The Magazine of The Hunt Saboteurs Association Autumn 2018 (Issue 118) £2 (free to members)

HOWL

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

The Inglorious 12th!



Operation Blackthorn Policing

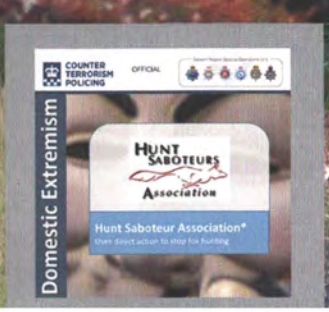
Tactics: Gizmo or GizNO!

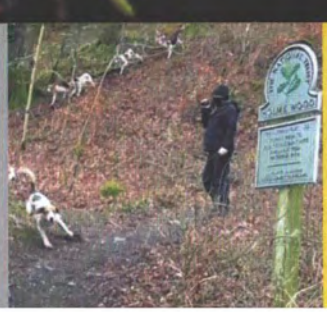
National Dis-Trust

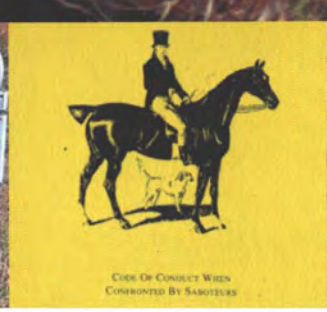
Back in the day: Surrey Union Hunt

Group News













LETTER FROM THE CHAIR:

As I write we are close to the start of the badger culling season; I call it a "season" as it has now become an annual event just like fox or hare hunting. I fully expect to hear the Countryside Alliance spouting off that it is now part of a rural tradition not understood by 'townies.'

The Countryside Alliance have recently been pushing a campaign to end on-line bullying of rural residents. On the face of it a worthwhile campaign but, as usual, they have an ulterior motive. Hunt saboteurs have long been on the receiving end of serious physical, verbal and online abuse from people in the hunting community but nowhere in the CA's campaign release is this mentioned. They complain about online abuse and deaths threats yet these are very frequently directed at anti-hunt people. The problem is that, with over 80% of the population against hunting, there will always be a small proportion of people who send aggressive messages, but are not part of any organised campaign against hunting. However, the abuse and death threats the HSA alone receives is easily traced back to people heavily involved in hunting.

The real aim of their campaign is to prevent, or reduce, legitimate campaigns highlighting companies and other organisations who support and prop up hunting. They wish to stop the highlighting of links to groups like the Pony Club and hotels who host hunt balls etc. As always, they claim to be the voice of the countryside, yet a 2016 survey by Ipsos MORI showed that 82% of people living in rural areas were found to oppose fox hunting. The Countryside Alliance exists to support a blood-thirsty minority who have no real support outside their own circles. They do not speak for the rural community.

Just last week hunt sabs were part of a successful campaign to close down two large grouse shoots on the not-so-Glorious 12th. The action saw over seventy sabs swamp the shoots and much fury was directed our way via social media. The press response was mostly positive with other anti-hunt groups now taking up the mantle against shooting for sport which we have pushed relentlessly for many decades. Grouse shooting is under serious threat as the public are increasingly aware of the huge cruelty and environmental damage they cause . Hopefully the sustained effort will finally pay off and we will see the end of the slaughter of grouse each year. As always, hunt sabs and the HSA will be at the sharp end of that campaign.

Cub hunting has started in many areas and, by the time you read this, full hunting will be underway. Please give a thought to sab groups across the country who will be getting up early to save our wildlife each week and will be facing another long season of real threats and abuse, not just some text on the screen. Your support of the HSA and local hunt saboteur groups is as vital as ever.

A big thank you to Joe Hashman, founder of Hounds Off (www.houndsoff.co.uk), who kindly attended our AGM and gave a fascinating speech on his experiences combating hunting, as a hunt sab and beyond. Hounds Off is a free online resource designed to help homeowners, landowners and tenants to protect their properties, livestock and pets from hunt trespass.

Finally, we now have a tip-off hotline (07443 148426). Put the number in your phone and if you have any info on hunting, shooting or animal cruelty of any description, ring us. Any information received is 100% confidential.

HSA Chair



photo: © www.richardbowlerwildlifephotography.com

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The Hunt Saboteurs Association has been in existence for over 55 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.

Editor Ed
Contributors All groups who sent group news in.
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The views expressed in Howl do not necessarily reflect those of the editor(s) or the Hunt Saboteurs Association Committee. Nothing printed should be construed as HSA policy unless so stated. Nothing in Howl should be taken as encouragement to commit illegal acts.

Howl is printed on 100% recycled paper using vegetable inks.

EDITORIAL

There was a time when the autumn edition of HOWL could be a little slender, with not too much to report from the quiet summer months. Those days are long gone and, as sabbing goes from strength to strength, you'll find this edition packed with news from the front line in the fight against all bloodsports.

For starters, several mink hunts have been run ragged this summer - the Northants MH having had a particularly torrid time of it! The other great summer sabbing tradition is mass action on the grouse moors and, once again, we've had the shooters in full retreat on the first Saturday of their season. But for many sabs this summer has really been about sett surveying in preparation for the expanded badger cull. This exhaustive work has paid off and, as we go to press, courageous hunt sabs are absolutely smashing it across the cull zones. You'll find articles on all of these issues in the following pages, and a lot more besides...

HOWL is proud to feature articles by our fellow grassroots activists at the Hunt Investigation Team and the National Dis-Trust. We also peer into the murky world of Operation Blackthorn, take a look at sabbing the Surrey Union back in the day and feature an excellent tactics article just in time for the main hunting season.

One consequence of our growing strength is that Countryside Alliance CEO Tim Bonner has admitted that we are the "primary concern" for hunts and so the CA have launched a campaign to "expose the individuals involved" in hunt sabotage. There is already some evidence from cubbing meets that hunters are trying to fit up sabs with harassment allegations. We will, of course, see off Bonner's lame campaign and, anyway, who is he going to "expose" us to? The 85% of the population who oppose hunting and love what we do?

Good luck for the rest of the season,

Ed



Hounds love Devon County sabs

Editor's Note

HOWL is your magazine and the mouthpiece of active hunt saboteurs everywhere.

Please ensure your voice is heard: send Group News, articles, photos and any other items of interest to howl@huntsabs.org.uk to arrive no later than 1st. January 2019.

Please also get in touch if you have ideas for content but are not sure how to proceed. We can't promise to include everything but we'll have a look and, if it's bad enough, we'll publish it.

CRY ME A RIVER

The Decline of the Northamptonshire Minkhounds



It is a warm summer Saturday morning in Northamptonshire. The heatwave of 2018 is in full swing and by 9 am the air is already heavy, while the smaller birds are beginning to take shelter from the sun's rays. Insects circle lazily, early dog walkers have completed their rounds and have returned home to shade and safety. On the brow of a hill overlooking rolling cropland and winding stream-lined spinneys, activists from several midlands hunt saboteur groups are watching and waiting, binoculars and long range cameras trained on the fields below.

Their location given away by the row of familiar vehicles parked along a hedgerow, the hunting party of the Northamptonshire Minkhounds comes into view. Several are wearing white panama-style hats which stand out in the bright sunlight. Walking with long forked poles, the purpose of which is to dislodge hidden wildlife from the roots and branches of trees, the hunt followers have the look of a retirees walking group. A spade glints briefly, one carries a rifle in the misguided belief that this legalises their hunt. While a pack of hounds is being used to hunt, the rifle is of course irrelevant.

From the edge of the treeline, hounds start to emerge one by one. Compared to a full fox hunting pack this is a small number of dogs, around a dozen.

They are of mixed condition, with several having seen better days. With their wet coats, it is clear they have been sent through the small meandering stream at the end of the field.

The quarry they hunt is the American Mink, a predator of fish, frogs and small mammals. The packs of old nominally switched to hunting mink in the late 1970s, before this they were otterhound packs, hounding the European otter to the brink of extinction in the British Isles. Otters are now thankfully in resurgence on our waterways - however the modern hound packs hunt the same rivers they always did, with little regard for the fate of any wildlife which stands in their way. The hunting of either animal is illegal regardless, since the 2004 Hunting Act.



Northants huntswoman looks back in anger...

The very presence of a pack of hunting hounds invading a delicate river ecosystem would be deemed an offence under the Environment Act 1995, with riverside plants trampled and destroyed by dogs and followers alike, and habitats of mammals such as water voles being disturbed. Finding quarry is then usually followed by digging and terrierwork in the river bank, with the aim of flushing the hunted animal out to the waiting hounds to be eviscerated.

Following the pack in the field below, the crimson waistcoat of the huntswoman becomes clear. From the vantage point in their four wheel drive vehicle the saboteurs ready themselves. The huntswoman's horn calls, and together with the sound of baying hounds it carries over the parched farmland. The activists' vehicle roars into life, swiftly delivering our team directly to the entrance of the hunt meet.



...then tries to hide in the hound van!



Hunters thwarted

110 ANTI-MINK hunt saboteurs from Cambridgeshire and all over the country converged on Snelson, nr Lavendham, Bedfordshire at the weekend.

The event attracted 100 hunters, and over 50 policemen, including two mounted policemen, 15 vans and a police helicopter.

A group of Cambridge protesters were arrested but later released without charges. One hunter was charged with assault.

All minks escaped

Clashes flare at mink hunt

Police blasted over saboteur 'invasion'

POLICE have come under fire after angry clashes between hunt saboteurs and sportsmen at a mink hunt over the weekend.

Mounted police and a helicopter were brought in to back up officers from three forces in the operation on the banks of the Ouse near Turvey on Saturday.

Landowner Richard Sanders said the arrival of around 50 protesters at his plush farmhouse was nothing short of an invasion and police could have done more and acted sooner.

He said: "It was terrible. I have never seen anything like it. It was a battle out there, it really was. I consider that the police could have been stronger and made arrests quicker."

Overkill

Northants Mink Hunt meets annually at his farm and he said around 180 guests were enjoying drinks on the lawn. Scuffles broke out as protesters tried to prevent the hunt moving off. A total of 16 arrests were made but no criminal charge are expected to follow.

Saboteurs stream down the hillside and towards the hunting party. It becomes clear that the huntswoman has only part of her pack with her, with a number hunting in the stream below. The team splits up, some with video cameras poised on the main party of followers and huntswoman, others heading into the hawthorns to locate the remainder of the pack.

Thick undergrowth, nettles and thorns have closed over the stream below. Sabs wade into the shadowy waterway to block the path of the hounds, rating them back, while others call from the bank above. The steep muddy banks are soon covered with sodden hounds and our team have the breakaway pack under control.

"Unlike their mounted foxhunting peers, a minkhound foot pack have nowhere to run. Caught red-handed breaking hunting law, and with their hunt foiled, they have no option but to give up."

Unlike their mounted foxhunting peers, a minkhound foot pack have nowhere to run. Caught red-handed breaking hunting law, and with their hunt foiled, they have no option but to give up.

Today they decide against calling the local police, although this is not always the case. Law enforcement reaction to these illegal mink hunts is at best relaxed, and primarily focussed on getting everyone away from the scene without confrontation. Dejected and sullen, the hunting party head back to their cars.

The Northants Minkhounds have been the subject of saboteur attention for decades. Historically kennelled with the Woodland Pytchley Hunt in Northamptonshire, they have moved home to the Oakley out of county in Bedfordshire as their fortunes have declined. From their heyday in the late 1980s and early 1990s, when the hunt would attract upwards of a hundred supporters, they now rarely reach double digits. Constant saboteur attention has ground the hunt down to a bare minimum existence, with the winding up of this hunt being our ultimate goal.

The summer of 2018 has brought several successes against the Northants Minkhounds. Activists from North Cambs Hunt Sabs have been joined by comrades from Beds & Bucks, Suffolk & Essex, and Northamptonshire Hunt Sabs in a continuous campaign. Attendance of regulars is waning, with even masters currently named in Baily's Hunting Directory no longer attending.

Of course, minkhound packs exist up and down the country; Baily's currently lists just seventeen active packs in England and Wales with one additional pack in Scotland. With continued pressure we hope to see the end of this group of committed wildlife abusers.



The facepalm: "A gesture used to display frustration, disappointment or shock."

RSPB: GIVING NATURE A HOME?



The Hunt Investigation Team (HIT) came to prominence with their devastating exposé of the South Herefordshire Hunt. Since then, their dedicated activists have continued to use innovative and sophisticated techniques to expose the darkest secrets of the bloodsports world. In this special report HIT explain the disturbing links they found between a leading conservation charity and local bloodsports enthusiasts.

