The Magazine of The Hunt Saboteurs Association Summer 2020 (Issue 123) £2 (free to members)

HOWL

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

Tactics: In or Out the Covert?

Hare Shoot Sabotage

Swedish Lynx Cull

Back in the Day

Badger Milk

Group News

Drones









LETTER FROM THE CHAIR:

Well, the world has really changed since our last issue, and who knows where we will be when you read this? Maybe we will still be sitting at home in self-isolation or it could be all over. At this time, we have had to postpone the AGM until further notice. I am pleased to report that the committee application process is complete, and we will once again have a full 12-person committee, with some additional co-opted members. One such is our HOWL editor who works hard to get this magazine into your hands.

There have, of course, been some benefits to the coronavirus outbreak for animals around the resultant shut down. Hunts had to finish early, giving our wildlife a much-needed break. Many large-scale shoots have been stopped and seem unlikely to be able to go ahead, and we may hopefully see the end of some of them, financially. If this goes on into August it will seriously affect the Badger Cull, more of the big scale shoots, mink hunting, and of course, the start of the cub hunting season. The really good news is that some shoots are making their gamekeepers redundant, and hopefully they will have found some more moral employment before the shoots want them back. I'll be honest and say I am torn between wanting this to end and wanting it to go on.

As an organisation we have shut down our merchandise sales, to protect our merchandise officer from the many trips to the post office it demands. This of course affects our income and I am glad to report we have partnered with abillionveg app as a new fund raising tool, (see more of that later in this issue), but I would urge you to get involved.

As a committee we continue to meet and make decisions virtually, so the organisation has not closed. As you should be aware, we have been running and promoting a hotline number (07443 148 426) for people to report any hunts or other forms of animal abuse to us. We receive on average about 3 phone calls a day. It has been amazingly successful and enables us to pass on vital intelligence to our local hunt sab groups. Please save it in your mobiles in case you ever need to use it.

Also, in this issue we report the sad passing of John Bryant, a stalwart in the anti-hunting community for many decades, a friend of hunt sabs and who sat on the board of the League Against Cruel Sports (LACS). He is one of a long list of truly great pro-animal board members of the League who have been forced out of the organisation for being too radical in their defence of animals. He will be sorely missed by his long list of friends and the animals he worked so hard to protect.

Finally, it my pleasure to announce that our membership has grown considerably over the past few years and continues to do so. Please encourage your friends and family to join and share this magazine with them. The financial stability of a large membership will allow us to keep our vital work going. Our hunted wildlife deserves no less.

As always you can be safe in the knowledge that as soon as hunt sabs need to be back in the field protecting the hunted animal we will be there, and 100% of your membership is used to ensure that happens.

You support, as always, is greatly appreciated.

HSA Chair



photo: www.stacywoolhousephotography.weebly.com

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The Hunt Saboteurs Association has been in existence for over 57 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 Howl
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Howl is printed on 100% recycled paper using vegetable inks.

EDITORIAL

Welcome to another packed edition of HOWL, the magazine of the country's leading anti-hunt organisation.

Many groups found hunts cancelling because of bad weather in the New Year, but this disruption was nothing compared to that caused by Covid-19. This virus has caused vast human tragedy - I hope you and your loved ones are keeping safe.

But it is also true that the lockdown has given nature a desperately -needed break. Even in my fairly urban area, for the first time ever I have seen trout in the canals, green woodpeckers in the park and red kites circling overhead. It is incredible how quickly rewilding can happen when nature is given a break.

There is no doubt that hunts and shoots will be negatively affected by the outbreak. For a start, their programme of summer fund-raising activities will be curtailed and we have to hope the same is true for cubhunting and perhaps the main season too. However, we also know how determined they are to kill our wildlife and so we must remain vigilant.

Whatever happens, the HSA is still working hard to support sab groups across the country and we stand ready to fight hunting whenever it begins again.

Please pass this magazine to a friend when you have finished reading it.

Stay safe,

Ed Howl



Cheshire Hounds love North Wales sabs

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 September 2020.

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.



IN OR OUT?

COVERING THE COVERT

The HSA Tactics Officer explains what to do - and what not to do

Look at any OS map of the countryside and it won't take long to find some historical names of small woods which indicate their use. The most common is something like 'Fox Covert'. It doesn't take a genius to work out why this copse is there and what its purpose is, but anything with "covert" in the name is likely to have been used for fox hunting for generations. Of course, not all of these will still be used for that purpose, but many will, and many will also contain artificial earths.

