and he would have surely been caught had it not been for a fortunately placed badger sett and the presence of sabs who guarded the sett once the hounds moved on. Just as well, as the terrier men turned up a little while later.

In the last few weeks we have been to see what the former Devon & Cornwall Mink hounds, now operating under the banner of the Cheriton Hunt Club, are getting up to these days. With a paltry turnout of just 6 people at the meet, it's no surprise the hunts have had to amalgamate. Teaming up with SDAR and Somerset Hunt Sabs, we shut them down and stopped any chance of them 'accidentally' getting onto an otter, which the hunt told us was a risk whenever hounds entered the river! Thanks to the HSA and all our supporters who have kept our vehicles on the road this season.





East Kent Hunt Sabs

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As usual, a hectic end to the hunting season for us here in East Kent!

A few memorable Saturdays were had of course…stopping a large shoot was one of them. The shooters responded by calling the police to say we had "stolen items from a farm" (!), resulting in several coppers chasing us about, then donning plastic gloves to check and see if we had any tractors stuffed away anywhere..!

We kept our attentions on the East Kent with West Street Foxhounds, who have again got away with killing another fox on 7th December 2016 at Burmarsh (video here: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6Z3zimhKteE) but we have long since given up on Kent police enforcing the Hunting Act, so it's sabbing as usual. We attended their end of season meet at the notorious Crundale estate without major incident (except a redneck jumping in the landy and assaulting the driver - masked up, but we know who you are mate!), and got to publicly out one of their "boys," who had been giving us meets in an attempt to set us up for ambush. Twat.

We also kept a close eye on the Ashford Valley Tickham Hunt, who are also hunting foxes openly, so some hard-core sabbing went on, with sabs taking the pack from under the huntsman's nose on many occasions…this led to them crying to their mates at the KM newspaper group, who printed an extraordinary article about us "terrifying children on horses and swearing at riders," whilst dressed in "paramilitary uniforms and balaclavas." Thanks for the free publicity!

We must also mention the North Downs Harriers, a new unregistered pack led by ex (sacked) EKwWS huntsman Alfie Vasser …seems like it's all over already though, and he is off to pastures new…was fun sabbing you though mate, got your hounds back yet?!

And lastly, we sabbed the Blean Beagles' end of season meet, who, of course, ran back to the farm when they saw us! Maybe the pressure is starting to build, now that the public are aware that the chairman of Kent Wildlife Trust is an ex Master, and ex huntsman of this pack!! Friends in high places…

Thanks as always to all our supporters-you know who you are.

Kernow Hunt Sabs

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Kernow Hunt Sabs had a frustrating season with repeated vehicle breakdowns but joined forces with various Devon people when able and had extra monitors out on weekdays. Our poor old landy finally gave up but we will be back with a new vehicle ready for next season. We have also had some new members join and will be actively recruiting over the summer.

One of our hunts, Cury, made national press when their hounds attacked an elderly couple and their greyhound on a National Trust beach. Unfortunately the couple were hunt supporters so did not pursue legal action but it did spark a huge outrage which resulted in the National Trust suspending Cury's licence until a further review prior to next season.

This also prompted the owner of a cat attacked by Western Hunt hounds to come forward. These events led to many new local people supporting us and passing on invaluable information, with some also contributing video footage of hunts they had come across while out and about. We are hoping that continued pressure on the National Trust will ensure no further licences are issued to hunts.

The team also resumed sett surveying a few months ago in preparation of the continuing badger cull in North Cornwall. Many active setts have been discovered but sadly also some that have clearly been decimated in last year's cull. The task is huge with approximately 650sq km to cover but new people are coming on board to help fight it so we will just keep recruiting and getting out there.

Norfolk/Suffolk Hunt Sabs

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Norfolk & Suffolk Sabs have had a very busy and productive season. We have probably covered more meets this season than we have previously and this is partly due to the fact that our group is steadily growing in numbers and we have more sabs in the fields. We have also been lucky enough to join up several times with the truly brilliant Suffolk & Essex, South Cambs and North Cambs Sabs. Big thanks and much respect to those groups for all their help this season.

Sadly, on New Year's Eve we witnessed yet another hare kill by the Easton Harriers. The hounds made very little chase and sabs did not get the chance to intervene before the hare was torn apart. We managed to retrieve the hare's body but the Police were not interested. The Officer who repeatedly stated he was there for public order only (and not for illegal hunting) lived to regret his words however when thanks to Facebook, the public saw for themselves what we had to deal with.

The Easton Harriers' Huntsman Alun Thomas (above) retired at the end of this season and so who knows what we will face next season. Maybe we will get someone who is not so interested in drinking at the pub and is more interested in the welfare of the hounds and goes back to the kennels with the whole pack rather than leaving half of the pack roaming around the countryside with sabs and members of the public forced to return loose hounds to the kennels.

Since Christmas we have sabbed the Easton Harriers and the Waveney Harriers in equal measure and we have fitted in a visit to the Essex & Suffolk Hunt and joined up with other groups to sab the Woodland Pytchley. Many thanks to those groups for hosting us.

North East Hunt Sabs

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This season we have focused our attention on the South Durham and Middleton hunts, occasionally joining forces with our friends from West Yorkshire and Sheffield to keep the pressure on them.

We managed to raise the funds along with a very helpful grant from the HSA to get a new vehicle, which has allowed us to get more sabs out in the field each week. We've also gained several more committed sabs making our group stronger than ever.

Sadly in January we witnessed our first kill as a group at the hands of the South Durham Hunt and because of this they can expect to be seeing a lot more of us in the future.

Cheers
North East Hunt Sabs



North & East London Hunt Sabs

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The New Year started with NELS preventing a dig out at the Essex and Suffolk Hunt alongside Suffolk and Essex Hunt Sabs and Cambridge Hunt Sabs. Next were the Easton Harriers Hare Hunt where NELS had to pull hounds out of a deep ditch where they had run into after a hare and were almost drowning while the hunt apathetically watched on.

Tensions ran high at the Essex and Suffolk hunt in February as we frustrated the hunt by our presence resulting in them sexually harassing sabs and trying to pick fights with everyone - including other hunt supporters.

In February NELS hosted a vegan benefit dinner at the Black Cat cafe in Hackney. Black Cat was then hit by negative reviews by pro hunters showing the petty and low tactics to try and hurt us. Show support to the cafe by posting a positive review here and also see the negative reviews left by pro hunters at:
www.facebook.com/pg/blackcathackney/reviews

Unfortunately we had our van stolen at the end of February so we had to do some last minute fundraising to raise money to rent vehicles to get us out to the last few hunts of the season. Our Facebook page became full of hunt supporters calling us liars and blatantly accusing us of trying to rip people off. Fortunately our followers gave us their support which enabled us to get out.