Lethal Larsens

In spring 2018, HIT was alerted to an extensive series of Larsen traps set on an RSPB moorland reserve in the Peak District. We were advised that a local bloodsports enthusiast was contracted to purge the reserve of unwanted predators that might compromise the vulnerable curlew population.



Caught in a trap: Barlow Hunt master filmed engaging in badger persecution

Having worked in the immediate area investigating the Barlow Hunt (whose Joint Master was illegally trapping badgers), HIT was keen to pursue this new lead. Sure enough, close surveillance verified the information, located all the trap sites and identified the contractor as a known hunting and shooting enthusiast. Further investigation confirmed the practice of fox shooting by night. Our team worked round the clock to document this programme – and represent the animals exploited by it.

"Live For Shooting, Hunting and Farming"

Predator control by the RSPB is nothing new, but to see a known hunter and shooter patrolling a nature reserve in the role of a gamekeeper was truly chilling.

An intensive network of Larsen traps using live bait birds encircled the moor – in much the same pattern as intensive gamekeeping. Further events heightened our concerns: a huge moorland fire raged over the site, whilst all the traps were in place. The land was a known fire hazard zone, yet the RSPB continued to set live bird traps there regardless. The killing of adult crows and foxes was undertaken during the springtime breeding season: when dependent young chicks and cubs would starve in the nest and den.

In addition, due to our investigation of the Barlow Hunt, we knew that the land directly opposite the RSPB reserve was managed to increase foxes. Numerous artificial earths were in place for rearing cubs. Extensive pheasant rearing was in situ, which is also known to attract higher numbers of foxes.

The RSPB were well aware of their hunting neighbours. But, rather than challenge bloodsports practices which could endanger the curlew, they simply employed one of the hunting/shooting fraternity to purge their land of unwanted species.

Collateral damage: another victim of the RSPB's conservation programme



The unfolding picture horrified HIT. The immediate suffering of the individual crows and foxes, the unseen deaths of their dependent young, and the RSPB's collusion with bloodsports practices and personnel could not be ignored. HIT made contact with the RSPB through a mutual party and met with their Global Director and Deputy Director of Conservation.

We explained our findings and concerns, and we advised the RSPB that these concerns would be shared to their members. We urged them to change their practices: to accept that Larsen traps are outdated and inhumane; to address the untold suffering of dependent young; to end their association with the bloodsports industries which do such harm to wildlife. Our concerns fell on deaf ears. Our questions went unanswered.

The Con in Conservation

And so HIT released its report. Various high profile conservationists urged us not to. They were alarmed at the power of the story and the division it might cause. We could see their point. But if the RSPB's practices are so shocking and divisive, then the truth has to be told. We explained that we are answerable to those suffering animals and nobody else. We had given the RSPB plenty of chance to reconsider their actions – but they had been utterly dismissive.

And the report was indeed powerful and shocking. RSPB members were horrified to find they had been unwittingly complicit in killing native wildlife. The public shared our simple truth that conservation is not a license for cruelty. That we must address the human root causes of curlew decline (and all other wildlife devastation!) rather than scapegoat and persecute natural species. The RSPB's responses to their members caused further insult and outrage. The story hit the national media and members withdrew their support. Yet the RSPB have made no concession. As things stand, the culling will continue.



Sickening: instagram page of a "conservationist" contracted by the RSPB

Further research on the cull sites indicates more RSPB connections with bloodsports enthusiasts. This is inevitable, as few true wildlife lovers have firearms licenses for shooting foxes, or access to Larsen traps and call birds to capture crows, or think this an acceptable way to "protect" wildlife.

The wider narrative of the curlew project also hints at further bloodsports associations – practical and ideological. The focus on eliminating foxes and crows is a tired old narrative from the shooting industry – and must be challenged. The plight of the curlew itself has been shamelessly appropriated by the grouse shooting lobby. Their intensively managed habitat to rear unnatural numbers of grouse also supports curlew by default.



This convenient side-effect is claimed as a conservation victory, for which the grouse shooting lobby seek validation from charities like the RSPB. Let's be honest, if curlew numbers recovered sufficiently, the shooting lobby would simply add them to their shooting calendar. The RSPB is playing a dangerous game by forging alliances with the shooting industry whose own interest in curlew is purely self-serving.

Speaking Truth To Power

And so it is left to animals rights activists – and the decent public – to speak truth to power. HIT has promised to publish details of the culling – and here is an exclusive HOWL preview:

The RSPB undertakes culling on multiple sites nationwide. The Curlew Trial Management Project specifically has six sites: North Scotland (Caithness), South Scotland, Geltsdale (Cumbria), Northern Ireland (Glenwherry), the Peak District and North Wales. Their programme prescribes shooting foxes four times per week between 30 Oct - 31 March and two times per week between 1 April - 30 June. Trapping crows is conducted from 1 April - 30 June, using Larsen traps checked twice daily.

The RSPB's programme of hunting foxes four times per week between Nov and March bears alarming similarities to the routines of the average fox hunt! This running theme of "conservation" mimicking bloodsports practices – whilst failing to address the very damage caused by bloodsports - sends out a very dangerous message.

HIT will continue to investigate the RSPB's use of cruel traps, employment of bloodsports enthusiasts and failure to address the impact of bloodsports practices on endangered species. Early research is leading to an even bigger scandal.

RSPB members deserve the right to make fully informed choices about who they support. And each animal suffering at the hands of the RSPB deserves representation and liberation from an experimental programme which affords them no protection.

For further info:

www.huntinvestigationteam.org

www.againstcorvidtraps.co.uk/

www.rspb.org.uk/our-work/conservation/projects/curlew-trial-management/



Melbreak hounds rampage through Holme Wood

SERIOUS TRUST ISSUES

The grassroots activists at National Dis-Trust bring us up to date with their campaign

The National Trust have been a major player in the continuation of hunting after the ban. As one of the largest land owners in England and Wales, it has provided hunts with 'trail hunting' licences, and despite overwhelming evidence of illegal hunting and licence breaches, has refused to monitor* or support independent monitoring of hunts on NT land.

Members and non-members have been challenging the National Trust stance on hunting since the ban, and in early 2014 the National Dis-Trust campaign was launched by Lakeland sabs who were sick of witnessing illegal hunting in the Lake District, where the National Trust is a major landowner.

Early on, the campaign raised awareness about hunting on National Trust land through an ongoing poster campaign and a nationwide day of action, with groups leafleting at National Trust properties. Footage of hunts breaching their licences was made public and handed to the National Trust who either ignored it or denied any breaches. As other campaigners from across the country have become involved, the team has expanded and public awareness has been raised enormously.

Freedom of Information requests from National Dis-Trust have revealed that no hunts had received licences to import fox urine from abroad, which the hunts claimed they had been using to lay a trail (aptly described by Surrey Hunt Monitors for a Hounds Off article - www.bit.ly/2scv70j). As hunts have rarely been seen to lay any trail, it had been obvious for some time that 'trail hunting' was nothing but a guise for illegal hunting. We were sent a fake 'certificate of authenticity' (see photo) that was being used by hunts to try and hoodwink the National Trust and other landowners into believing that hunts were genuinely following a trail of legally procured fox urine. Even though the certificate was shown to be fraudulent, the hunts that presented it were still granted licences.

At the National Trust's 2017 AGM, a member's resolution was proposed to ban hunting, only failing because the National Trust used discretionary member's votes to oppose it. However, having been informed that the resolution had been proposed, and in the knowledge that they had been licensing hunts under the false premise of a legally obtained trail scent, the National Trust attempted to placate everyone by updating their existing licensing rules.

Updates included:

- The publishing of dates and locations of hunts on National Trust land (previous licences stated that hunts must provide this information when requested, but hunts refused).
- A ban on the presence of terrier men (although previous licences also did this).
- A ban on the use of animal-based scent for trail laying (although no hunts actually lay trails).

*** Pre-warning the hunts and then sending a staff member out with binoculars to each hunt once per hunting season doesn't count as a monitoring system, sorry Director Harold !**

The National Trust then performed a spectacular u-turn with regard to publishing routes of trails following pressure from the pro-hunt lobby, and they have since said that this was following discussions with the police. However, every single police force in England and Wales has responded to Freedom of Information requests concerning this discussion, and only one has a record of a brief email chat. Prior to the AGM, the Trustees had met to discuss the promise of publishing dates and routes and decided against it, but this did not stop them continuing to offer this promise during the AGM itself.

Although 67 hunts were licensed in the 2016-2017 season, since the updated rules have come into force only a third of these hunts have been licensed to hunt on National Trust land. Other hunts have been denied licences (such as the West Norfolk Foxhounds -> www.bit.ly/2l14k6e) as they refuse to comply with the licence terms, whilst other hunts, particularly some of the fell packs, have refused to apply for licences and have admitted that they are unable to comply with the licence terms, an admission of illegal hunting if ever there was one.



The National Trust: accessories to murder



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All Adrian's Fox Scent products are heat treated & UK tested free from pathogenic Leptospires. Please follow the instructions on label for safe use.

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Adrian's Fox Scent is marketed by The Animal Scent Company trading as Harrier Contracting

A complete piss-take: this certificate is not worth the paper it's written on

Meanwhile, over a dozen hunts have been witnessed hunting on National Trust land without a licence since the current hunting season began i.e. trespassing (how ironic; see our trespass round-up here -> www.bit.ly/2hpoRwq). This includes the Warwickshire Hunt, who then went on to attack West Midlands Hunt Saboteurs and kill foxes on camera. Their reward? A seemingly secret licence to enter National Trust land at Upton House for Boxing Day along with a licence for Farnborough Hall, both of which we are calling to be revoked and refused -> www.bit.ly/2klChhC.

With opposition to fox hunting rapidly growing in almost every arena, it's inevitable that the National Trust will abandon their disgraceful endorsement of wildlife crime. We only hope and demand that this outcome comes sooner rather than later for the sake of the victimised wildlife that the Trust is wilfully ignoring.

THE TIMMY

The coveted Tim Bonner 'Timmy' awarded for the most shite excuse for illegal hunting



Hollywood have the Oscars. The Countryside Alliance have the Rural Oscars. We at the Hunt Saboteurs Association present the Timmy - awarded to the hunt offering the most ridiculous excuse for illegal hunting.

This year's clear winner is the Northants Minkhounds. The judging panel praised their ability to keep a straight face whilst claiming they were simply "dealing with thistles on the riverbank" when those nasty sabs turned up.

Nominations for next year's Timmy are now open and should be sent to howl@huntsabs.org.uk



OPERATION BLACKTHORN

The Political Policing of Fox Hunting



An official government counter-terror document lists the Hunt Saboteurs Association as domestic extremists. The fact that a non-violent organisation who are opposed to wildlife cruelty are listed as such tells you that this is political policing. It also goes some way to explaining the police response to hunting across the country: it is hunt saboteurs not the hunters who are treated like criminals by the police.

Operation Blackthorn

Each police force has it's own policy on hunting. Operation Blackthorn is the regional hunting operation for Northamptonshire, Nottinghamshire, Lincolnshire and is led by Leicestershire Police. From our experiences on the ground it's obvious that Blackthorn is heavily influenced by the counter-terror document.

Prior to 2016 Blackthorn came under Special Branch and the Territorial Support Group where the approach to policing hunts was to actively harass saboteurs whilst letting hunts carry on hunting foxes unimpeded. This blatant and overt support for hunts often involved the deployment of police riot vans, helicopters and plain clothes officers who fraternised with hunt supporters. Police would often misuse legislation in an attempt to stop saboteurs protecting foxes as happened at the Quorn Hunt in 2014. Leicestershire Police deliberately misused Section 60 legislation (used for football matches) to stop and search a group of saboteurs.

From 2016 Leicestershire Police changed their approach with Blackthorn realising that overtly supporting hunts did not go down well with the public. They decided, publicly at least, to take a more balanced approach. This is how Northamptonshire Police describe Operation Blackthorn:

> *"The purpose of the operation is to promote engagement with both hunt saboteurs and hunt members with a purpose of developing relationships between the police, the hunting community and the hunt saboteurs. It is recognised that the majority of individuals present at the hunt, either for or against it, are law-abiding citizens with legitimate concerns. Where there is any likelihood of demonstrations, incidents, or crimes these will be identified as early as possible to ensure the correct operational, investigative and intelligence response"*

However in our experience the core aims of Blackthorn remain the same: now, instead of stopping saboteurs out in the fields it is done behind the scenes. Cases against hunts are simply dropped whilst those against saboteurs - where there is no actual evidence - are taken all the way to court. We believe that Operation Blackthorn is an ongoing campaign to actively disrupt and frustrate investigations into hunting whilst also aiming to discredit and ultimately dismantle saboteur groups.