Sabs may have an overriding desire to get into a covert and do something when they see it being actively hunted, but the question which really needs to be asked is - when do we go in?

The answer is very simple (bar a few exceptions) - **Never.**

I'll cover the exceptions to this rule later but for now let's look at why you shouldn't go in.

A fox is a wild and intelligent animal. It will know its environment intimately. It will know all the best escape routes and where it can go to ground to hide, provided these holes haven't been filled in the by the hunt's terrierman. Once hounds are cast into the covert and are actively searching for a fox it will already be aware of the approaching danger and be in the process of making its escape. During a hunt there will almost always be a point rider (this may be the whip or a senior rider) where they believe a fox may leave the covert. It's their job to alert the huntsman to this and point the direction. Foot support may also do this if they notice the fox. In the old days this would have been in the form of a holloa and pointing but now it may be a discreet radio or phone call.


She knows her way through

If the hounds pick up the scent they will start speaking and finally go into cry. If you haven't seen the fox, there is a huge temptation to go in and try and stop the hounds, but this is absolutely the last thing you should do. The fox will know how best to escape the hounds. If a bunch of sabs go blundering in they will add a variable which the fox is not qualified to deal with and potentially turn the fox back into the hounds. You will, in effect, become part of the pack. Foxes should always be given the time and space they need to run and escape.

Sab Positioning

This means standing back from the edges of the covert, you need to be in the fields a good 30 metres minimum but also making sure you have a clear line of sight to all escape routes the fox might take. Split your teams if necessary, to cover all sides. Corners will give you line of sight over two sides, use this to your advantage. Foxes often run hedge lines so pay special attention to these and make sure you're not standing right on them. The position of the point rider will also give you a fair indication of where they think the fox will run.


Squadding up: sabs keep it tight on the move

Make sure all groups of sabs are close together. Spreading out in a line will be like what hunts do during cubbing. Keeping things tight will give the fox the maximum space. If you do see a fox approaching move as quickly and as quietly as you can out of the way.

If you are limited by space get low and don't move until he's well past you. Don't look straight at him either. Many animals recognise the human face so turn away and watch from the corners of your eyes, keep quiet and don't make sudden movements.

Don't Give Him Away

Never point and shout "fox". That seems daft but it's hard not to especially in the heat of the moment. Remember the hunt will be looking for him too so the last thing you want to do is help them. If someone is filming quietly advise them or make a quiet call over the radio to inform your colleagues that Charlie has left the covert and in what direction.


Once you've got 'em, keep 'em interested!

Take Action

Once he's clear move swiftly and purposefully to the line he took. Give the area a good soaking in whatever scent-masking solution you use. And then be prepared to stop the hounds. Be aware that from about Christmas onwards foxes will be paired up for mating so there may well be a brace on the same line so give it enough time for another to come out. If the fox throws in a direction change or goes over a road then these are the areas to cover his line. Using these direction changes and environmental elements to your advantage means

the hounds might blow through your wall of citronella and lose the scent as they fail to make the turn. If they do this, then have someone on hand to encourage them away in a different direction with a horn or gizmo but make sure you're taking them over open ground where's there's no chance of them picking up on another line. Once well away stop the encouragement and stop them.

Rate the Hounds

If the hounds pick up the scent they will be heading in your direction and probably at speed. Stay calm and get your whips ready and get shouty.



"Backtoim!" Sab moves in to rate the hounds

Be firm, loud and sharp with your commands. "Leave it" and "back to him" (pronounced backtoim or biketoim) with loud cracks of the whip should do the trick. If you are a horn blower then blow the "stop" command. Get in front of them and be prepared to head off any that want to go around you. Sometimes this is unavoidable but every second you delay them will give the quarry a better chance of escaping.

Taking Control of the Hounds

Sometimes a fox may stay within the covert and the huntsman will know there's something in there due to the hound's excitement and his previous experience. If he continues to work the covert take any opportunity you can to try and pull the hounds out... but be careful. Never pull them across the covert or through areas they haven't covered. If you can see the hounds on the edge this is the perfect time, especially if they are away from the huntsman. Get on that horn or gizmo and pull them out into the open. Use encouraging voice commands too.



Sab pulls the pack out of covert

Taking the hounds away from the huntsman is hugely satisfying and a major embarrassment for the hunt.