For the last few weeks we kept the Thurlow Hunt on the run and prevented dig outs at the Suffolk and Essex hunt where we experienced terrier men driving their quad-bike straight into walking sabs and actually hitting one of us and also trying to kick and punch others. Our last sab of the season at the Pytchley hunt included a rider assaulting two sabs. Fortunately we were able to prevent kills at all the aforementioned hunts.

We have also hosted three fundraising nights and we will be continuing to fundraise over the summer to pull together funds for a van for the new season.

Northants Hunt Sabs

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We've continued our pressure on the Belvoir Hunt, especially after the disappointing, but not unexpected, news that the CPS dropped all charges against John Holliday after sabs and residents of a care home witnessed three foxes being killed in December 2016.

Thanks to our continued hard work liaising with Leicestershire Police the rest of our season sabbing the Belvoir since those kills in December has been an extremely successful one with no more kills on our watch and a couple of notoriously aggressive hunt stewards being bailed away.

We joined up with other local groups to hit the Fitzwilliam on the last day of their season, they spent much of the day milling around doing not much of anything while sabs fussed the hounds, when their tactic of getting the police to slow us down didn't work they threw in the towel and packed up early.

End of the season saw us visiting the Pytchley Hunt and then the last few meets of the Woodland Pytchley Hunt, thanks to all the other groups that travelled from far and wide to support us, there were mass assaults and arrests of sabs with the usual downright disgraceful policing from Northants cops, this is ongoing as complaints have been made and evidence submitted.

We'll now be concentrating on fundraising and sett surveying. As always, get in touch if you want to get involved.

Nottingham Hunt Sabs

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The second half of the season started well with a visit to the High Peak Harriers. Upon our arrival they hastily laid some trails and we had a bizarre day watching some genuine trail hunting. Shef sabs still had to be alert later in the day however as the hounds rioted on a hare. Proof that hunting with hounds is never safe for wildlife!

Next up was a rare visit to the Grove and Rufford who were thoroughly delighted to see us and a smashing day was had by all. We also had a couple of visits to the Belvoir in January. Once to support Northants sabs and once to give them a well-earned break from the Belvoir who they've been hammering every Saturday.

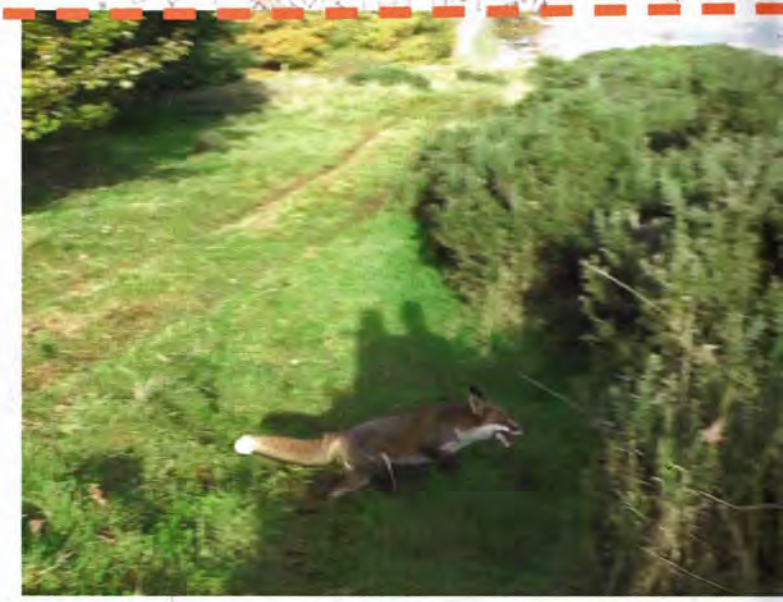
We also stumbled upon an elusive beagle pack whilst heading over to the Belvoir one day. They were hunting Per Ardua Country and we saw some familiar faces but they had a different huntsman and were a right rag-tag bunch. Whoever they were, they carried out the traditional beagler walk of shame upon sabs arrival!

February saw us back at the Meynell with a couple of hard but effective days and also a couple of weeks at the South Notts. They don't generally hunt Saturdays but sometimes try and sneak the odd one in at the end of the season. It would be rude to ignore them when they do, in case they make a habit of it. Rarely have we seen such a badly supported hunt with so few riders out. They did seem delighted to see us though so we'll make sure they're not neglected next season.

Our season finished with the traditional, lively visit to the Middleton in Yorkshire. More on that elsewhere. And now it's summer. Sett surveying anyone...?!

Perthshire Hunt Sabs

www.facebook.com/pages/Perthshire-Hunt-Sabs/521968741261981



We came to the end of our 3rd season in mid-March and what a season it's been!

We have once again focused our efforts on the Fife Foxhounds. We have had a few vehicle problems but that hasn't stopped us from visiting them every week and it's paid off with the numbers of riders continuing to decrease, morale seems to be low with the hunt packing up early all season and most importantly, many foxes saved!

On one slightly wet and miserable day they only hunted in one woodland before packing up, the huntsman didn't even bother wearing his usual red coat and instead just turned up in a red waterproof!

As our experience has grown we have found ourselves in the right place at the right time repeatedly throughout the season, sometimes being able to help foxes get away right under the hunt's nose. At the opening meet a fox ran within metres of two sabs who were able to cover its scent and even though the hunt knew the rough direction it had gone the hounds just couldn't pick up on its scent.

Despite the hunt becoming increasingly paranoid and secretive we've had no problem finding their meets and have been able to keep with them well during the day, even at meets we're unfamiliar with.

The last day of the season was fairly dramatic. We believe the terrier man released a fox shortly before the hunt set off, thankfully the hounds struggled to pick up its scent and ended up on a fresh fox and went the opposite direction to the potential bagged fox. There was foxes all over the place but with sabs around, the hunt struggled to do much proper hunting.



Severn Vale Hunt Sabs

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The first part of the year saw us continuing to support West Midlands Hunt Sabs in their ongoing campaign to bring the Atherstone Hunt to its knees. A particularly violent response from hunt support in response to a peaceful demonstration at their New Year's meet was met with a mass hit at the hunt's next meet. Sabs groups from across the country attended, including Severn Vale and resulted in the hunt not going out at all that day. Sabs 1 Atherstone 0.

We're sure West Midlands Hunt Sabs will have plenty more to say about The Atherstone as this is their campaign, suffice to say we have been happy to take help out any way we can.

Our final outing of the season saw us cross the Welsh border to catch up with South Wales Hunt Sabs, Bristol Hunt Sabs, Bath Hunt Sabs and West Wilts Hunt Sabs for a joint hit on the Woolaston Basset Hounds. News of our approach reached them in advance and they didn't even bother taking the hounds out of the kennels. Exactly the result we'd hoped for. After a short standoff with sabs outnumbering support at the meet, once we were sure no hunting was going to take place we headed off to make it two in a day, finding the Curre and Llangibby on their final meet of the season.