Countryside Alliance

Countryside Alliance CEO Tim Bonner recently sent a letter to his members identifying hunt saboteurs as the number one threat to hunting. In particular saboteur groups who use "targeted, obsessive campaigns" with "Social media and video sharing.... Showing hunts in a bad light". Bonner's solution to deal with these saboteurs is to run a campaign "exposing the individuals involved and put pressure on the authorities to address their activities." This is nothing new and will no doubt involve Philip Davies, ex-senior police officer and now CA Police Liaison Officer. The sinister Davies travels the country meeting senior police officers in an attempt to influence their policy.



Last year Davies attended at least one meeting with officers from Operation Blackthorn. A few months after the meeting Leicestershire Police charged a member of West Midlands Hunt Sabs with a Section 4A and 5 of the Public Order Act after members of the Atherstone Hunt had claimed she had sworn at and threatened them.

They charged her despite the hunt supplying them with NO evidence and NO independent witnesses. They even tried to prevent footage which proved her innocence from being shown in court. Luckily it was shown and she was found not guilty. However the same police force have dropped numerous cases against hunt supporters despite being provided with footage. In fact footage was submitted showing a hunt supporter swearing at and threatening saboteurs (remember a saboteur was taken to court after being accused of this).



In this case Leicestershire Police let the hunt supporter off with a conditional caution. One of the conditions of the caution was to write a letter of apology to the victim; however, Leicestershire Police refused to hand this letter over to the victim.

Police Harassment

West Mids Hunt Sabs will be one of the groups Bonner wants to target as their direct action and social media campaign has crippled the Atherstone Hunt. There is already a long list of incidents where this group has been targeted by Leicestershire Police. One member successfully sued Leicestershire Police after they arrested her and tried to stifle the right to protest by deliberately misusing legislation. This was followed by another member being arrested for causing "chaos and mayhem" after sitting quietly in his car. He was detained just long enough for the hunt to move out of the area before being de-arrested. This was followed by more deliberate misuse of legislation after officers took false allegations by members of the Atherstone Hunt at face value - with no evidence to back them up - and issued harassment notices to the same two sabs. They were forced to overturn the harassment notices and issue a humiliating apology after both sabs made official complaints and got their MPs involved.

This didn't stop Leicestershire Police trying again however when they issued yet another harassment notice to the same sab. Again, they were forced to apologise and overturn the harassment notice after another official complaint was made.

Whilst regularly targeting the same few saboteurs Leicestershire Police have gone out of their way to derail investigations into the Atherstone Hunt. Clear footage of terrier-men blocking a badger sett wasn't handed into the CPS on time so the case had to be dropped. There have been countless other cases that have been suddenly dropped due to a "lack of evidence", though this is never an issue when charging saboteurs! Another case involved hunt supporters attacking sabs and stealing their cameras. A body camera that wasn't stolen and showed exactly what happened was handed in.

> "So far two officers at Leicestershire Police have been outed as riding with a fox hunt."

However Leicestershire Police chose to believe counter-allegations made by the hunt (with no evidence) and wanted to arrest the saboteurs!

Davies may have had some influence over Operation Blackthorn but a more concerning problem is the close ties a lot of officers have with their local hunts. So far two officers at Leicestershire Police have been outed as riding with a fox hunt. One is a senior officer and the other a wildlife officer. We know there are many more and hopefully they will be outed in the future. The wildlife officer position in particular seems to attract fox hunters.

The current wildlife officer has been involved in many of the failed cases against the Atherstone Hunt. One case involved investigating a fox killed by the Atherstone Hunt and reported by independent members of the public. Apart from not even giving the incident a proper crime number the officer dropped the investigation simply because the Huntsman had told him he hadn't killed the fox.

Whilst it's good to know that hunt saboteurs are having such a big impact on hunting it also means that the Countryside Alliance will continue to pour a lot of their resources into trying to stop us. The willingness of a lot of police forces to accommodate them means the police will continue to target hunt sabs. There has been a lot of negative publicity for hunting over the past few years largely as a result of local sab groups showing what they really get up to. Bonner and the CA know they cannot stop this flow of information so are turning to the police in the hope of taking out restraining orders or even getting a few saboteurs sent to prison.



sabgroupnews

Bath Hunt Sabs

www.facebook.com/bathhuntsabs
bathhuntsabs@yahoo.co.uk
bathhuntsabs.wordpress.com

Bath Sabs have had a busy few months. We've mostly been preparing for the badger cull.

Sabs have been to a number of vegan fairs and raised money for the upcoming cull fuel costs among other things. We've given talks on sabbing and the badger cull, we've got people signed up to be involved in fighting the culls in their local areas, and we've taken numerous new people out surveying so they're confident that, when the cull comes to their doorstep, they will know how to sab it effectively.

All our members have worked solidly for months fighting the cull in a number of different ways of which is great to see. As a group we've spent the entire summer sett surveying in local zones, both established and new. The cull is expected to start any day now so we'll be out full time.

New sabs have arrived from our work against the cull and our presence at vegan fairs: it's really heartening to see the different routes into direct action.

We're now fully kitted out for the cull and the hunting season after fundraising for new equipment and some extremely generous donations; we're really grateful and the equipment is invaluable. With our snazzy new night vision and borrowed Thermal Imaging along with our recording equipment we now have a full inventory...almost as if we're getting professional! In the second week of August members, along with Bristol, had a successful hit of the Mendip Farmers FH for the second time, after last season's end of season hit.

Our ace mechanic/super sab has been upgrading our landy so it'll be better than the batmobile soon!

We're now also back to sabbing the disgusting cub hunting season.

If you're interested in getting involved give us a shout.



Bath sabs in hot pursuit of the Mendip Farmers hound vehicle



Beds and Bucks Hunt Sabs

www.facebook.com/Bedsandbuckssabs
bedsandbuckshuntsabs@riseup.net



"Oh, for fu...", Northants MH master spies Beds & Bucks sabs yet again

Summer certainly hasn't been a time for putting our feet up.

Summer means mink/otter hunting and the Northants Mink Hounds have had little respite. Working in conjunction with our regular comrades at North Cambs Sabs we've found them on most Saturdays and stopped their attempts at hunting. They've even resorted to changing their days by going out on non-regular hunt days, early mornings and evenings to avoid us. We've also paid the odd visit to the Dove Valley Mink Hounds with several other groups and, apart from the sabbing, it's always good for a catch-up with our colleagues further north.

We've also been putting in the hard yards sett surveying in preparation for the cruel and pointless badger cull. We've found a whole host of nasty stuff out there as well as locating the badger setts. It's been hot and tiring work but we know it will save lives in the future.

Once again, we held a stand at Milton Keynes Vegan Fair, spoke to lots of the public and raised some much-needed funds. We also gained some potential new sabs which is promising for the new season as, by the time this goes to print, cubbing will be underway and we'll be out sabbing our local hunts.

The Fitzwilliam saga continues, the convicted huntsman, George Adams, is appealing his decision but we hope to overcome this hurdle in the Crown Court and make the conviction case law which would mean the end of the Bird of Prey Exemption in the Hunting Act. We've also been informed that the Huntsman and Whipper-In of the Thurlow will face a combination of charges for the fox killed on Boxing Day last year. We hope to gain another conviction and once again make it clear that we will not stand for illegal hunting on our watch.

Bristol Hunt Sabs

www.facebook.com/bristolhuntsaboteurs

We ended the 2017/2018 on a high and got straight to work trying to find information on elusive mink hunts that operate throughout the summer.

We managed two trips into Devon to visit the Culmstock Minkhounds working alongside multiple other groups. The first visit saw sabs sticking to the hunt for the duration of the day, making sure there were no kills. The second visit saw a long standoff at the hunt kennels meaning the hounds were unable to leave for a good few hours. Eventually, the boys in blue turned up and helped the hunt sneak out unopposed.

Despite the long drive, we also took part in a mass sab against the Glorious Twelfth where two grouse shoots were sent packing by over seventy sabs. The first didn't even manage to fire any shots before returning to their vehicles. A beautiful day.

Cubbing has just begun and at the time of writing this, we've already paid visits to both the Mendip Farmers and Cotswold Vale Farmers Hunt. We're working with the largest group of sabs we've had in years which puts us in good stead for the season ahead.

Thanks as ever to all the other groups we work with (you know who you are!).



Bristol sabs take control of the Cotswold Vale Farmers pack

Cirencester Illegal Hunt Watch

Twitter: @cihwatch
CIHWatch@gmail.com
www.facebook.com/CIHWatch/
Donate: paypal.me/cihwatch

CIHW have had a busy summer preparing for the supplementary badger cull in west Gloucestershire and the imminent cull in south Gloucestershire. This means surveying huge areas of land and reporting wildlife crime to the police and relevant agencies. The shocking cull statistics are now available for 2017. The number of badgers killed was a staggering 35,000 at an estimated cost of £50 million to the tax payer.

We have been working with Three Counties Hunt Sabs to document all known badger setts in our areas. Info on blocked setts related to the hunts that we sab and monitor has now been shared with the police. This led to a *BBC Points West* interview which highlighted the blocking of setts by hunts so that foxes can't run to ground. Hunts deny this but the evidence is too strong and videos of 'masked up' terrier men digging and filling in setts is constantly out there on social media.



CIHW have been setting out their stall

We have enjoyed spreading the word and fundraising at vegan fairs, demos and leafletting events with National Dis-Trust and LACS. We welcomed support from Chris Packham when he gave talks in Stroud recently. Several reports have gone out in local and national newspapers which are helping to expose illegal hunting.

We have already been working alongside Gloucestershire's new Rural Crime Team whose role is to prevent and investigate incidents of rural and wildlife crime. They are asking hunts to film their trails, report accidental kills and refer any imported fox and urine from the US to Customs and Excise. They have a quad bike, buggy and a drone for following hunts and catching sett blockers. Well, let's hope the tide is turning and sabs get more support. We'll update you in the next issue.

Cub hunting has now started and if you would like to help us please get in touch.

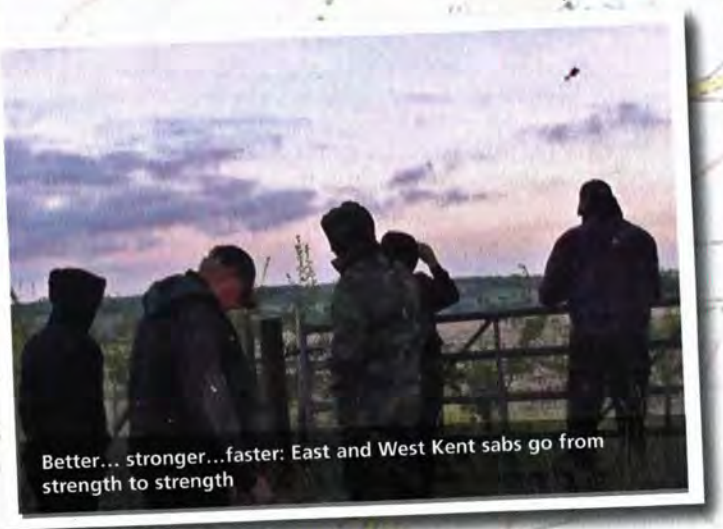
Thanks to our supporters and to those who have donated.

East Kent Hunt Sabs

www.facebook.com/east.sabs
eastkenthuntsabs@hotmail.co.uk
Twitter.com/hunt_sabs
kenthuntsabs.wordpress.com
Donate: paypal.me/EASTKENTHSA

We have been busy fundraising over the summer, with stalls at Vegan Festivals, animal sanctuaries etc, and we have had requests from many potential new sabs, so are feeling very positive! We also have had sabs on local news over the Ashford Valley Tickham hunt after the CPS dropped the investigation, so nobody can be in any doubt about the realities of "trail hunting"

Our trusty landrover is now repaired for next season, and we have even been able to buy a second vehicle for the West Kent group, thanks to generous public donations. Our group has never been bigger or stronger, and the hunts weaker in the South East – onwards and upwards!