Exceptions to the Rule

1 **Large Woods.** Really large woods mean that the huntsman and hounds will be effectively hunting the fox within the wood and it may not actually leave it. Such woods will usually have tracks or rides running through on which horses can travel. These allow a clear line of sight and this is vital. In these instances, your only option will be to enter the wood but keep you heads on a swivel and try and keep up with the hunt. It can be dangerous to be in front of the hounds in these instances as there is the constant danger of turning the fox, but you can still make things very difficult for the hunt by filming and constantly distracting the hounds. Voice calls of "heads up" and "backtoim" should keep them distracted and annoy the huntsman.

2 **The terriermen go in.** If a fox goes to ground the terrier men will be called in to either dig it out or flush it to the hounds for further hunting. Historically this would have been three long blasts on the horn but it's now more likely to be a radio or phone call. If you see them go in, get in there after them. If the hounds are marking to ground, then pull them out and sit in the holes! These can be very tense situations but be stubborn and do no move for anything. If you have a sympathetic police force call them, especially if the hounds are marking to ground in a badger sett, these are of course covered by the Protection of Badgers Act, so any interference is a crime.

3 **Huntsman gets off his horse.** This could mean that he has seen a fox and will be directing the hounds more closely to get into the area where the fox may be hiding. These tend to be very thick areas of scrub, stick piles or bramble thickets where there won't be room for his horse. He will be attempting to flush the fox with his presence and will often use a "brrrrrrr" type sound to excite the hounds. Get in there with a camera and start distracting the hounds, this will most likely dissuade him from continuing his activities. Seeing another rider on the edge of a covert with a spare horse could signal this so make sure you know the horse that the huntsman is riding.

These few simple basics can make a huge difference in your effectiveness and save a lot of lives. Just remember that unless the exceptions apply, never go in!



If this scum goes in, you should too

EAST COAST CONQUERORS

East Yorkshire Coast Hunt Sabs (EYCHS) have gone from strength to strength over the last three years, covering a huge area to protect wildlife from the Staintondale, Holderness, Middleton, Sinnington, Goathland & Glaisdale and Derwent Hunts, often standing with other sab groups and sabbing shoots in the region.

The hunting fraternity desperately wants the public to believe sabs only rouse themselves from their beds for two reasons: *'to sign on or to mask up to intimidate the so-called custodians of the countryside'*. Nothing could be further from the truth – sabs are never off duty. The COVID-19 crisis means this article is written about a typical year rather than 2020. Sadly, despite the lockdown, wildlife is still not safe from persecution: lampers are still out, terrier men are still roaming the countryside with dogs and spades, and foxes and other animals are still being killed.



EYCHS out in all weathers!

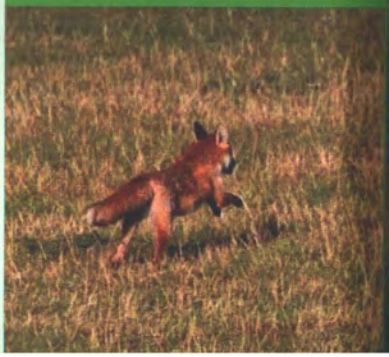
"The rapport established with landowners means they turn to us for help because they are fed up of hunts and their supporters trespassing and their intimidating behaviour."

During summer, after the official hunting season has ended, EYCHS are always active. Most of us work full time, including roles in the NHS and education, fitting everything in around family, activism, volunteering with wildlife and animal welfare groups and rescuing animals such as pigeons, rats, hedgehogs and pheasants. During the cubbing and hunting seasons, we also protect a local wildlife sanctuary from the hunt.

Our usual activities are severely limited by lockdown and social distancing. Usually we would be sett checking and supplying water in case of drought; talking to landowners, farmers, and locals; posting notices to help people identify signs of hunting activity; researching hunts' territories, on OS maps and on the ground; fundraising; outreach and protests such as

Countryside chaos







Sabs tend injured hound

the Enforce the Ban march in London.

One of EYCHS's greatest achievements is building support and trust within local communities, the result of the incredible hard work of members living in hunt areas. The rapport established with landowners means they turn to us for help because they are fed up of hunts and their supporters trespassing and their intimidating behaviour. Landowners and locals alike ask to meet us and for 'Hounds Off' signs for their property - a running battle with the hunts, who remove signs on sight.