Since then we have focused our energies on making plans for this year's badger cull, sett checking areas we know and sett surveying new areas too. The badger cull could be extended to a further ten zones this year, so more people will be needed on the ground.

If you live in the Severn Vale area and specifically Herefordshire and Gloucestershire and would like to get involved, or you have any info about hunts or the badger cull in these areas please get in touch.

Sheffield Hunt Sabs

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We had a very successful second half of fox-hunting season. We worked with West Yorkshire, Nottingham, North East, Manchester and Liverpool Sabs.

We went and spoilt the day for the High Peak Harriers, who kill hares around beautiful (well, until they appear) Bakewell. This hunt attempted to lose our vehicle a few times but due to some local tips we kept on them. The Claro Beagles we found, again due to a local tip off (respect to the countryside folk who do this, a lot of the time they give in to pressure regarding letting the hunts on their land because they have little choice, due to intimidation). Unfortunately The Claro called in their buddies, North Yorks Police, who threatened us with a section 35 whilst the hunt van scarpered.

We paid a lot of attention to the Middleton Hunt too. Now this hunt have been unreal this season, careering from one disaster to another. The huntsman, Charles Carter was filmed telling a member of the public, "I'd quite like to shag you," after she confronted him and his cronies for chasing a fox. He then lost his standing as a Tory Councillor and even his "friends" in the hunt where sarcastic about him - in front of us! Then sabs where attacked on one of their meets (can't say any more at this time, obviously).

Two days on from this the Middleton met again, mid-week. One of our sabs, having finished work early chose to show up and let them know that we won't be deterred by violence. It was fortunate that he did, because he discovered the hunt at the edge of a small wood with the huntsman off his horse, which is never a good sign. An earth was found in the wood with hound prints and footprints around the entrance. The terrier men returned twice but left as soon as they saw our brave sab was still there.

And, to finish the season, on their last Saturday meet, with a high police presence, they took the full pack of hounds across the busiest road in the area, with no spotters. A car then ploughed into the pack and killed at least 3 hounds outright, with others injured in the road. We think this hunt will be having a major reshuffle this summer and Lord Middleton and the Countryside Alliance will be hoping for no more repeats of these disasters.

Now all our energies are going into preparing for the 5th year of the Badger Cull. Welcome to our new sabs this season - and to ones returning after a hiatus of 20+ years – you're all great! If you want to get involved in helping us please email or message the facebook page.





South Coast Hunt Sabs

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So the bumpkins read Howl and Group News, because no sooner do we declare that we need a second Land Rover than our beloved red Land Rover is stolen (sob)! So beaten down and defeated we stopped sabbing...NOT! Thanks to our comrades in Brighton, Croydon and Southampton we went out each week in cars and used seats in their vehicles. The theft was reported to Sussex cops who never even bothered to call back.

Following a highly publicised kill the Old Surrey, Burstow & West Kent had stopped going out on Saturdays to avoid us; then we heard that their huntsman and all round scumbag Mark Bycroft was leaving at the end of the season. Their hunt ball was also publicised so we helped organise a demo and with the help of social media got the booked band (who had been told it was a charity event) to cancel and the garage which was sponsoring the event also withdraw support. In the end the demo had 100 people attend and not a single blood junkie got in without being told what the majority of the public think of them.

Alongside this, we had gone into overdrive on fund raising and within 6 weeks of the theft had raised enough to buy a new vehicle. A big thank you to all of those who donated to us (some very large amounts), you know who you are and we very much appreciate your financial support.

Last sab of the season saw a day trip to the Isle of Wight, all our hunts had closed but the Isle of Wight Fox Hunt had one last meet. The HSA covered all groups' ferry costs (thanks HSA) so alongside our usual mates, off we went. They were as expected: very violent, one of our female sabs received a head injury from a whip and a quad bike rammed one of our cars. The police of course were very useless and did nothing, but we ensure there were no kills that day.

Finally, we are pleased to report we now have a new Landy and it's as good if not better than our last one which had been through the wars. No photos yet as we don't want the blood junkies to see it just yet. And with all the new support, we may still need a second one...!!!

Southampton Hunt Sabs

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It's been a successful season for us here at Southampton Sabs but it hasn't been without its additional struggles. We started the season without our trusty Landy but still managed to get out and about across the south to sab meets during cubbing and main season by working collectively with other local groups.

Once back on the road we set about sabotaging all the usual suspects and were joined by several new Sabs this season. More boots on the ground are very welcome.

We then unfortunately suffered a break in to the Landy not too long after being back up and running. This meant that we were then without our screen camera and some vital kit for the Landy and its maintenance. This was quite a blow, but it will take so much more than that to keep us from saving lives.

We paid many visits to hunts such as the Crawley and Horsham, the Surrey Union, the Southdown and Eridge, the Tedworth and the Old Surrey Burstow and West Kent who were all up to their usual vile ways. We witnessed the use of a bagged fox, injured hounds, injured horses, the use of horses as weapons and general violence towards Sabs from these hunts. There have also been several changes across these hunts this season and next, including a hall of shame/rogues gallery leaver in the form of the Huntsman, Mark Bycroft from the Old Surrey Burstow and West Kent. We will see what evil joins them for next season, sadly.

We went on to close the season with many sabs from multiple groups to sab the Isle of Wight Foxhounds. Needless to say they were not expecting us. Sabs from the IOW had previously witnessed a kill so we wanted to remind the murdering scum on the island that they are not out of sab's sights and will be sabbed the same as any other. It was a long day of somewhere in the region of 12 - 15 miles on foot with no sign of even any fake attempts at trail laying. There was violence towards sabs almost from the off including a hospitalised sab and then vehicle damage, mistreatment of hounds and horses, and vehicle blocking from the hunt along with a whole lot of threatening verbal abuse and attempts at intimidation from the hunt and their staff, with very minimal support throughout. Suffice to say they're an 'orrible bunch, but all sab groups went the distance as always, which made for a kill free day.

The summer months will see us protecting wildlife from slaughter wherever we can. Massive thanks to all we've worked with and to all those who have supported us and continue to do so. Until next season...

Love and rage
Southampton Sabs



South Wales Hunt Sabs

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Building on a good start to the season and now with our new wheels, we were up and at 'em for the remainder of the season. In an attempt to win the trophy for most well rounded sab group, we sabbed basset, beagle and harrier packs, as well as shoots and fox hunts. One day, along with our comrades from Bristol and Bath, we fitted in two hunts and two shoots. Everyone slept well that night.

Our group is going from strength to strength, building knowledge, experience and the ability to keep a cool head when all about are frothing and threatening – apparently that's the two main skills needed to be a hunt supporter these days.