Better... stronger...faster: East and West Kent sabs go from strength to strength

Dorset Hunt Sabs

www.facebook.com/DorsetHuntSabs
dorsethuntsabs@riseup.net



Sab solidarity: an attack on one is an attack on all

We had a busy season sabbing the fox hunts and paid many visits to the Blackmore & Sparkford Vale who sadly killed at least twice last season, one of these kills made it onto the front page of *The Western Gazette*. The BSV's hunting season comes to an end earlier than other local hunts so we then concentrated on the Portman Hunt. Evo Shirley, the Portman huntsman was in court for illegal hunting but - despite clear evidence - he was unsurprisingly cleared which meant he went straight back to blatant hunting and on numerous occasions we found ourselves directly in the line between his hounds and a fox. We also caught up with the South Dorset Hunt at Corfe Castle and, joined by other sabs and monitors, we were able to make sure their season ended on a reasonable low!

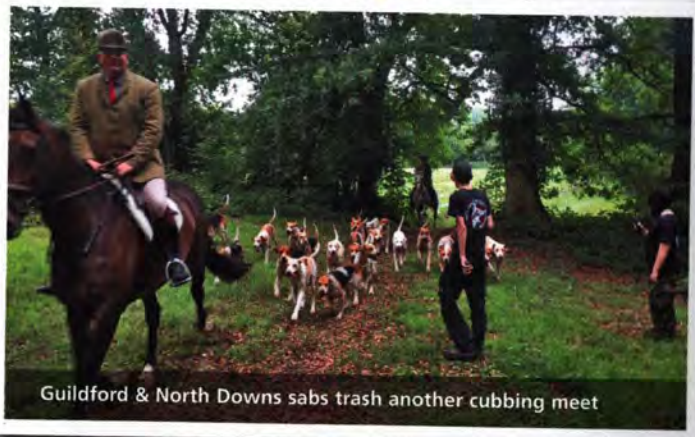
In January two sabs were assaulted by Peter Charles Brookes who was out supporting the BSV and in July he was found guilty of one charge of assault by beating and now has a criminal record, this made the front page of the *Western Daily Press*. In February we went to show our solidarity for South Devon Animal Rights after the vicious attack from members of the Dart Vale and South Pool Harriers, we ended up paying the Modbury Harriers a visit as the Dart Vale went into hiding! We were joined by other sab groups including South Wales, Bristol and Severn Vale in an excellent show of solidarity. During the day our windscreen was smashed and we identified the offender but this was not taken any further by the police. In March there was an altercation between sabs and hunt thugs and a sab required hospital treatment and is currently trying to make a statement to the police as we have video footage and a conviction is likely.

We have been designing and making some new merchandise to help raise funds and had a stall at a vegan fair in May. Our stall was busy all day and we were able to raise awareness into the badger cull and fox hunting so it was well worth going. We have now turned our attention to the badger cull and will be working in North Dorset which is in its fourth year and South Dorset in its second year. We have been checking setts and finding strong signs of activity at many of them which is great news. We have carried out extensive map work in both zones and there may be some Wounded Badger Patrols going ahead this year. If you want to get involved on any level please do get in touch with us via the HSA or email dorsethuntsabs@riseup.net

Guildford and North Downs Hunt Sabs

The group spent the summer maintaining our land rovers and arranging a few social events (walks and canoe trips) to keep the group together. From August we started our usual pattern of staking out the Surrey Union Hunt kennels and searching the hunt's area for illegal cub hunting with a few successes including packing up an early morning cub hunt in less than half an hour at Wintershall Bramley. At an afternoon pony club meet at Ewhurst they were illegally hunting from start to finish - to indoctrinate the next generation - but we managed to get them off a fox in Holt Copse.

The group is strong and ready for another season of sabbing hunts in the South East.



Guildford & North Downs sabs trash another cubbing meet

Greater South London Hunt Sabs

(Croydon, Kingston, Brixton and Hook)
www.southlondonhuntsabs.wordpress.com
www.facebook.com/southldnhuntsabs
Twitter: @SouthLDNHuntSab

The group had an unusually quiet summer. The local mink pack seem to have vanished without a trace, despite our best efforts to locate them, and August was limited to a couple of tame outings of early cubbing by the Burstow and the Southdown.

Our alarms are set for 3am and we are fired up and ready for the new season!



The Burstow can't spell "liar"

Hertfordshire Hunt Sabs

Hertfordshire-hunt-saboteurs@riseup.net
http://paypal.me/HHsabs

While we've actively protested for years and been part of direct action by sabbing fox hunts and the badger cull we thought we'd set up a group and guess what, we did! So, this is officially our first post in HOWL. We have been extremely busy focusing on all animal cruelty; whether it be sabbing fox hunts, mink hunts, hare hunts, pheasant shoots, saving birds from Larsen traps, cubbing and, of course, the badger cull. We feel like we haven't stopped. Witnessing a fox run for his life and giving him seconds to get away - that's what it's all about. We have gained a wealth of knowledge through working with other groups, notably Northants who have taken us under their wing and even allowed us to drive their Landy! We are so grateful to them and we are currently fund-raising for our own one; having two vehicles out at the same time keeping the blood junkies on their toes would be ace.

It's not easy being a sab, it's no glory whatsoever; it's hard work out the field - literally mud, sweat and tears. The hired thugs have routinely been in attendance, ready with their verbal diarrhea, fists and elbows! We've had our share of assaults: one sab had their tooth knocked out, despite video evidence it was decided NFA - typical of the police bias in Leicestershire. We successfully sabbed a pheasant shoot, saving hundreds of lives. One shooter didn't break his gun and let it off above the head of the sab who was confronting him.

We have spent numerous years in the cull zones. Recently, we've been sett surveying in readiness for the 2018 cull; we've come across all manner of traps, snares, shooting towers and filled setts which we have, of course, unblocked.



Herts sabs keep the hunt on their toes

Lincoln Hunt Sabs

www.facebook.com/lincolnhuntsaboteurs
www.lincolnhuntsaboteurs@gmail.com
Donate: www.ko-fi.com/lincolnhuntsaboteurs



Cage fighter: Lincoln sabs find another trap

Since the close of season, we haven't been resting on our laurels, quite the opposite! We have been busy doing a lot of pre-cull surveying in Derbyshire alongside other groups which has been a huge undertaking but successful with many setts found. Some of us were even lucky enough to catch a glimpse of our little black and white friends. It also gave us the opportunity to better understand the country hunted by the Meynell and South Staffs Hunt; a lot of which runs through areas affected by TB!

The summer has also provided us the chance to sabotage mink hunts with varying degrees of success and once again join protests at the Peterborough Hunting Festival and the National Dis-Trust demos. We were happy to attend the mass Glorious 12th sab for the first time which saw us join around 70 other activists from around the country to shut down two grouse shoots, a great success with many lives saved.

As well as this we have been busy fundraising with stalls at various gigs in Lincoln; a charity pot party at LUSH, and Battered helping us out at the Vegan Camp Out. We also had our first t-shirts printed which were a big hit!

A big thank you to everyone who has supported us.

Kernow Hunt Sabs

www.facebook.com/kernowsabs
kernowhuntsabs@riseup.net

The Kernow team have been busy sett surveying in our suspected new cull zone and held survey training days to get new volunteers engaged. We had some fantastic new logos created by a supporter for both Kernow Sabs and Cornwall Against the Badger Culls. We also recently held a hunt sab training day for some new recruits which was very successful.

Four Burrow Hunt under surveillance by Kernow sabs



Lancashire Hunt Sabs

lancasterhuntsabs@hotmail.com



Another innocent victim of the grouse-shooting Bleasdale Estate

Sabs in Lancashire have been working throughout the summer to counteract the cruelty that is inflicted on our wildlife. Some of our sabs have been in Cheshire sett-checking ahead of the cull and we have also continued to oppose the wanton slaughter of our wild birds, responding to calls for help from local people who are sick of being out in their gardens and being forced to watch shooters killing birds.

We have continued to monitor the killing fields of the Forest of Bowland where birds and mammals are wantonly killed to supposedly protect game birds so that they can later be shot for fun by morons. We are pleased to hear that Fenn-type traps will finally be outlawed in the UK in 2020 in line with international laws, some years after other countries have banned them. We will be watching closely post-ban to make sure that the wildlife criminals on the grouse moors are not continuing to use these cruel implements to kill our wildlife.

We recently 'inspected' Fenn mark 4 traps on the Bleasdale Estate, where raptors have historically been persecuted. A recent case was brought to court where someone (a gamekeeper, obviously) was filmed killing peregrine falcons on a grouse moor (Bleasdale Estate) but it sadly failed on technicalities, as the police officers involved in obtaining the footage didn't follow RIPA protocol. (Coincidentally the same officers were involved in persecuting sabs after a cat was rescued from a Fenn mark 4 on the Bleasdale Estate – leading to three-week Crown Court trial at the taxpayers' expense. The star witness for the prosecution was the same person who was allegedly filmed killing raptors).

We suggest that next time the RSPB attempt to catch estate workers persecuting raptors it would be preferable to use police officers that don't shoot on the grouse moors – and don't have the sick privilege of shooting red deer on RSPB reserves in Lancashire - but more on this another day. Please see the forthcoming footage of one of those officers being questioned about his shooting interests.

Some of our sabs also attended the recent shoots in North Yorkshire, meeting up with sabs from all over the country, and putting an end to two shoots, saving countless lives.

We will be out as usual this season sabbing, campaigning and monitoring.

Melbourne Hunt Sabs (Australia)

www.facebook.com/MelbourneHuntSabs/
Donate:www.gofundme.com/5c6loso

As you're reading this the 2018 season has come to a close. We here at Melbourne Hunt Saboteurs are reflecting on what was a wild season for us. In only our second season we faced a lot of learning, victories and losses, but we were never defeated.

We covered over 10,000 kilometres, following multiple Hunt Clubs. We visited four new Hunt Clubs who had never had the pleasure of meeting saboteurs. We also stepped up our visits to some old foes.

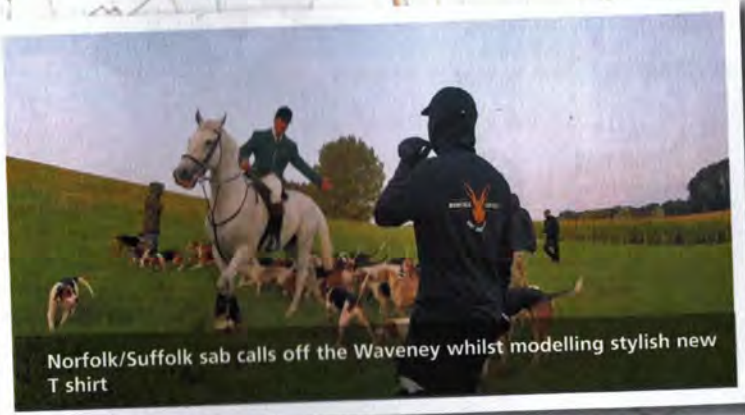
We chased the hunt during the day, and through the night. We travelled to two states in Australia, and directly intervened to save foxes from the jaws of hounds. We safely took control of the hounds from their huntsman on multiple occasions.



A familiar scene: different continent, same violent hunters

We welcomed four new sab to the team, had the expertise of a visiting UK saboteur and even sent one of our saboteurs to the UK for a few weeks. We realized we needed a sab car, launched some merchandise and started our outreach campaigns.

You can aid our saboteurs here:
www.gofundme.com/5c6loso



Norfolk/Suffolk sab calls off the Waveney whilst modelling stylish new T shirt

Norfolk & Suffolk Hunt Sabs

www.facebook.com/norfolksuffolk.huntsaboteurs
ns.sabs@yahoo.co.uk

Norfolk & Suffolk Sabs have been in action since the middle of August, due to the cubbing season on the Norfolk and Suffolk border starting a good couple of weeks earlier than normal.

So far, we have sabbed two Waveney Harrier cubbing meets. It has become obvious that the Waveney are no longer interested in hares and, for the last few seasons, they have predominantly been hunting foxes. At times we wonder if they know what style of hunting they are doing, because at the last two meets they have had both a drag and a bird of prey out (as well as a quad bike with terrier men).

At the first meet (which was pretty easy to find as it was at the kennels) we only had four sabs out but we still managed to keep the hunt on their toes.

Our second trip out was during the early hours of Bank Holiday Monday. We received a tip-off from the HSA the previous evening (many thanks to the HSA and the kind person who called in) and at short notice we managed to coordinate a joint sab with other local groups. The hunt was more than a little surprised to see us when they set off hunting at 6.00 am. abs present did well to prevent a nasty road accident when hounds rioted after half a dozen deer that crossed a busy B-road in a bid to escape the hounds.

We have also been busy fundraising over the summer in order to top up our petrol tanks. We have had stalls at vegan fairs and the lovely folks at Lush in Ipswich hosted a charity pot weekend for us. Thanks so much to all our brilliant supporters, we couldn't do half of what we do without you.