We are always grateful to recruit new members – hopefully, most won't have the same very muddy initiation as two of our new sabs did in December. In the rapidly fading light of late afternoon, it seemed a good idea nimbly to skip over the mud at a gate entrance. Unfortunately, our sabs got stuck in thick, stinking, freezing mud above their knees. One sab's boots stuck fast, and no amount of pulling would release her. After many unsuccessful attempts to free her, the only way to escape was to abandon a boot. On the journey home, the smell of foul mud filled the cars. Sabs had mud in their hair and clothes, and it took several showers to shift the stink. It taught us to ensure we carry spare clothes and boots, rope (for pulling out stuck sabs) and plastic bags for seats. However, such incidents also forge incredibly strong bonds and through sabbing you'll make the best friends you'll ever have, who you know you can trust to stand with you in the most challenging of circumstances.

On New Year's Eve, EYCHS sabs witnessed Holderness' hounds killing an exhausted, terrified vixen. Horrific incidents of cruelty of this magnitude inevitably affect the sabs involved.



Reaching out

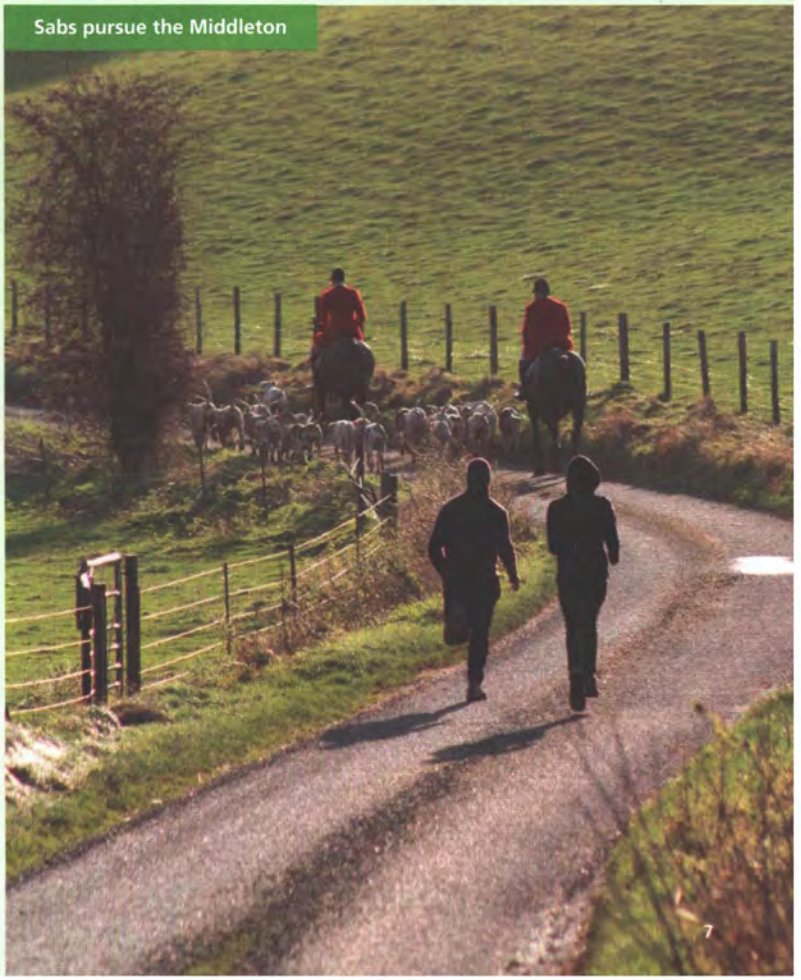
There has also been an escalation in hunt violence toward sabs and an ambulance had to be called for one of our female sabs, pushed over by a hunt supporter while she was spraying citronella on the road, and she was treated in hospital for injuries to her face, hands and knees.

Please don't let incidents like this deter you if you are thinking of joining your local sab group. Although it might appear that while out sabbing we only encounter abuse and intimidation from hunts and their supporters, this is absolutely not the case. We frequently meet members of the public who abhor hunting as we do, and it always lifts our spirits. One of our favourite memories is of the lovely older lady who invited sabs in for a cuppa in her camper – she gave the hunt such an ear bashing they thought she was one of us.