We're now limbering up ready to deal with this year's badger culls – getting surveying done now so that when the killing starts, we know where we need to be.

Thanks as always to everyone who has supported us in any way this season. We couldn't do it without you.

Three Counties Hunt Sabs

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At the time of writing it's the end of season over in the Three Counties and it has been a busy one! From doing early-morning sett-blocking patrols to catching packs of hounds like those of the Heythrop Hunt chasing foxes to stopping hunt terrier men like those from the North Cotswold Hunt digging out active badger setts, we've been kept busy almost all week, every week, since the start of the season.

We visit the Ledbury and Cotswold Vale Farmers at nearly all of their meets, getting along to the Heythrop, North Cotswold, Ross Harriers, Croome, Cotswold, Beaufort and VWH when we can, whilst keeping a close eye on South Herefordshire Hunt goings-on. A huge thank you to everyone who has supported us :)

We've had the pleasure of supporting the wonderful Cirencester Illegal Hunt Watch and Welsh Border Sabs as well as joining up with friends who monitor the Bicester and Kimblewick Hunts. We also had a visit from an old Ledbury huntsman, Will Goffe, who now hunts the Warwickshire hounds who met with the Ledbury towards the end of season. Plenty of footage of illegal hunting from that day!

It certainly hasn't been an uneventful season as we have had tyres slashed, cameras damaged and two groups of our sabs were attacked at two different hunts on the same day in December.

With new badger culling zones being considered in the area, we're helping local people to set up groups in different areas to combat wider wildlife persecution whether it be culling, badger baiting, snaring and so on. We already work well with a number of people who get out to check on setts and walk their dogs while keeping an eye on their local hunts - this is the way forward!

We're also getting to various events and talks as well as hosting public events to help raise awareness of different issues. It's set to be a busy summer!



West Midlands Hunt Sabs

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We had a very eventful end to the season, on the 2nd January. The Atherstone Hunt held their New Year's Day meet in Atherstone Market Square. Anti-hunt protestors occupied the centre of the Market Square preventing the hunt from gathering there. The hunt and their supporters soon turned violent and began to assault the peaceful protestors, stealing their banners and belongings, and throwing manure at them. Two members of the hunt's board of directors and two town councillors stood by and watched the violence happen. Warwickshire Police decided not to police the event and so are at least partly to blame for what happened. In fact, since the incident, Warwickshire Police have actively tried to cover up the events with officers investigating complaints about themselves and then clearing themselves of any wrongdoing! Anyone would think that Warwickshire Police decided not to police the event on purpose in the hope that sabs and anti-hunt protestors would get hurt...

Not long after the New Year's Day violence we filmed the Atherstone Hunt chasing and killing a fox. Huntsman Barton and the hounds raced up a road after a fox eventually killing it in someone's garden. Sabs tried to save the fox and managed to get the fox away from the hounds however it died shortly afterwards in a sab's arms...

These incidents plus other violence by the Atherstone, resulted in the Atherstone Hunt being in the national media over 80 times. The Atherstone ended the season in complete chaos, having made a huge financial loss due to the constant presence of sabs, they've had no terrier man, no whipper-in and huntsman Stuart Barton was fired towards the end of the season. He has since decided to sue the hunt for lack of earnings. There are various ongoing police investigations into the Atherstone Hunt.

West Sussex Hunt Sabs

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We were all ready to see the end of another long and very hard season for our small group. Our thanks go to our friends from South Coast, Croydon, Brighton, North Downs and Guildford Hunt Sabs, for all their help (and cakes). The season was everything we expected from the Crawley & Horsham Fox Hunt; illegal hunting, violence, abuse, and threats. We suffered damage to our vehicle and even with irrefutable evidence the police did nothing.

During a meet in November we found terrier men busily digging out, they were so terrified by the two female monitors approaching them they ran off leaving their shovel behind. We saw the return of hunt supporter Wayne Spencer, one of the most violent men we have ever encountered. We had seen him sneaking about during the season, however during the New Year's Day meet 31/12/16 he made his presence known. With evidence from several video cameras of his threatening and abusive behaviour towards sabs during this meet the police still decided a quiet word with him was enough.

Although we focused our attentions mainly on the C&H we also took time out to visit the Chiddingfold, Leconfield & Cowdray Hunt, and we took the ferry over to The Isle Of Wight several times to sab the I.O.W hunt. The island now has its very own sab group and we extend our very best wishes to them. We will be busy over the summer working alongside other groups to stop the badger cull and mink hunts. We will also spend as much time as possible working with the Anti-Snaring campaign and checking for traps.

Get in contact if you would like to get involved or for more information on how to save wildlife.

THE KEYBOARD WARRIOR

How to cause havoc to the hunting community from the safety or your own home.



The keyboard warrior strikes again...

Those who read my last article will know that I am enough of a coward not to actually sab, but behind my keyboard I can help those heroic people out in the field and maybe feel a little reflected heroism myself (well, in my mind!)...

The point is that we can have an effect on hunting by using social media to highlight and hassle those who get their kicks from killing animals. With the end of the hunting season there was to be less for me to do, or so I thought; then along came the Cruella de May's grand plan for a Britain under her 'Jodhpur Jackboot'.

Now, as we know, pro-hunters just aren't good on maths and despite being told time and again that 84% plus of the populace hated hunting, she thought it would be a vote winner to propose yet another vote to repeal the ban, not learning from Mr Cameron's mistakes.

It makes you feel that they are so closeted from real life that they cannot see the reality of the world - which would explain a lot.

Anyway, this gave me a great excuse to highlight all pro-hunt MPs, and make sure their constituents and potential voters know about their support for killing our wildlife. I even threw in a few quid to Facebook to target my posts in the area those who were standing in marginal seats.



But I digress. The point is, this is great if you have a large Facebook following for your personal page or group. 'You don't leave the house!' I hear you cry, 'Why would people like you?!' Well, there is a great tool called Facebook Fan Inviter, which only works in the Chrome Browser and costs just under £8.

This neat bit of code wanders through your Facebook posts and when it finds someone who has liked a post, but not your page, it sends an invite to them to 'like' that too. There is a limit of just over 400 invites a day set up by Facebook but run it each day and you start to build your page very quickly, assuming you are creating posts yourself each day. This is a great way to build real support for sabbing posts very quickly.

So come the next election, expect those marginals to be hit once more and make sure we make hunters know what we think of their scummy ways.

The only thing necessary for the triumph of evil is that good people do nothing.

The Keyboard Warrior

UNMASKED: PHILLIP DAVIES

OF THE COUNTRYSIDE ALLIANCE

You are unlikely to spot Phillip Davies out in the hunting field: he prefers to operate in the shadows. However, if you are one of the growing number of sabs to have been threatened or nicked under Sections 35 or 60AA, then you have felt his influence.