North Wales Hunt Sabs

www.facebook.com/Nwalessabs
northwaleshuntsabs@yahoo.com

We've spent the majority of the summer sett surveying and fundraising for the upcoming badger culls. We'll mainly be in Cheshire cull zone again this year but are also hoping to send some of our sabs out to help in other zones when needed.



Morning! Sabs greet the Flint and Denbigh at first light

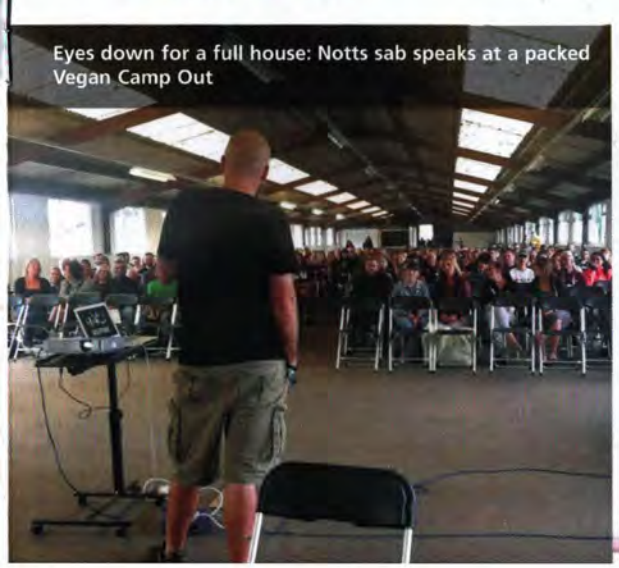
We've already started sabbing hunts this season. On August 25th we were joined by Cheshire sabs Welsh Borders sabs and Derby sabs for an early morning visit to the Flint and Denbigh FH opening cub hunt.

The hunt, aware we actually outnumbered them, did not leave the kennels in Cefn near St.Asaph till 7am. Sabs were all over them from the off resulting in no actual cub hunting taking place. The 12 or so riders, 40 plus hounds and a lone terrier man tried to give us the slip on to higher ground. This didn't work well for them as sabs stuck on them as they largely stayed on the road to try to escape us. By around 10am the hunt had to turn back to the kennels. Their frustration was clearly showing as they came back out of the kennels to try goad sabs but only managed to make further fools of themselves.

Thanks for everyone's support.

Nottingham Hunt Sabs

www.facebook.com/nottssabs
huntsabs@hotmail.com



Eyes down for a full house: Notts sab speaks at a packed Vegan Camp Out

Even by our standards it's been a busy old summer. We don't yet know when the badger cull is coming to Derbyshire but if it's not this year it'll most likely be 2019. Either way there's sett surveying to be done so that's exactly what we've been doing. Almost every weekend we've been poking about in Derbyshire finding hundreds of amazing badger setts and lots of other things beside that the local populace were rather kept secret!

We've also squeezed in a couple of visits to the Dove Valley Mink Hounds and we had an enjoyable day in North Yorkshire fucking up a couple of grouse shoots. As well as all the direct action we've also been fundraising and recruiting. We had stalls at the Viva Nottingham vegan festival and also an amazingly successful weekend at the Vegan Camp Out where we also gave a talk to over 200 people.

As the days get shorter and the mornings cooler we're now turning our attention to cubbing and the badger cull. If Derbyshire doesn't go ahead we'll be elsewhere doing our very best to mess up an animal abuser's day.

See you in a field somewhere.....

North Cambs Hunt Sabs

www.facebook.com/northcambssabs
northcambshuntsabs@gmail.com


Northants Mink Hounds can't pack up quick enough

It feels like it's been a long but successful summer for North Cambs, with a focused campaign against minkhound packs - in total twelve meets of the Northants Minkhounds and the Dove Valley Mink were attended by our team.

We've witnessed staff and support at the Northants MH fall from double digits down to just five people. They've changed their hunting days to avoid us, and when they are caught hunting, they've packed up immediately - which does nothing to alleviate any concerns that they're hunting illegally! Even the masters have stopped bothering to come out.

Having successfully stopped mink hunts on so many occasions, we're now turning our attention back to the cull and fox hunting. In fact, the cubbing season has barely even begun, and one of our sabs has already caught a Fitzwilliam FH rider (out for 'mounted hound exercise') cracking their riding crop with some serious force against their horse, just out of sheer frustration. And these are the sort of people who defend fox hunting...

We're sure the Fitzwilliam are looking forward to our presence at their meets again this year, especially given that we head into this season with a successful prosecution against them and their previous huntsman, for hunting illegally.

Bets are on as to whether they continue using their pointless and proven-redundant bird man Mease, or whether they pick up with the 'trail hunting' lie that they started to push at the back end of last season.

(Check out the report on their amazing campaign against the Northants MH on page 4 – Ed.)


Stink pit: yet another dirty secret of the shooting industry

Perthshire Hunt Sabs

www.facebook.com/Perthshire-Hunt-Sabs-521968741261981/
perthshiresabs@gmail.com

We have been fairly quiet on our Facebook page, but it does not mean we are not still active. Perthshire sabs are still busy uncovering the horrors of the countryside even when the fox hunting season is over. We do not post too much about this publicly, though, as we prefer to do this work undercover.

The game shooting industry is responsible for the deaths of so many creatures; some they kill "legally" while others they are happy to kill illegally, just to enable an un-natural over population of grouse to be shot for fun or to ensure the thousands of released non-native birds such as pheasants and red-legged partridge are not predated on by native wildlife. The damage caused to our environment and wildlife to maximize this so-called "sport" needs to be stopped. We will continue to expose the reality of what goes on behind the scenes and save lives whenever we can.

South Coast Hunt Sabs

www.facebook.com/SCoastHuntSabs/
southcosthuntsabs@gmail.com
Donate: paypal.me/SouthCoastHuntSabs

Hunting has started in the South East with hunts going out cubbing or attempting to under the cover of puppy walking or 'charity' events. The truth of this is clear that when sabs turn up the usual tactics of road blocking and low-level abuse, nothing which our group cannot deal with. The bumpkins have been helping out our fund-raising activities by saying stupid things while we are filming, which makes our Facebook posts much more interesting, but they never seem to learn and keep running their mouths off. One recently pointed out that he not only had better things to do but that their numbers had dropped drastically over the past few years.

Last season one of our group was subjected to a more serious level of violence and we are pleased to report that the perpetrator will be in court shortly, but at this point we cannot report more.

As well as going out hassling the local animal abusers, we have been out sett surveying, and taking the odd call for injured foxes in need of assistance. We will, of course, be out each week protecting our local wildlife in the South East but we always need more members. If you want to go out sabbing please contact us on: Southcoasthuntsabs@gmail.com


Hit the north: South Coast sabs travelled far to sab the grouse shoots

South Wales Hunt Sabs

www.facebook.com/southwaleshuntsabs
southwaleshuntsabs@gmail.com

We finished the fox hunting season as we started it – frustrating hunters and working with top quality colleagues from nearby groups. Since then we've kept out of mischief by sett surveying both in Wales and further afield, and some summer sabbing.

Out sett surveying, we've been working in areas we think will be new cull zones this year. As always, we find chaos and cruelty in the fields and hedgerows. From farmers dumping their rubbish where they think no one will see it, to traps and snares, to farm animals suffering in pitiful conditions. More joyfully, we also find cracking great piles of badger poo and marvel at the survival skills of wildlife despite the best efforts of farmers, hunters, anglers, shooters and cull companies.



Culmstock Mink Hounds head for world-renowned otter habitat

Sabbing saw us out with the Culmstock Mink Hounds along with friends from the South West. They were trying to hunt along the Tarka Trail – you couldn't make it up! They spent that day trying and failing to lose us. The next time we visited them they called in their friends in blue, who arrived in five vehicles and tried to facilitate a spot of illegal hunting – no shortage of police resources in the South West clearly.

Recently, we headed up to Yorkshire to sab the start of the grouse shooting season. The day was a great success and two shoots were stopped in different parts of the county. Best overheard comment was one security twit saying to another (about sabs) *"the problem is, when there's a lot of them, there is A LOT of them"*. How right he was.

We're now focusing on preparations for this year's badger cull which, as time of writing, could start any day. We will do our best to sab the bastards.

As ever, thank you to all our supporters.



Three Counties Hunt Sabs

threecountiessabs@live.co.uk
https://www.facebook.com/3CHuntSabs/
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07891639803

As we write this the 6th year of the cull is now underway in the Gloucestershire (zone 1), a 'supplementary cull' to try and kill the badgers we have all protected for so long. Local groups have put up a massive fight and were a nightly presence for the whole of the cull period from 29th August 2017 until 15th January 2018 (though actually they watch for illegal activity all year round). Massive respect to Newent Badger Alliance, Z 16, West Gloucestershire sabs and all those who were out there in the winter months. We did a bit of sett checking but they were out in rain, snow and hail. Of course, the legal war on wildlife is bad enough but it doesn't stop there. We, and Cirencester Illegal Hunt Watch, have documented 150 blocked setts across the cull zones over the last season as hunts try and stop foxes from escaping. This is the tip of the iceberg but enough to start putting an end to the practice with police and press involvement helping both badgers and foxes. We know that cubhunting is about to begin again and so face an exhausting few weeks with several cull zones about to start killing and 8 weeks of early morning starts.

(See their excellent article on page 28 – Ed.)

West Sussex Hunt Sabs

www.facebook.com/westsussexhuntsabs
Twitter: @Wsussexhuntsabs
07871569494
w.sussexhuntsabs@gmail.com

We have had a very busy summer, it's literally flown by and here we are in the cub hunting season. We have done as much fundraising as we could fit in, and would like to say a massive thank you to the lovely staff at Lush Brighton for helping us with a fantastic charity pot fundraising weekend.

Getting a new vehicle is now very necessary to keep us out in the field. We hope also to have new people coming out this season as we are all getting on a bit and need some young people to keep us going! Throughout the summer we have worked with the anti-snaring campaign and focused on checking traps and illegal snares, and we have constantly checked local areas for mink hunts. All members of our group are involved in various animal welfare and protection issues so there is never any time off.

We have been out several times already during August and found the Crawley & Horsham hunt cub hunting.

We would love you to join us out in the field, visit our Facebook page or give us a call.



Not just foxes: Crawley & Horsham rider abuses his horse

Deadline for next Howl Group News submissions is 1st Januray 2019
Please email 300 words or less to howl@huntsabs.org.uk

Please try to include at least one photo of something vaguely interesting - preferably sabbing!



West Midlands Hunt Sabs

Facebook: facebook.com/WestMidsHuntSabs/
Twitter: @WestMidsSabs
Tip off hotline: 07767620767
Instagram: www.instagram.com/westmidshuntsabs/
YouTube: https://t.co/hzhLV3QD48
Website: https://network23.org/westmidshuntsabs/
westmidlandhuntsabs@hotmail.co.uk

Over the summer we have been busy sett surveying in Warwickshire in preparation for the badger cull after the announcement that edge areas will be included in the cull.

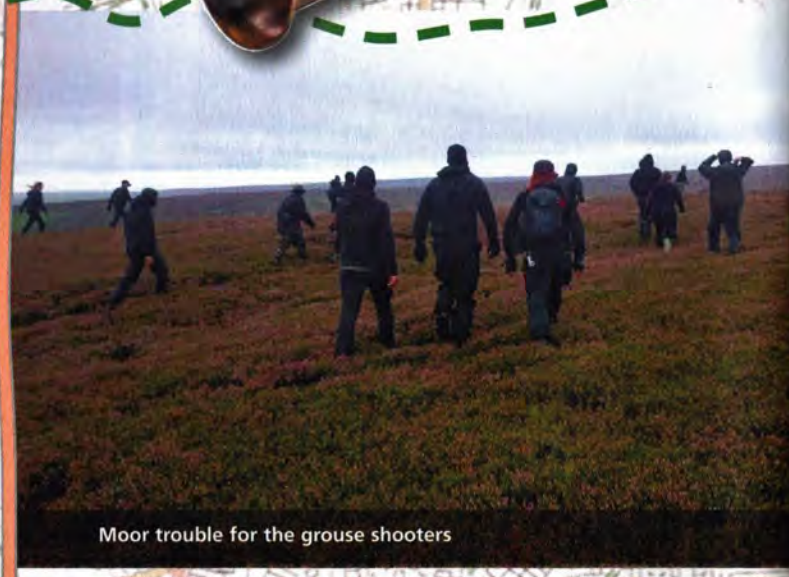
We've held demonstrations outside various police stations in Leicestershire as part of our new campaign to expose Operation Blackthorn, Leicestershire Police's hunting operation. After the same few sabs have been repeatedly targeted by this police force on top of the majority of cases against the Atherstone Hunt being dropped we've decided to start exposing their corruption and some of their officer's close ties with local hunts. Wildlife officer PC Rob Cross was part of an investigation into a violent hunt-supporting farmer. The farmer happens to be the son-in-law of the Atherstone Hunt chairman and also just happens to be friends with PC Cross on social media. The investigation was unsurprisingly dropped. PC Cross's wife is close friends with a regular rider of the Atherstone Hunt who was also under investigation for assaulting a sab. Leicestershire Police claimed to have difficulties locating him andthis case was also mysteriously dropped.