The COVID-19 crisis has resulted in the cancellation of events such as vegan fairs and we are missing the opportunity to talk to the public without the hunt breathing down our neck. It's always wonderful to talk to so many people. Vegan fairs are just one way we raise funds, along with very successful events such as online auctions - we'd like to take this opportunity to say a huge thank you to everybody who has donated. We invest your money wisely on equipment ranging from radios, maps and body cams through to our drone, and we will be forever grateful to HSA for their support with the purchase of our sab vehicle. EYCHS also raised funds for an iPad for a local hospital ward, allowing isolated COVID-19 patients to stay in touch with their loved ones.

Finally, EYCHS have heard from several sources that Staintondale Hunt has folded. Nationally, several hunts have disbanded recently and while we are very concerned about the fate of the hounds, we are hopeful that the foxes and other wildlife in the area will be a little bit safer in future.

Sabs pursue the Middleton



sabgroupnews





Why not collect the set?

Bath Hunt Sabs

bathhuntsabs@yahoo.co.uk

Find us on

Spirits have been 'top shelf' for Bath Sabs as this season ends. We try not to remind each other that the pubs have done the same, but that hasn't stopped us celebrating the successes and hard work of our team throughout the year.

We have saved countless lives, exposed the scum with publicity and raised much needed funds over endless hours of grafting on stalls, making merch and getting bought coffees that never got spent on coffees.

We've worked with a number of brilliant groups, most often Bristol and South Wales. And we've sabbed a whopping twenty-nine hunts so we won't bore you by listing them *(Phew! -Ed)*.

We would like to thank the HSA for their support and especially for supplementing our fundraising efforts which has seen another Landy join our now forty strong group!

And thanks to our wonderful artist friends, including Naomi Joy who has helped get us there making and selling beautiful 'ANTI' enamel pins to help with our future endeavours. They can be found on her website naomijoyart.com

All the best, Bath Sabs x

Beds & Bucks Hunt Sabs

bedsandbuckshuntsabs@riseup.net

Find us on

So, we reach the end of another hunt season, one that was cut short by the unprecedented situation we currently find ourselves in, we hope all our supporters are safe and well.

Prior to the Covid-19 outbreak we were having a very successful season with hits on the convicted Fitzwilliam and helping our comrades Peterborough Hunt Sabs against the Fernie, however our primary target will always be the Oakley. Our success will always be measured on the reaction of the hunt and this was obvious for all to see. They bought in some hired thugs to try and stop us and changed their hunts days to avoid our attentions. This of course largely failed as we hit them both on Saturdays and midweek. Towards the end of the season they effectively ceased hunting on a Saturday, and this will have had a major impact on their finances through lack of cap fees.

On top of their lack of hunting, the Oakley were in the midst of a scandal. Affairs within the hunt mastership lead to the sacking of the hunt groom and the resignation of two masters. With only two masters left, their country diminishing all the time and a general lack of support this feels like a terminal decline. When a hunt has to borrow country off another hunt (the Fitzwilliam in this case) and continually look for joint meets you know that all is very much not well. We like to think we've played a significant part in this.

What happens over the next months depends very much on how the situation over the whole country develops but rest assured when hunting begins again, we'll be ready and waiting. The group is in a great position to face these challenges and we look forward to doing so.


Is that it? A pathetically small field at the Oakley



She prefers sabs

Berkshire Hunt Sabs

huntsabs@riseup.net

Find us on

Once again, we have been concentrating on our local and sometimes not so local hare hunting beagle packs. As with the mounted packs they have become ever more withdrawn, paranoid, and secretive about their movements.

As we look back over the season we have been finding that often they will switch days, meets and even time of day to attempt to throw us and even though they comprise of small gatherings we find them with tip offs and the extensive intelligence that we have gathered over the years. We have been putting together more efficient mapping and search tactics towards this as well as more in depth online research and whilst we don't yet know what 2020/21 hunting season will look like amidst the coronavirus we're making sure that we are ready for next season.

Of particular interest to us are the packs who are connected to schools and those that are able to use MOD land. These are the most nervous of being exposed and are very quick to stop activities when we appear.

Apart from protecting the hunted animal, an important aspect of the college beagle packs is that they are a training ground for young hunters and, as our opposition admits, this type of hunting helps shape future generations within their community with many of the kids trained with beagles going on to positions in the fox hunts.

To end the season, we collated our stats and have worked a lot with friends from Severn Vale & Bristol as well as 13 other fantastic groups and have been out most weeks and some mid weeks when available. As has been the case for the last few years, we are bracing ourselves for being in a new cull zone and are continually sett surveying in preparation.