Davies is the Countryside Alliance's Police Liaison Officer. HOWL readers will be unsurprised to learn that he was himself a police officer for many years, joining the force in 1980 in South Wales and later moving to Dyffed Powys where he became a Chief Inspector in 2001. He retired in 2010, spent a leisurely year shooting birds out of the sky then joined the Countryside Alliance. His job involves trying to undermine the Hunting Act and frustrate the work of the HSA, Stop The Cull and other anti-hunt groups.

One of Our Own

Davies' key role is to influence policing policy in relation to hunting. To this end, he has inveigled his way onto various advisory bodies and attends policing events up and down the country. One such event was the National Police Chief Council's conference which took place in Derby on 16th March 2016. Here, Davies delivered a twenty minute talk entitled 'Hunting without Harassment' in which he went out of his way to portray hunt sabs as dangerous and violent criminals. In particular, he called for an increase in the use of both Section 35 anti-social behaviour dispersal orders and Section 60AA powers (which compel protesters to remove face coverings) against hunt saboteurs.

It is of concern to the HSA that Davies is attempting to influence senior police officers who he may very well have come to know professionally - or even personally - during his lengthy police career. As every sab knows, the police are - to put it mildly - an extremely conservative and insular organisation and, at the conference, they were receptive to the message of someone they obviously regarded as 'one of our own'.

The HSA wonders why police forces are prepared to invite an obviously biased speaker from a pressure group such as the CA to address them on a controversial issue like hunting.

> Trying to prevent breaches of the Hunting Act is quite clearly not "anti-social behaviour" and the police must stop routinely treating it as such.

To illustrate the sheer hypocrisy and duplicity of Davies' attempt to criminalise sabs, let's just look at some examples of hunt violence from around the time of Davies' talk in Derby. On March 10th, less than a week before the NPCC conference, masked followers of the Ross Harriers used an iron bar to smash the windows of an occupied sab vehicle. Footage from the incident shows one individual wearing a full balaclava, the other a skull mask of the type popular with neo-nazi groups such as the EDL. Three days after Davies' talk, on the 19th March, a masked-up gang from the Middleton Foxhounds launched a vicious and sustained attack on North East Hunt Sabs at Skirpenbeck, North Yorkshire. A mounted redcoat blocked the road, while thugs used spades to smash the windscreen and windows of the car. Two months later came perhaps the most brutal attack of the season when a balaclava-clad mob assaulted sabs at the Cheldon Buckhounds on Exmoor. One sab sustained a fractured skull, others were beaten unconscious and had their cameras stolen. The national press covered this incident extensively and carried photos of both the masked hunt thugs and a badly injured sab - blood pouring down his (unmasked) face from a serious head wound. It's clear who the dangerous and violent criminals are.

Kevin Blowe, coordinator for the Network for Police Monitoring (Netpol), who attended the Derby conference, commented to HOWL:

"Davies' eagerness to see a wide extension of the use of Section 35 anti-social behaviour dispersal powers immediately set alarm bells ringing for us. Under these powers, individuals face exclusion from an area for up to 48 hours.

There is growing evidence this is misused as a new weapon against people already frequently targeted for harassment by the police. Section 35 is also increasingly used against anyone exercising their democratic right to freedom of assembly with absolutely no public oversight.

Trying to document and prevent breaches of the Hunting Act is quite clearly not "anti-social behaviour" and the police must stop routinely treating it as such.

Mr Davies' efforts at the conference to portray anti-hunt groups as violent criminals seemed like a rather crude attempt by the Countryside Alliance to try to co-opt local police forces as its own private security. Unfortunately, in some parts of the country, that is exactly what we are witnessing."

We've Got You on File

If you are one of those sabs who choose not to wear a mask, or you are a LACS investigator, then your mugshot is likely to end up in Davies' files. If you are really lucky your face will feature in the illustrated talk he delivers to bodies such as the Masters of Foxhounds Association (MFHA) and the Association of Masters of Harriers & Beagles (AMHB). Photographs of sabs and monitors have also been reproduced on postcards and distributed to hunts, and many hunt supporters appear to have these images on their phones too. At a time when even non-interventionist monitors are being targeted and attacked, the distribution of these images is another serious concern. HOWL readers will recall that a LACS investigator had his neck broken by masked thugs at the Belvoir Hunt back in March, while other LACS operatives have had sophisticated tracking devices attached to their cars by persons unknown.

Yet another aspect of Davies' role is to gather intelligence on the likelihood of the HSA turning up at major events such as hunting festivals. He is particularly bad at this aspect of his job, and has been unable to counter our most annoying habit: our unpredictability. We can - and do - turn up anywhere and Davies has failed to provide forewarning on several occasions when the HSA has sabotaged set-piece events such as Severn Vale Hare Week. Rumour has it that the organisers of this festival were furious with Davies after he incorrectly assured them they would be 'safe' from sab attention!

What's In a Name?

One of the reasons that people like Davies get away with 'advising' the police is that the Countryside Alliance has learnt to present itself as 'the voice of countryside'. This, of course, is absolute bollocks. For sixty seven years the organisation now known as the Countryside Alliance was called the British Field Sports Society and its sole purpose was to defend hunting with hounds and hare coursing. The 'Countryside Alliance' green-washing occurred in 1997 as a response to the Labour election victory and the looming threat of a hunt ban. In a cynical attempt to widen its support the BFSS/CA tried to portray such a ban as a general attack on rural life. However, those suffering from real rural issues - poverty, isolation, lack of affordable housing - quickly learnt that the CA offers them nothing.

Just look at the CA's Board: it is comprised almost exclusively of hunting fanatics who will never accept that their 'sport' has been banned. These include chairman Simon Hart (former master of the South Pembrokeshire Hunt and current Tory MP), chief executive Tim Bonner (former master of the Wye College Beagles), Lizzie Pinney (Director of the AMHB), and vice-chair Lord Mancroft (former master of the VWH Foxhounds, current chair of the MFHA and, by an extraordinary coincidence, also vice-chair of the former BFSS).

The CA's membership, too, is very far from being a representative cross-section of the rural population. The fact is that every single registered hunt in the country requires evidence of CA membership as a pre-condition to subscribing or even joining the Hunt Supporters Club. In other words, the CA is a pressure group very largely comprising people directly involved in hunting with hounds. Given that hunting was banned in this country over ten years ago, the police should be extremely suspicious of the CA's activities, not inviting its representatives to 'advise' them or speak at their conferences. The police would also do well to remind themselves of the CA-orchestrated Hunting Declaration Day on 1st November 2003. This unprecedented event saw 37,000 hunt supporters publicly sign declarations that they would break any future law that banned hunting. Some of these aspiring criminals also threatened to escalate their campaign by poisoning reservoirs and burning down forests!

Collusion in the Countryside?