West Mids sabs make their point at the Ashby Show

We've held demonstrations at all of the Atherstone's summer events which have included the Ashby Show and fundraising events such as pleasure rides. We also held a demonstration at the Atherstone's hound racing event at their kennels where last year they made up false allegations about one of us in an attempt to take out a restraining order banning us from the hunt. It would have been rude of us not to attend this year and remind them all that the magistrates had called them unreliable witnesses after video footage undermined their statements.

(Read more about Operation Blackthorn on page 10 – Ed.)


Moor trouble for the grouse shooters

West Yorkshire Hunt Sabs

facebook.com/WestYorksHuntSabs
wysabs@riseup.net
Donate: ko-fi.com/westyorkshirehuntsaboteurs

After an eventful 2017/18 season marked by violent attacks on our sabs by riders, terriermen and hired security goons from both the Middleton Hunt and the Badsworth & Bramham Moor Hunt, West Yorkshire Hunt Saboteurs were glad to take a breather over the summer and regroup for the upcoming season.

With our trusty old van Bella finally conking out for good in spring after years of service, we've spent the summer searching for a new vehicle and we're pleased to report that we've just put down the deposit on a new set of wheels. All being well, our 'new' van will be in action very shortly and we're all looking forward to racing around the minor rural roads of Yorkshire in it. Big thanks to our generous supporters and the HSA for helping to fund our new vehicle.

WYHS haven't been entirely inactive over the summer, with members of the group sett surveying in preparation for the upcoming badger cull, as well as providing local badgers with peanuts and water during the recent extreme heat.

We also had a stall at both days of the Great Yorkshire Vegan Festival at Leeds Town Hall in June, where we chatted to lots of supporters and raised funds with our smart new stock of HSA merch.

A contingent of WYHS made it by car to the grouse shoot sabotage in the Yorkshire Dales on August 18th, where we thoroughly enjoyed meeting up with various other groups, forcing the shooting party to pack up early and escorting them off the moor

We're looking forward to a successful season and we hope it goes as well as possible for every other group too.

Weymouth Animal Rights

www.weymouthanimalrights.co.uk
Fb/Twitter Weymouth Animal Rights
weymouthanimalrights@protonmail.com

Weymouth Animal Rights formed during the Badger cull 2017 at Camp Badger W Dorset. With all of us having sabbed, some for longer than they can remember, there was no way we could let the local hunts enjoy their start to the season, cubbing, without giving them a visit...and so it began.

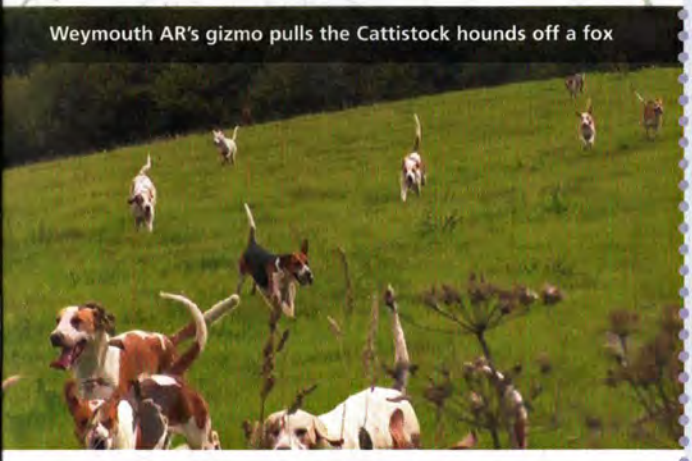
We went from the badger cull and cubbing to full on hunting, hardly having time to breath.

Concentrating mainly on spoiling the fun of Lady Charlotte Townshend's bloodthirsty Cattistock Hunt and their poor relations the South Dorset Hunt, we started to get right under their skin.

Managing to get out 2-3 times a week over the entire 2017/18 season, very soon the appearance of the Red Landy made the knuckle-draggers (terrier boys) and dribblers (hunt supporters) do some very strange things! Will Bryer (huntsman for the Cattistock), tried so many ways to try and hide from us it nearly became entertaining

Growing slowly, we were joined by other groups, South West Sabs, Dorset Against Blood Sports, Wildlife Witness and Southampton Hunt Sabs who joined us during the season and have stayed with us. We are also lucky to be able to work with some legendary Monitors! By the end of the season our appearance made the South Dorset run from home on more than one occasion and their field of sixty dwindle to just ten on a week day!

Weymouth AR's gizmo pulls the Cattistock hounds off a fox



We had an effect and saw many foxes to safety. This made the knuckle-draggers more and more violent towards us, especially our female sabs! Unfortunately, in West Dorset the police only come when called...if you happen to be on a horse... We have also been involved from the start with National Dis-Trust's campaign against the licensing of 'trail' hunts on National Trust land including organising peaceful demos at prime National Trust sites.

We also attend as many vegan/activist fairs as we can one of which was the Tolpuddle festival.

We are proud to now be affiliated to the HSA.



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 prisoners. 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.

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 Dibee #812133
Multnomah County Detention Center, 11540 NE Inverness Drive, Portland, OR 97220, USA.
Joseph Dibee was arrested in August 2018. He is facing several charges, including conspiracy to commit arson, related to actions claimed by the Earth Liberation Front and Animal Liberation Front between 1996 and 2001. Joseph has pleaded not guilty.

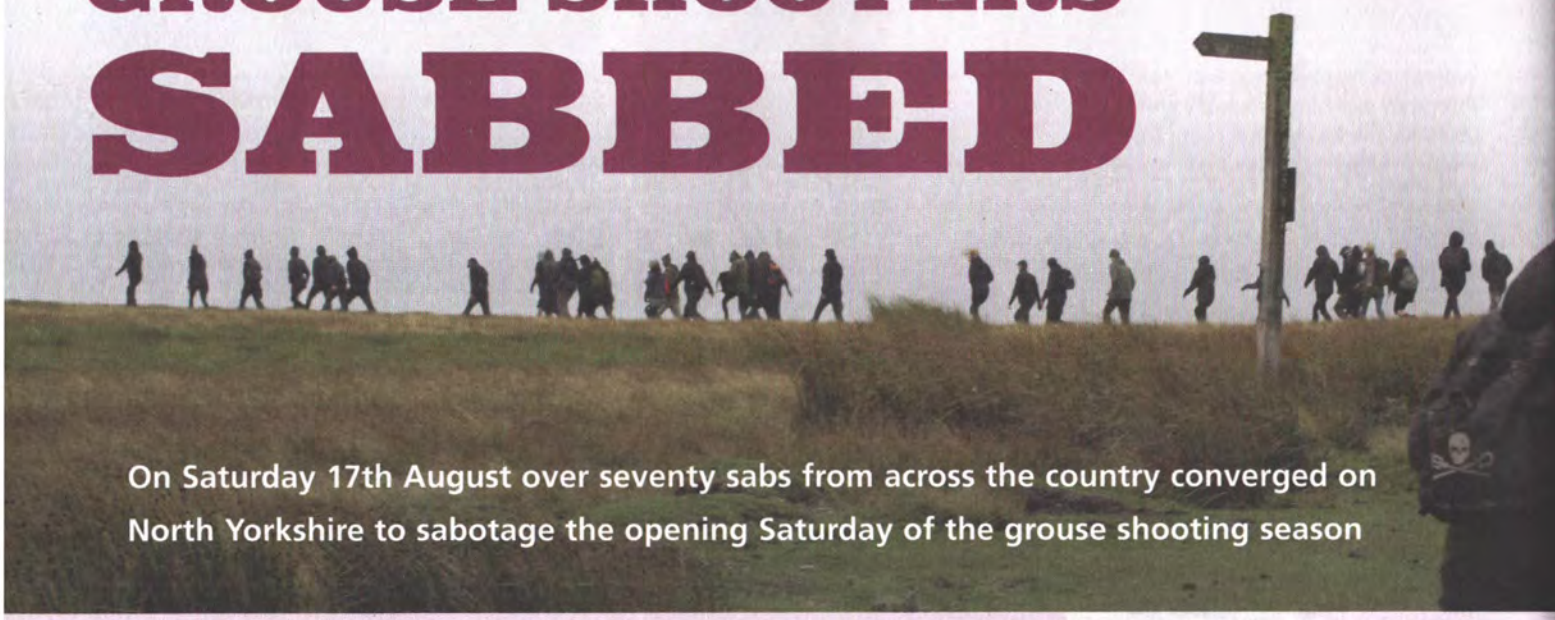
Sven van Hasselt A3021ED
HMP Winchester, Romsey Road, Winchester SO22 5DF
Sven was sentenced to 5 years in prison for 'Conspiracy to Blackmail', accused of attempting to close down a notorious animal testing laboratory in the UK, Huntingdon Life Sciences (now rebranded Envigo).

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."

Brian Vaillancourt #M42889
Danville Correctional Center, 3820 East Main Street, Danville, IL 61834, USA
In February 2014, Brian was sentenced to 9 years in prison for a McDonald's arson.

INGLORIOUS BASTARDS:

GROUSE SHOOTERS SABBED



On Saturday 17th August over seventy sabs from across the country converged on North Yorkshire to sabotage the opening Saturday of the grouse shooting season

Despite various shooting organisations claiming many shoots would be cancelled because of low grouse stocks (due to the weather extremes experienced in the UK this year) we were confident this was just a smokescreen. Nothing would get in the way of their desire to blast thousands of innocent birds out of the sky. Grouse shooting has nothing to do with conservation, it's about two things: money and bloodlust.

Months of preparation went into the action and we had teams of spotters out across the Peak District, North Yorkshire Moors and the Yorkshire Dales looking for signs of shoots. Meanwhile the main body of sabs had gathered at a central location ready to mobilise to wherever they were needed. Shoot activity was quickly spotted in both the North Yorkshire Moors and the Yorkshire Dales as several large shooting parties started to prepare for the day. A small group of sabs was dispatched to the moors to monitor the shoot there whilst the main body headed to Arkingarthdale at the northernmost edge of the dales where beaters had been spotted.



"The problem is there's a LOT of them!"



And still they come: sabs pour onto the moors

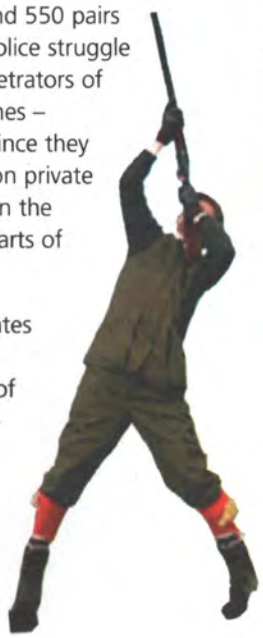
Sabs flooded onto Kexwith Moor and the shoot quickly broke their guns, retreated to their vehicles and fled at high speed. Sab spotter vehicles were quickly on their tail and followed them to the Burgoyne Hotel in Reeth. The rest of the sabs headed back to their vehicles and down to the village where they kept an eye on the shooters, mingled with a Guide Dogs fundraising event and informed the locals why they were present.

Once it became clear that the shoot had settled into the hotel to drink away their disappointment, most sabs headed south to Bransdale in the North Yorkshire Moors leaving a small contingent to keep an eye on the unhappy bunch in Reeth.



WHY DO HUNT SABOTEURS TARGET GROUSE SHOOTING?