Brighton Hunt Sabs

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Find us on

We've been keeping ourselves nice and busy down here in Brighton for the last half of the 2019/2020 season. We've been sabbing the usual array of scum in the South East making visits to the Crawley & Horsham, the Southdown & Eridge, the Old Surrey & Burstow, the Surrey Union and the East Sussex & Romney Marsh.

We've also managed to squeeze in a couple of shoots and some of the group have been able to sab a lot of midweeks too – super important as we all know the most killing occurs at this time. All this has by large been done alongside our good friends from South Coast, Croydon, Guildford and West Sussex groups.

Of course, the season was cut short for obvious reasons, but we kept an eye out for those last few weeks knowing that given the chance they'd have been out regardless.

Our last proper day out sabbing was had at the Surrey Union as a show of solidarity to the Guildford group who'd had landy tyres slashed the week prior, a good day was had with many groups in attendance showing the SU that nothing they do is going to save them from being sabbed!

On February 4th we held a screening of *The Animal People* at The Cowley Club, this went down well and hopefully encouraged more Brighton locals to get involved in animal rights.

Shooters shafted by Brighton Hunt Sabs



Bristol Hunt Sabs

bristolhuntsabs@hotmail.co.uk

Find us on

The second half of our season was far from conventional, with a lot of cancellations due to bad weather and flooding, and the last couple of meets we planned to attend cancelled due to the Coronavirus outbreak. We hope everyone is keeping well during these challenging times!



Nuff said

Rewinding a bit...we started 2020 with a New Year's Day sab of the Wiltshire & Infantry Beagles. They got another visit a few days later - the third time they were sabbed in just over a week - this time after we had stopped the RAC Beagles from hunting earlier in the day. A bad start to the year for the hare hunters! The RAC got another visit later in the season, with them spending most of the day in their kennels instead of hunting before their hunt ball.

A particular highlight of the season was scuppering the first 'National Basset Hunting Day', a day of hare hunting hosted by the Four Shires Bassets in the Cotswolds, with hunt supporters travelling from all over the country to take part!

The fox hunts got some attention too, with visits to the Cotswold Vale Farmers' Hunt, Ledbury Hunt, Monmouthshire Hunt and a couple to the Curre & Llangibby. We finished the season sabbing a foot meet of theirs where a fox was helped away to safety by sabs.

Shout out to all the groups and individuals we worked with throughout the 2019/20 season and to everybody who has helped us financially, with information and in any other way. We will be out and active again as soon as it is safe to do so.

Cheshire Hunt Sabs

cheshirehuntsaboteurs@riseup.net

Find us on


Hounds get some TLC from Cheshire sabs

Well, it's been an interesting season of sabbing to say the least. The introduction of "Safety Officers" to deal with pesky sabs at the Cheshire Hunt and the Wynnstay certainly threw up a few challenges for us. They also provided us with a few laughs along the way whilst we gave them the slip too! With their constant attempts to stop, we had to quickly adapt our strategy to keep up with the pack and avoid any interaction with them. We saw much success and still proved to be a massive pain in the ass for them! So much so Jake Oppenheim the huntsman for the Cheshire Hounds has decided to up sticks and try his hand elsewhere this coming season! Our newest recruits that we met during the badger cull have really pushed the boundaries too and proved themselves to be very efficient hunt saboteurs.

We had sabs on the Wynnstay and the Cheshire Hunt for most of the season with the occasional visit to the Flint & Denbigh with our friends North Wales. We also teamed up with comrades from Staffordshire, Manchester and Liverpool. A tense standoff with hare coursers in Yorkshire will live long in the memory. An away day with Fife sabs was a huge success and no doubt there'll be more linkups in the future!

As the season ended it became something of an anti-climax for the hunts. Hitting headlines again, a Wynnstay groom was caught out kicking a horse in frustration and the Cheshire Hunt all but gave up without so much as a final blow for home, failing to turn out for their final meet!