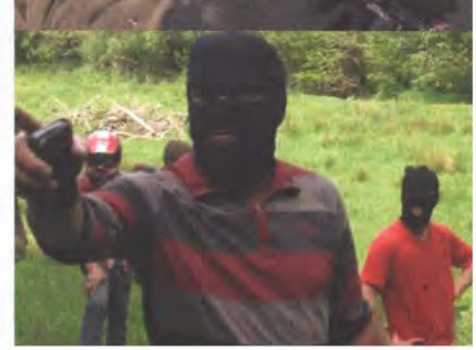
As its Police Liaison Officer, Phillip Davies is at the heart of a disturbingly close relationship between the police and the Countryside Alliance. The Derby conference perfectly illustrates how the police are only too willing to let the CA set the agenda and dictate how they approach policing the Hunting Act and hunt saboteurs. This explains why we see a total disinterest in policing hunts, yet endless resources made available when it comes to harassing hunt saboteurs. The police are either too stupid to see the CA for what it is, or they are intimidated into doing the bidding of the powerful and influential people - including Lords and MPs - that lie behind it.

All the while, foxes, hares, deer and mink are still being hunted and killed in the British countryside, while those trying to save them continue to face arrest, assault or even worse.









GAME BIRD REARING

FACTORY FARMING IN THE NAME OF SPORT

If you think 'gamebird' shooting forms part of a rural idyll, with shooters (or 'guns' as they are known) venturing into the countryside to grab a pheasant for the pot, you are much mistaken.

Approximately 35 million pheasants and partridges are released every single year to be shot, according to the British Association for Shooting and Conservation (BASC). Despite being a common sight in the countryside of the UK, neither the common pheasant nor the red-legged partridge are native birds, with pheasants originating from Asia and the red-legged partridge from southwestern Europe. When released, the pheasant becomes the UK's most numerous 'wild' bird with their population eclipsing that of the wren, who has the next largest population of an estimated 8.5 million breeding pairs. The scale of the cruelty inflicted by the vast shooting industry (and it is just that, an industry) is hard to fully comprehend and begins in the laying, hatching and rearing processes used to produce such a huge number of 'gamebirds'.

"The scale of the cruelty inflicted by the vast shooting industry is hard to fully comprehend."

Hundreds of thousands of pheasants and partridges spend their entire productive lives in tiny, metal battery cages not dissimilar to those used for egg laying hens. However, as opposed to egg laying hens, there is no minimum legal space requirement for caged pheasants and partridges. Each cage typically houses eight to ten females and one male. Females often develop wounds to their backs from repetitive mating from the males.

Stress from a life of incarceration leads to feather pecking, sores on the birds' feet due to the wire mesh flooring and 'scalping'; a term used by the industry to describe the birds' head damage received by repeatedly striking their heads against the top of the cage in futile attempts to escape. The industry's answer to the problem of stress-induced aggression and feather-pecking is to trim the birds' beaks or to put a 'bit' or a mask onto the bird. These cruel devices are fitted by driving a pin through the nasal septum and have already been made illegal for use on poultry.

Devices known as 'spectacles' are also used which block the forward vision of the birds and are meant to deter feather-pecking and cannibalism.

Some pheasant chicks are crammed into boxes and are sold on to other rearing farms at a day old. Others are reared on site and are sold off to shoots at 7 to 8 weeks old.





Game farms also pose a very serious risk in terms of disease. During the recent outbreak of H5N8 avian 'flu, at least four pheasant rearing facilities in Lancashire were put under DEFRA special measures after the virus was detected at three of them. At one of the farms, all 10,000 pheasants kept there either died from the disease or were culled as a result (the vast majority culled). Two of the farms had birds culled before H5N8 was even detected. The very nature of 'gamebird' shooting is prone to spreading disease, as bio-security throughout the process is extremely limited. Birds are hatched and reared at huge densities and around 5 million pheasant poults are imported from overseas into the UK each year. They are then released into the wild where they come into contact with farmed poultry and wild birds and are then shot and either eaten or simply discarded. Surviving birds are then 'caught up:' that is to say they are re-captured and placed back into farms for breeding.

This continual cycle of intensive farming and release is an almost perfect method by which diseases such as avian flu can spread.

It's not just 'gamebirds' who suffer at the hands of the shooting industry. The process of rearing these birds to be shot also includes the persecution of a wide variety of wild species. Foxes are routinely killed, due to their predation of 'gamebirds'. Gamekeepers and farmers go out shooting foxes at night with bright lights, known as 'lamping' and set snares or fox traps in close vicinity to game farms and release pens. Horrific spring-loaded devices known as Fenn traps are used to kill rats, stoats, weasels and squirrels. Rabbits, hares, deer and pigeons are also shot as a matter of routine to stop them damaging 'cover crops,' small patches of crops sewn specifically to keep 'gamebirds' in one particular place.

Game shooting has grown enormously in the UK over the past few years and the horrors that take place within game farms have continued to take place largely unbeknownst to the general public. The shooting lobby is very keen to promote shooting as a way to produce 'ethical' meat (an oxymoron in and of itself) as shooters go out and kill a few wild birds to eat. The reality is that nothing could be further from the truth. Pheasants and partridges are intensively reared in factory farms, often having been shipped in from overseas and suffer greatly all throughout their unnatural lives. With the modern rise of commercial shooting and the pressure to provide more and more birds to shoot on a given day (the number of birds shot often being around 200/300 a day), comes more intense suffering by 'gamebirds' and wildlife alike. It is our job, as both hunt saboteurs and decent members of the public to put an end to this horrifying industry and as a result save millions of animals from persecution.



FIVE (GROUPS) GO MAD ON THE ISLAND

Eton Blighted



In March four sab groups (Brighton, Croydon, Southampton and South Coast) decided to join their chums, the Isle of Wight sabs, and expose the wrong-doings of the Isle of Wight Foxhounds. Up at the crack of dawn, the groups ventured onto a ferry to take the exciting trip, delighted to be meeting up with their Island counter-parts.



A jolly day ensued with the hunt frustrated by the pesky kids, who always seemed to turn up where they were least expected! Most riders seemed confused and bewildered, as well as hopelessly outnumbered; whilst the foot support were even more disgruntled.

Sadly, a couple of these local villains (nicknamed 'Bad Santa & Son') seemed intent on attacking the plucky sabs; blocking their way and physically attacking them; unfortunately this did not end well for them. When a female sab was deliberately whipped, a kerfuffle ensued, with the miscreant being given a well-deserved drubbing by several other sabs.

Also, when a hunting horn was snatched in a very ungentlemanly way from a sab it was only a matter of time before the perpetrator was shown the error of his ways, the misunderstanding resolved and the horn was returned to its rightful owner.

'You youngsters are very organised,' a local constable observed.
'Well,' explained one of the five, 'I used to work for the Police at a jolly high level!'
'Goodness, young sir, what made you leave?'
'You are all a bunch of corrupt bastards,' the sab explained.