- It's a bloodsport.
- 500,000 grouse are killed each season between August and December.
- A day's shooting can cost each gun several thousand pounds. A disrupted shoot costs them money as they'll have to refund the participants.
- Natural predators such as foxes, stoats and crows are trapped or shot (in very large numbers) because they eat grouse (and don't pay £75 a bird for the privilege). Grouse are given medication because their unnaturally high densities allow diseases to spread. Mountain hares carry ticks that affect grouse, so are killed in huge numbers.
- Environmentalists highlight the intensive moorland management and a body of science demonstrating that this causes increased flood risk, higher water-treatment costs, greater carbon emissions, damage to moorland habitats and reduced insect life in the streams running off grouse moors.
- The recent spate of moorland fires are attributed to the intensive management of moors by gamekeepers.
- There should be over 300 pairs of hen harriers nesting in the English uplands, (2,600 pairs in the UK as a whole) and this year there were just seven pairs (around 550 pairs in the UK). The police struggle to catch the perpetrators of these wildlife crimes – understandably, since they operate covertly on private shooting estates in the least populated parts of the UK.
- Grouse moor estates cover an area of England the size of Greater London – some 550,000 acres – and are propped up by millions of pounds in public farm subsidies.



Shortly after most sabs had left the area six vehicles from North Yorkshire Police - including a dog unit and a riot van - came screaming into the village to the general bemusement of the crowds who had been enjoying a pleasant summer afternoon. The rumour went round that the shoot had called them to report that "ISIS" were in the village. Surely a waste of police time? The remaining sabs watched over the next couple of hours as the shoot drifted off in dribs and drabs, their day's killing totally ruined.



Shooters not shooting

Meanwhile, down in Bransdale, our smaller group of sabs had been keeping close tabs on a large shoot who had done very little shooting all day. Reinforcements raced to join them and sent the shoot to an early bath after a very frustrating day. The local gamekeepers and shoot lackeys attempted to take their disappointment out on sabs by blocking in vehicles and general silliness but, as more and more sabs arrived in the area, they realised this wasn't such a good idea and quickly retreated.



Shooters drown their sorrows

Grouse shooting's days are numbered and hunt saboteurs will continue to play our part in consigning this bloodsport to history. We'll be stepping up our campaign against the shoots and plan to focus more of our energies on disrupting them whenever we can.

If you're out shooting then you should be looking over your shoulder. You never know - you might just see a large group of sabs heading your way!



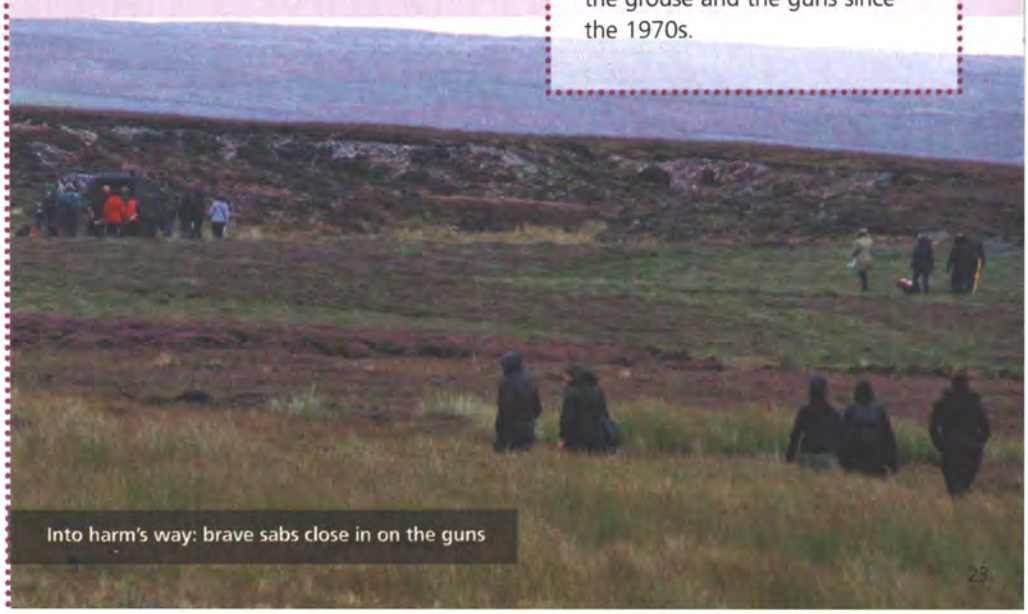
HSW

MOOR TROUBLE FOR SHOOTERS

SHOOTERS SERVE SUMMONS ON SABS

AHEAD OF OUR TIME

It's great that grouse shooting has recently come under fire from conservationists, environmentalists, rewilders, land rights activists and others. However, we in the Hunt Saboteurs Association have been putting ourselves between the grouse and the guns since the 1970s.



Into harm's way: brave sabs close in on the guns

GIZMO or GIZNO!

The HSA Tactics Officer advises on use of the gizmo

The gizmo is a small loud speaker device which plays a recording of hounds in cry. Real hounds are drawn to this sound as it makes them think there are other hounds nearby that are on a scent. Naturally enough, the real hounds want in on the action! The gizmo is therefore a powerful tool but one that should be used with caution - deployed in the wrong circumstances it can do more harm than good.

There are therefore some golden rules of gizmo use:

1 - Never pull hounds through uncovered territory*.

Picture the scene. You can hear the hounds in covert and they are working through it in front of you and are moving away from the huntsman. Here's an opportunity to take them away from him. They are starting to pick up the odd scent and getting a bit vocal but you can't see them all and more importantly part of the covert nearest to you hasn't been drawn by the hounds.

Playing the gizmo now will certainly get the attention of the hounds, their heads will go up and they'll turn in your direction as they will be searching for those hounds who they think are on a strong scent and will be keen to get in on the act.

The problem is, in doing this they've just flushed a fox which was sitting tight between you and the hounds' original direction. Now they really are on the scent of fox and that's down to misuse of the gizmo.

2 - Never pull hounds across roads or anything likely to cause danger to the hounds or members of the public.

Irrespective of how quiet you think the road is there's still a risk of an incident by using a gizmo in this way. This is why it should NEVER be used when it could potentially pull hounds across a road, railway line or similar hazard.

3 - Using the gizmo when hounds are in full cry and on the line of a fox.

I think there's a tendency for some sabs to believe that the gizmo offers a one-stop solution for this problem, but this couldn't be further from the truth. I've heard several times (when a fox is seen breaking from a covert then moments later the hounds go into cry) *"Get the gizmo, get the gizmo!"* Realistically, the only thing that you will be doing is further encouraging the hounds by adding more excitement to the situation. If the line they are on is a strong one you have little chance of changing their direction. In this situation you'd be far more effective rating the hounds with voice and whip and deploying runners to cover that line with whatever scent masker you use. These decisions need to be made quickly and with a cool head, panicking by using the gizmo will have the opposite effect.



Yer basic gizmo

4 - Don't overuse of the gizmo.

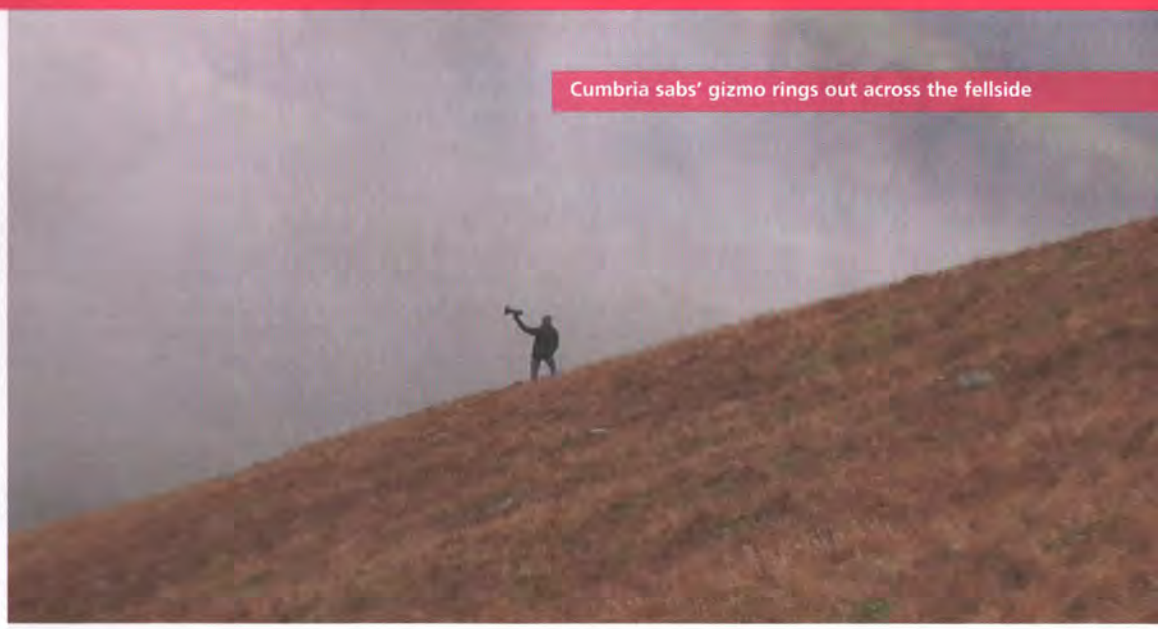
If the gizmo is used too often the hounds will quickly learn to ignore it. You'll be stood there like a lemon with the hounds completely ignoring you with a smug bastard in hunting pink laughing at your failings. Keep the gizmo for when you really need it, it can be an ace card so use it when the time is right.



Textbook: Sheffield sabs gizmo the whole pack across open ground

5 - Keep it out of sight and use with discretion.

Much like use of the horn the gizmo will attract attention, not just from the hounds but the hunt staff, terrier men and supporters. Having it on display or using it in front of hunters is likely to make you a target for any repercussions. Use the gizmo when no-one else can see you and stick it away once the job is done.



Cumbria sabs' gizmo rings out across the fellside

So, when should you use the gizmo?

Highly effective use of the gizmo was displayed by a very experienced colleague of mine when we were sabbing the Oakley FH a few seasons ago.

The huntsman was working the hounds along a line of scrub in a small valley which also contained a stream. I was on one side of the valley and my colleague was on the other. The hounds had started to pick up on a scent but had not gone into full cry, they knew a fox was there somewhere but hadn't picked up it's line. The huntsman was some distance behind and the hounds were ripe for the taking. At this point we noticed a fox leave the scrub and run down the line of the stream. The sab with the gizmo immediately stopped and watched the fox.

She waited and waited some more until the chance presented itself: the fox did a sharp 90° turn, leaped the stream and headed up the hill on my side of the valley. She then positioned herself some distance back at an angle of about 45° from the original line before the fox made the turn. She turned on the gizmo and the hounds responded immediately. They broke cover close to the original line of the fox and took off in her direction. She then proceeded to run up the hill over open ground taking the hounds with her and away from the direction the fox had taken. I then took the opportunity to cover that line with citronella. It took some time for the huntsman to gather up his hounds and our job was then done. Another life saved.

Every situation is different, but some lessons can be drawn from the above example:

1 - Don't panic if you see the fox.

2 - Be patient, give the situation time to develop.

3 - Wait for the fox to make its turn. They will nearly always do this and will also make use of wind direction and physical obstacles.

4 - Don't try and take the hounds in a direction which is unlikely. You won't usually get them to do a 180° turn so take them off at a tangent if you can and once you have them take them further away.

5 - Once you have them take them over open ground (*see point 1) and keep them in sight.

6 - Once a safe distance away cease use of the gizmo and use voice calls. Turn it off as soon as you can and certainly before the huntsman arrives to retrieve the hounds.

Although not needed in the above example, the gizmo is even more effective when used in conjunction with the horn. The horn blower should double the horn (blow a series of short, staccato notes) to further excite the hounds.

An amusing situation occurred when we sabbed the Bicester with Whaddon Chase hunt. This lot don't get sabbed that often and were somewhat surprised to see a small bunch of sabs appear, especially as there were about 100 followers and 40 riders!

The hounds had been in cry and hunted a fox to ground. We pulled the hounds out by voice then snuck out the back of the covert and hit the play button on the gizmo. We were completely out of sight of everyone there and had people sitting in the holes of the badger sett where the fox had gone to ground to discourage any further action by the hunt.

One of the Whips was acting as point rider on the other side of the covert and he had obviously heard the hounds on a line and was waiting for a fox to break. When he heard the gizmo he assumed the hounds had chased the fox out of the covert and into open land out of his sight. He came galloping round at full pelt only to find some smug -looking sabs who promptly turned off the gizmo and started laughing! He tried to style it out but was long past saving face.

It just goes to show that it's not only the hounds that can be fooled by the gizmo!



"On...on...on!" Cattistock hounds answer the call of WAR's gizmo

BACK IN THE DAY...