Cirencester Illegal Hunt Watch

cihwatch@gmail.com

Find us on


Beaufort Hunt hounds all over the road

The hunting season was brought to an abrupt end due to Covid-19. Hopefully, this gave fox families respite so vixens could give birth and raise their cubs without threat of hunts rampaging through their habitat. Sadly, animal cruelty never stops, and sabs are finding traps and snares and sett entrances blocked and driven over by tractors. Wildlife rescue centres are still admitting injured mammals and birds during lockdown and need so much support. During this season we have had over 50 incidents to report to the police which of course included breaches of the Hunting Act and Protection Badger Act as well as common assaults and criminal damage to our vehicles. We have witnessed hounds rioting on to a deer family. Being blocked on footpaths is commonplace and being told to get back to footpaths when already on them! Huntsmen try to use their horses as weapons and block our way, especially when the hounds are in full cry pursuing a fox. There have been several occasions when sabbing the VWH and Beaufort Hunt when we are certain they have killed – the site of a fox fleeing for its life is something we never get used to. Beaufort Hunt terrier men were caught on camera by 3C sabs, blocking a sett and digging an entrance where toilet blocks were found inside. We are still finding artificial earths where they're feeding and releasing foxes and we suspect 'bagged foxes' have been released to ensure a chase to satisfy their bloodlust for a kill. Recklessly, during lockdown DEFRA has announced that the Badger Cull will go ahead for its' 8th year, in 50 zones resulting in 50,000 badgers being killed this year. Please join your local group to help and make a difference for all wildlife.

Thank you to all our supporters.

Croydon Hunt Sabs

croydonhuntsabs@gmail.com

2020 started with Croydon sabs catching the Crawley & Horsham blatantly illegally hunting on their New Year's Day meet. Evidence has been submitted to the Sussex cops…don't hold your breath.

After that, the rains came. With much of the countryside under water, most hunts cancelled or resorted to hound exercise. Only the C & H carried on regardless, coming up with a hitherto unseen form of aquatic hunting, with the hounds rioting after deer in knee-deep water until the timely intervention of sabs.

The Old Surrey, Burstow & West Kent FH tried to bolster their meagre numbers by inviting riders from every waterlogged hunt in the south-east to their meet at Marsh Green. It wasn't the best choice of venue (the clue is in the name) and they had a brief, soggy and heavily sabbed day. The OSBWKFH have been increasingly resorting to hunting on Sundays, presumably in a futile attempt to avoid the attention of sabs. Then, just to round off the season, Coronavirus and lockdown came upon us. Not only were the final few hunt meets cancelled, but also the lucrative Point to Point meets, which will have major financial implications.

Many of the hunts in the south-east seem to be struggling, with rumours of mergers rife, so let's get out there next season and finish them off. Our summer fundraising is also being hit, so if you can contribute, it would be much appreciated.


Croydon crowd in



Derby have the pack under control

Derby Hunt Sabs

derby_sabs@outlook.com

Find us on

This year, 2020, is 69 years since the Peak District became Britain's first designated National Park, 43 years since Derby Hunt Saboteurs was formed, 15 years since the Hunting Act, 8 year since securing the first successful conviction of cub hunting, and the third time we prepare for a possible Derbyshire Badger Cull.

While we've enjoyed former sab's stories, of cracking open a bottle on the quadruple joint meet (Meynell & South Staffs Hunt, Staffordshire Moorland Hunt, DNS Beagles and Dove Valley Minkhounds) the day after the ban came into force, and laughed at the thought of terrierman, Andy Bull carrying a coffin onto the meet, we realise the naivety as we continue to protect our wildlife 15 years on.

This season, we got out mid-week a lot more than we have in recent past seasons. This means the Barlow Hunt who avoid sabs as they only usually go out at weekends once a month, have received lot more attention. We also surprised the Meynell & South Staffordshire Hunt and the South Notts Hunt, with our mid-week escapades – they weren't very happy to see us. We've travelled to North Wales a few times to sab the Flint & Denbigh and to say a final good radiance to former huntsman of the High Peak Harriers, Nigel Cox, who finally retired. We've also had few visits to Cheshire and Shropshire.

Earlier we revealed that Derbyshire Constabulary, are running an anti-hunt protestor operation called Operation Trek. There was a mass sab of the Barlow Hunt's New Year Day Meet, with locals also holding their own protest. The policing cost for just this one meet were a staggering £15,856. The season finale, just before the Covid-19 pandemic, was armed police (who just happened to be in the area, once again) stopping us outside the Barlow Hunt's kennels.