The constable scratched his head and smiled, ruefully. He gave no reply until the end of the day when he confirmed that, 'you youngsters have certainly spoilt the Hunt's day and no mistake.'

In jubilant mood, sabs had a photograph taken whilst they had a slap-up picnic outside Carisbrooke Castle and then made their way back to the ferry.





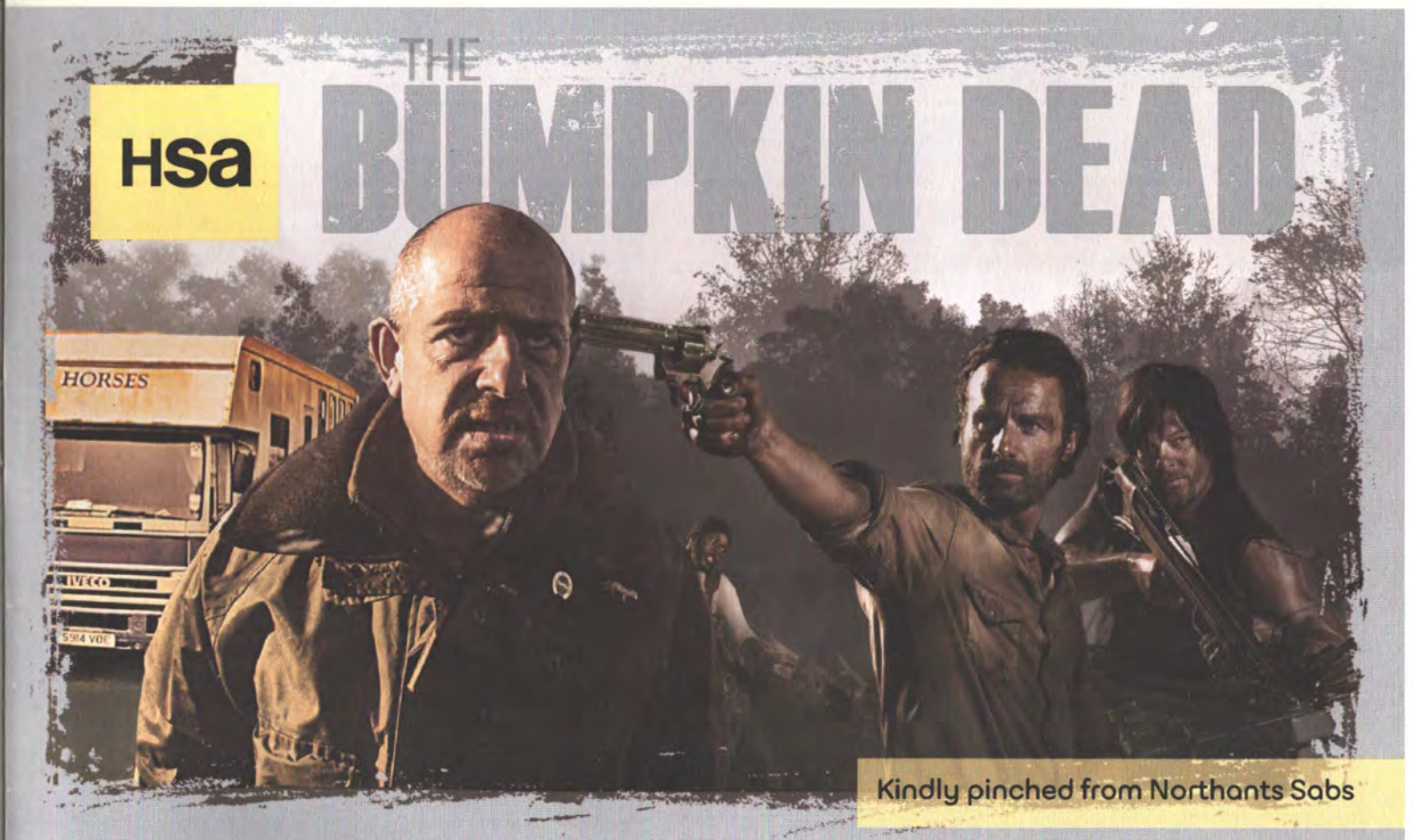
The injured sab, as well as her plucky driver (who had had his car rammed and damaged by the hunt hoodlums) joined her comrades in partaking of several medicinal ginger beers on the journey home.

Despite the later attempts of hunt ne'er-do-wells to say that this was inappropriate behaviour, other ferry passengers exclaimed that the sabs were jolly sensible at all times, even going as far as giving them a rousing 'huzzah!' as they left the ferry.

Sabs had a great day out, enjoyed meeting their Island friends and were all keen to repeat this jolly wheeze if they should be invited, or needed, by their Isle of Wight chums.

All were keen to give their grateful thanks to the spiffing support given by the HSA, who paid for the ferry fees and enabled this jolly adventure to go ahead

– Thank you chaps and chapesses!



Kindly pinched from Northants Sabs

Email us your favourite, dribbling, undead bumpkin pictures and we'll feature the best....space permitting!

HOW YOU CAN HELP END BLOODSPORTS

Organisations such as the Countryside Alliance are backed by some of the richest people in Britain, and can spend millions on advertising and paid campaigners. Their wealth and power gives them a stranglehold over most of the media and some of the most influential people in government.

The Hunt Saboteurs Association, in comparison, runs solely on funds from you, the public, who keep the organisation afloat with donations and membership. It depends on the small band of volunteers who give over their spare time to keep the HSA running smoothly, produce leaflets and salesgoods, staff stalls, manage websites/social media and deal with the press. And most importantly of all it depends on the dedication of the men and women who, week in, week out, defy the hunts on their own turf, and in the face of increasing violence and police powers, *still* manage to save the lives of thousands of hunted animals every year.

There are several ways you can help the HSA.

- Get in touch with your local sab group (details from the office) and either go sabbing yourself or help in other ways such as fundraising, mechanics or donating financially.
- If you are not already a member of the HSA, please join now by using the form below - or join online at www.huntsabs.org.uk/index.php/get-involved/join-the-hsa
- If you are already a HSA member then please photocopy the form and pass it on to someone else you think may like to join us.
- Ask the office for back copies of HOWL to leave in places where they can be read by members of the public (ie. doctors waiting rooms). If you are still at school or college why not leave a copy in the library reference section?
- Support us by buying HSA T-shirts and other merchandise - see enclosed salesgoods catalogue or visit www.huntsabs.org.uk/index.php/merchandise
- Let the hunters know what you think! Like us on Facebook, follow us on Twitter, contact your local newspaper's letters page and your MP to let them know your views on Government plans either regarding hunting or hunt saboteurs.