The Surrey Union used to be one of the most powerful and influential hunts in the country. Not anymore: decades of action by dedicated sabs has reduced the hunt to a shambolic laughing stock. In the first of a two-part series, one sab recalls the highs and lows of the long campaign against them.

The Surrey Union Hunt (Part 1)

There can't be many sabs who haven't sabbed the Surrey Union at some point over the years.

The mid '80s were the height of the Animal Liberation Leagues and there were several mass hits on the Union that saw over 200 activists turn out: hunting was usually abandoned at an early stage and the riders and supporters were chased around the fields and woods of Surrey!



The big picture: hunting halted beneath the Surrey Hills

"The resultant mass hit became known as the 'Battle of Holmbury Hill' - 300 sabs swamped their Forest Green meet and showed them the error of their ways in the big woods above the meet."

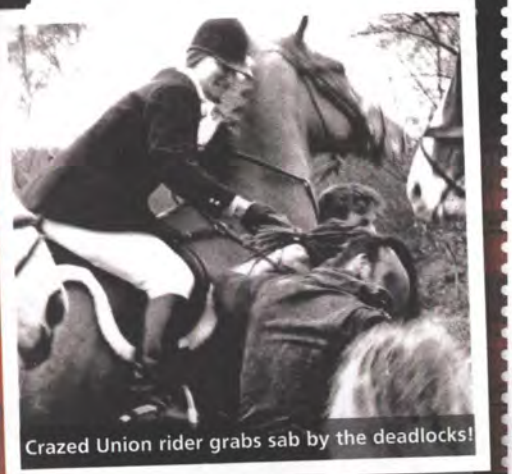
They have been through so many huntsmen over the years it is laughable: they've had the good, the bad and the clearly deranged! I started off when they had an old-school huntsman called George Holder who tried to hunt straight when sabs were around and had the support of influential masters who simply instructed the police what to do. His downfall came in the mid-80s when the pack started to riot and kill deer and then ripped a pensioner's collie to pieces which made national news. He was dispensed with and another guy - who appeared to be constantly pissed - took over the farcical hunt for a few years.

In November 1987, following the gales that brought chaos to Southern England, the hunt lost their hounds to a small group of sabs at Winterfold. They proceeded to ambush the sab's vehicle with horses blocking the road and, at several points, horses actually on top of the bonnet and boot of the vehicle. This attack led to the first



Yes sir, I will: Surrey Police carry out their orders from the hunt

arrests of hunt masters and riders in Surrey, but they later got off and it was the sab whose car was wrecked that ended up being convicted of driving without due care! A familiar story then and now.


Crazed Union rider grabs sab by the deadlocks!

The infamous John Funnell (father-in-law of Pippa) arrived in 1990 at a point when the hunt had nearly disbanded but were kept afloat by some new masters, donations of land from a neighbouring hunt and a desperate British Field Sports Society (BFSS) - the precursor to the Countryside Alliance. Funnell later blotted his record with a suspended prison sentence for ABH after riding his horse (on the orders of hunt secretary, Pru Goodchild) over a sab who was sitting in an earth to protect a fox that had gone to ground.

The Union were no different to most hunts in that they orchestrated violent ambushes and then pleaded victim when the inevitable mass hit happened the following week. Unfortunately for them, local groups had become bigger in number, including older locals who formed the 'Granny Sabs'! Then, with the attendance of Brixton and South London sabs at most meets, the hunt became a meek little thing. They stopped advertising meets, changed days and hid in farmyards.

In January '91 after being sabbed at almost every meet they snapped and pre-planned an ambush at Lukyns Estate near Ewhurst which saw five sabs hospitalised with fractured skulls, broken wrists and noses. The resultant mass hit became known as the 'Battle of Holmbury Hill' - 300 sabs swamped their Forest Green meet and showed them the error of their ways in the big woods above the meet. Many well-known sabs were arrested for violent disorder in the days that followed but these charges were eventually dropped. The hunt learnt their lesson for a while.

They nearly collapsed again in 91/92 but decided to bring in some outside help to deal with the sabs. They first bought in a bunch of East End villains under the management of a gangster/actor called 'Nosher' Powell who some might have seen in the Motorhead film 'Eat the Rich'. He had a scary-looking bunch of thugs turn up one Tuesday meet near Reigate and, with the attendance of Adrian Thompson (then terrierman at the Crawley & Horsham) and his mates, they thought they would see us off.

After a day of full-on fighting and sabbing, and after Thompson's lot had had to depart after he headbutted a sab in front of some scared-looking police, we finally won the day during an altercation at a footpath bridge where even Nosher surrendered and John Funnell looked utterly defeated.


Adrian Thompson: a thug then and now

After so many years of constant sabbing (more than 80% of their meets were hit) the pack was basically useless and were easily taken by sabs who had more experience of controlling them than the numerous useless huntsmen. They had become a laughing stock and were essentially a honeypot for sabs - other hunts would even give us their meets so we didn't come to them! A measure of their demise was how their Boxing Day meets moved over the years from the Civic Centre in the middle of Guildford to a car park on the outskirts, to, finally, a crap pub in the middle of nowhere near their kennels.

They still entertained ideas of grandeur and so, after their bad experience with Nosher's amateur thugs, they decided to bring in some professional security who were something of a growth industry in the early '90s. Next time we'll look at how successful that was (spoiler alert – it wasn't!)


Nosher Powell's meatheads fail to deter sabs

SETT THREAT

HOW HUNTS TARGET FOXES AND BADGERS

"Badgers... you may stop them in, but you can't stop them out if they wish to get in, which is why big badger earths are such a nuisance in a hunting country..."
(from 'Hunt and Working Terriers', Jocelyn Lucas).

Badgers and their setts remain vulnerable to attack by hunts despite 1992 legislation (the Protection of Badgers Act) which criminalises damage to setts and harm to badgers, and despite the 2005 Hunting Act which made hunting itself illegal.

The badger cull has turned out to be key in exposing how persistent and ubiquitous the practice is. Had it not been for the cull, groups would not have started checking setts as a tactic against fox hunting other than those encountered by chance. Our normal sabbing and monitoring area covers not only the Gloucestershire cull zone but also new zones in Herefordshire, Worcestershire and the Cotswolds, so we have been familiar with sett blocking antics for some time. It was only during the Gloucestershire cull, however, that we fully realised the importance of incorporating sett checking and sett knowledge with sabbing in protecting both foxes and badgers.

As a group, along with many other hunt sab groups, sett surveyors, wildlife enthusiasts and cull sabs, we have found many setts blocked by fox hunts. We recall one occasion when a sett was blocked in the heart of the Gloucestershire cull zone in 2013 by an embittered landowner who breeds racehorses. Furious that neither cages nor marksmen had killed any badgers, the sett was blocked, unblocked by sabs and then blocked again with earth-compacting equipment. An entrance was missed in this heinous act and the badgers survived, but the sett has now been destroyed. Such attacks are, alas, all too common but hunts have long targeted badger setts to stop foxes escaping down them.

The results are devastating. An article by 'Brockwater' highlights how badgers can be trapped when they try to dig their way out of a blocked sett. Earth piles up behind them and they get trapped on both sides, dying from suffocation. The National



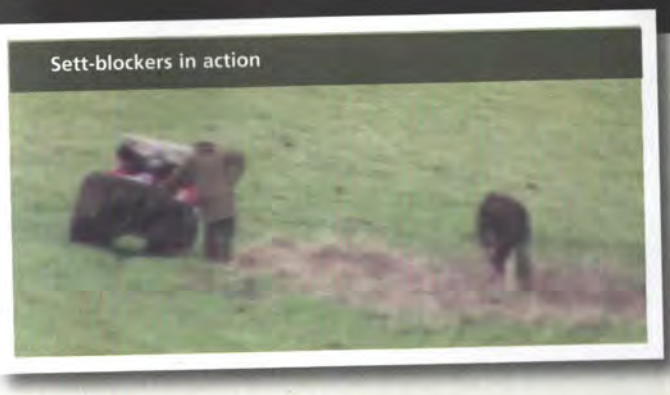
Sett-blocker filmed burying badgers alive

Federation of Badger Groups has found that badgers "*could be physically crushed by the soil used to block their sett entrances, especially following rain*". It has stated: "*An example of this was observed in Leicestershire in February 1995 where a badger was found trapped by the waist in a sett entrance which had been blocked by a local fox hunt...*" The badger, which was euthanised by a vet, "*had a ruptured spleen and had been in agony for days*".

We have been out before meets to try and catch the culprits and have deterred numerous attempts at sett blocking, often seeing known hunt staff beat a hasty retreat with a couple of confrontations thrown in. Quite simply, hunts do not want hunted foxes disappearing down a large sett where it is very difficult to dig them out and so we often find five or six blocked setts before, during and after hunt meets. We know that it is only the tip of the iceberg. In January 2018 a sab from our group caught a masked man with a quad bike who had just blocked a badger sett prior to a meet of the Cotswold Hunt. Incidents like this have forced several hunts to block fewer setts or resort to other methods of stopping foxes from going to ground in them (such as having supporters stand around setts to scare off any hunted fox) thereby making it harder for them to hunt as effectively and more likely that wildlife will suffer less. The more setts you know and check, the more foxes will escape and fewer badgers will be put at risk from suffocation.

Game, sett and match: Heythrop scum caught red-handed





Sett-blockers in action

Working closely with Cirencester Illegal Hunt Watch we have compiled data on sett blocking over the 2017/18 season. The resulting document lists 149 blocked badger setts found and recorded with 140 of these reported to the police in the hunting areas covered by the two groups, most in Gloucestershire.

While Three Counties recorded the majority of these, CIHW made a significant contribution and others on the ground also supplied information.

The vast majority of blocked setts discovered and recorded (94) were freshly or recently blocked and found in proximity to known hunt meets on the day of the meet or in searches within a week of a known hunt meet in the area. The searches also revealed some setts historically blocked by hunts even if not recently. This accumulated information gives a vivid picture of hunt behaviour. Blocked badger setts in the vicinity of a hunt may be circumstantial evidence but it is very persuasive and Three Counties and CIHW succeeded in instigating a BBC Points West report and a headline article in The Independent Online. As with cub hunting, this is an aspect of hunting that the public does not know about.

The data has also proved effective in providing the police with an accurate picture of the situation, and we have received a positive response from PCCs and the police in the areas involved. As the new season starts Three Counties, in partnership with CIHW and other groups, local individuals and the police, will continue to work to protect badger setts from this criminal activity which also serves to expose the trail hunting myth. We check setts all the year round. During the hunting season this can include frequent checks. As this coincides with the badger cull which started in Gloucestershire zone 1 in August and continued up until 15th January 2018, cull signs are also being checked for.

In his 18th century book 'Thoughts on Hunting,' Peter Beckford wrote: "*You should not encourage badgers in your woods: they make strong earths, which will be expensive and troublesome to you, if you stop them; or fatal to your sport if you do not*" (page 226).

We would be happy to advise other sab groups who might want to help show that sett-blocking by hunts is still a national concern.

Three Counties Hunt Saboteurs in conjunction with Cirencester Illegal Hunt Watch
August 2018

(More background information and hunters' statements on badger sett blocking can be found at https://network23.org/3chuntsabs/hunt-information/hunts-in-the-three-counties/hunts-vs-badgers/

HSA ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 2018 REVIEW

This year our AGM was held at Jackson's Lane Community Centre on Saturday the 9th June and over 70 people from 25 different sab groups attended. After the usual formalities of welcome from the Chair, officers reports, elections and submitting of accounts we had an excellent open floor discussion which included some lively debate about sab interactions with the police. It's fair to say there were differing opinions about how much involvement we should have with them but everyone listened respectfully and we all had stuff to take away and think about.



We were then treated to a very informative presentation by Joe Hashman from Hounds Off. Joe shared his decades of experience with us and gave his thoughts about different tactics we could use today, over ten years after hunting was supposedly banned.

Once we'd tidied up after ourselves we all headed down to Archway (via the pub) and had a delicious vegan buffet at The Loving Hut. Such was the attendance at the AGM that we struggled to squeeze everyone in and may have to consider our options for next year.

A fantastic day was had by all and the AGM is always a great opportunity for networking and to catch up with old friends. The more sab groups who are represented the more successful it becomes, so it would be great to see even more groups present next year.

Lee Moon
Press Officer HSA

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 email Membership@huntsabs.org.uk

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.....





HUNTERS
SHOOTERS
ANGLERS
WANKERS

"Fishing is conservation! Off you fuck." Mark S

"This badge is totally out of order and not nice." Phil B-R

"What's wrong with wanking?" Beverley S

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www.huntsabs.org.uk