HSA MEMBERSHIP / DONATION FORM

PHOTOCOPIES WELCOME

I would like to become an active / supporting* member of the Hunt Saboteurs Association
(**delete one*)

I enclose my membership subscription of: (*tick one*)

❒ £20 (1 year subscription) ❒ £200 life membership

❒ I enclose a donation of £..... to help fund the HSA's work

Name.....

Address .....

.....

..... Postcode .....

Telephone Number.....

Email.....

Cheques / PO's should be made payable to "HSA".

Please return to HSA, BM HSA, London WC1N 3XX

For a standing order form, to pay via paypal, or for more information please email us - info@huntsabs.org.uk or visit www.huntsabs.org.uk

USEFUL ADDRESSES

Animal Justice Project
www.animaljusticeproject.com

Animal Liberation Front Supporters Group (ALF SG)
PO Box 1107, Northampton, NN7 9BT
info@alfsg.org.uk www.alfsg.org.uk

ARPS (Animal Rights Prisoner Support)
PO Box 2174, LEIGH-ON-SEA, SS9 0AZ
www.arprisoners.org
info@arprisoners.org

The Black Fish
www.theblackfish.org info@theblackfish.org

The Coalition to Abolish the Fur Trade (CAFT)
PO Box 38, Manchester, M60 1NX
0845 330 7955 caft@caft.org.uk www.caft.org.uk

Digging Out (Campaign for the Abolition of Terrier Work)
BCM Digging Out, London, WC1N 3XX
info@diggingout.org www.diggingout.org

Earth First!
www.earthfirst.org.uk www.eco-action.org

The Fox Project
The Lodge, Kings Toll Road, Pembury, Kent, TN2 4BE
01892 842111 mon-fri 9am-12 noon
fox@foxproject.org.uk www.foxproject.org.uk

Hounds Off
PO Box 162, Shaftesbury, Dorset, SP7 7AZ
www.houndsoff.co.uk

Hunt Watch
PO Box 487, Norwich, NR5 8WE
07952 550054 contact@huntwatch.info www.huntwatch.info

The National Anti-Snaring Campaign (NASC)
PO Box 3058, Littlehampton, West Sussex, BN16 3LG
info@antisnaring.org.uk www.antisnaring.org.uk 07580455223

National Fox Welfare Society
135 Higham Road, Rushden, Northants, NN10 6DS
01933 411996 natfox@ntlworld.com www.nfws.org.uk

POWA (Protect Our Wild Animals)
enquiries@powa.org.uk www.powa.org.uk

Sea Shepherd
Sea Shepherd UK, 27 Old Gloucester Street, London WC1N 3AX
Tel: 0300 111 0501 admin@seashepherduk.org
www.seashepherd.org.uk

SPEAK Campaigns
PO Box 6712, Northampton, NN2 6XR
0845 330 7985 07906 497317 info@speakcampaigns.org
www.speakcampaigns.org

Stop the Cull
www.badger-killers.co.uk

Vegan Prisoner Support Group (VPSG)
BM 2107, London, WC1N 3XX info@vpsg.org www.vpsg.org

The Vegan Society
Donald Watson House, 21 Hylton Street, Hockley, Birmingham, B18 6HJ 0121 523 1730 0845 458 8244
info@vegansociety.com www.vegansociety.com

Veggies Animal Rights Calendar
www.veggies.org.uk/arc

save us some dosh if you're moving!

If you move house please tell us. The HSA has a disproportionate number of returned envelopes due to unknown addresses, this inevitably means wasted funds.

Please make sure we have your current address!





HELP SAVE A LIFE AFTER YOUR DEATH

REMEMBER THE HUNT SABOTEURS ASSOCIATION IN YOUR WILL

You may think that it is not worth your while making a Will but you may be surprised at how much you are worth, especially if you own your own home. Most people in this country die without making a Will and that means that the government gets more than their fair share. Making a Will need not be complicated or time consuming and it could save your loved ones a lot of unnecessary heartache. If you do not have a Will when you die there is no guarantee that those closest to you will benefit from your wealth and property. In addition, many people like to know that the organisations they support whilst alive will continue to benefit after their death.

The Hunt Saboteurs Association relies entirely on the generosity of its membership to function. As the organisation strives to function on minimal running costs more of the money coming in can be put to good use where it counts most – in the hunting field. Leaving a gift to the H.S.A. in your Will helps to ensure that the good work carried out by active hunt saboteurs can continue. With a ban now in place, and so many hunts blatantly flouting it, the role of sabs has never been more important, so your gift will still be put to good use – the HSA will continue until no sentient creatures are abused in the name of sport.

A Will is a legally binding document and needs to be prepared properly. The services of a solicitor should be employed. A solicitor is the only person who can give professionally qualified advice. Have a look in Yellow Pages (under 'Solicitors') or call the Law Society on *020 7242 1222*. If you already have a Will you can include a gift to the H.S.A. by adding an amendment (known as a 'codicil') – you will need to consult your solicitor about this.

If you are able to remember the H.S.A. in your Will it would help if you could let us know.

I plan to / have already prepared a Will and have remembered the Hunt Saboteurs Association as follows (please tick as appropriate):

☐ **Residual Legacy** - a percentage of my estate once my family and friends have been provided for.

☐ **Pecuniary Legacy** - a cash gift of £.....

☐ **Specific Gift** - an individual item of value e.g. jewellery.

Name.....

Address.....

.....Postcode.....

Signature.....

Date.....

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- INSPIRING A NEW GENERATION

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- GUARD LAND "EYES & EARS"
- EVIDENCE GATHERING*

WORKING TOGETHER
SENSE OF BELONGING

THEY HELP YOU:
- SANCTUARY FOR SABS
- VEHICLE PARKING
- RESOURCES | FUNDRAISING
- "EYES & EARS"
- CAKE! IMPORTANT

MEETS
GOSSIP
NEWS

INFLUENCE PEOPLE

SUCCESS BREEDS SUCCESS – WORD SPREADS
INVOLVE NEIGHBOURS & FRIENDS "UNITED WE STAND"

HUNTS:
- MIGHT TRY IT ON
- MIGHT AVOID THE AREA

→ REINFORCE "WARNING OFF LETTER" (SEE: HOUNDS OFF – NEXT STEPS)

DIFFICULT AT TIMES
FUNDAMENTAL DIFFERENCES
BUT REMEMBER & REMIND:
HUNTING WITH HOUNDS
IS ILLEGAL

← ESTABLISH & CULTIVATE RELATIONSHIP WITH POLICE* WORK TOGETHER

PUBLIC ORDER NOT HUNTING ACT
DISTRESS HARASSMENT + ALARM

LANDOWNER/SABS COMBINED EFFORTS

HUNT STEERS CLEAR

RESULT!

HUNT SABOTEURS ASSOCIATION

www.huntsabs.org.uk