Devon County Hunt Sabs

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Find us on

2020 kicked off with a NYD visit to our friends at the Eggesford where the clearly hungover hunters were especially unpleasant. A fox was hunted to ground, and sabs prevented a dig out.The following Saturday we went to the South Tetcott. They seemed unhappy to see us and sabs faced aggression throughout the day. One drunken young moron decided it would be fun to hang off the back of our Jeep hitching a ride for most of the afternoon. Torrington Farmers were next on the list and a fox was seen to safety early in the day. On route home driving past the Eggesford kennels a large rock was thrown at our Jeep windscreen, covering sabs in glass.



Eggesford rider on the attack

Horrendous weather one Saturday in mid-February meant most Devon hunts cancelled...we checked several meets and found the South Tetcott. As they packed up, we were accused of smashing a supporters 4x4 back window in - utter rubbish - the window was broken already! The same drunken yob who caused us trouble before made threats and on returning to one of our vehicles we found a back window smashed.

With help from South Devon, Guildford, and Norfolk sab groups (legends!) we sabbed the four-hunt joint meet on Dartmoor on 19th February. A good day with sabs keeping up with the hunt despite difficult terrain. Due to Covid-19 bringing the hunting season to an abrupt end our last sab was with the Silverton on the 14th March. A fox was seen to safety after being blatantly hunted illegally and soon after there was a violent and unprovoked attack on two of our runner sabs by the terriermen. They stole a phone, broke equipment, and smashed our Landrover window.

East/West Kent Hunt Sabs

astkenthuntsabs@hotmail.co.uk/

Find us on

Straight after Boxing Day, we were back out with the EAST KENT with WEST ST. (EKwWS) hunt, watching their terrier men tooled up to break the law giving Oscar-worthy performances of "trail laying" the moment sabs turned up, with the rest of the hunt their usual bad tempered selves. We also joined them at a pub meet on NYE and had an impromptu demo. Without pause for breath, we then joined the ASHFORD VALLEY TICKHAM (AVT) hunt on NYD, who rode into a riding school who were out for a tack, completely spooking their horses and nearly causing a serious accident.

Our drone was as put to good use as our eyes in the sky, often a reason why the hunts now pack up early, or swap Saturday meets for weekdays, causing massive pressure on the hunt's structure. One Saturday with no Kent hunts out, we joined 40 other sabs at the East Sussex & Romney Marsh Hunt joint meet with the Southdown & Eridge.

The local hare hunts were also put under pressure, with visits to the Bolebroke and the Blean Beagles, who would often block in our vehicles, or take us on a wild goose chase...but on several Saturdays, our methods stopped them hunting. We also sabbed a pigeon shoot!

The AVT continued to try and thwart us by endlessly wasting police time with absurd allegations, and even swapping vehicles to travel to meets... but whenever we could, we were with them, constantly hampering their efforts to hunt. The EKwWS also played silly beggars, but we also attended several of their meets, including their closing meet at the infamous Crundale estate, where sabs were ridden at and attacked by crazed terrier "men", but sabs stood their ground, and the hunt gave up after a pathetic three hours.

An excellent end to season with two vehicles out and many new members getting involved...



Terriermen: smoking tabs, scowling at sabs

Fife & Central Scotland Hunt Sabs

Find us on


Tall sabs or small pylons? Fife & Central at the ready

We have had a busy season sabbing hunts across Scotland, mainly focusing our attention on the Fife FH with the help of our comrades Grampian sabs, but also heading west to sab the Lanarkshire & Renfrewhsire (L&R) FH with the brilliant Glasgow sabs. Cubbing saw the beginning of an emerging pattern of behaviour from Fife FH that would continue throughout the season, with the hunt trying every trick in the book to evade us, from switching their hunting days, times and using different vehicles to transport the hounds.

As the season wore on, we got more attuned to their tricks and often managed to locate them. On the occasions we didn't, we headed over to sab the L&R with Glasgow, who could reliably be found terrorising the countryside to the west of Glasgow. This season we have noticed a marked increase in aggression and violence across hunts in Scotland, in particular at L&R, with sabs being attacked and cars vandalised. We can only assume our increasing numbers and effectiveness in ruining their day is starting to grate on them!

As well as hitting our two nearest hunts, we also headed down to the Borders to pay a couple of visits to the Berwickshire Hunt. Our main target for the season though was Fife FH. We sabbed them effectively throughout the season, with sabs negotiating tough terrain and classic Scottish winter weather right the way through. The season ended on a high, with the hunt meeting at the same closing meet as the previous year when they killed a lactating vixen; this year, with knowledge of the meet from last season, we managed to stay with the hunt all day and saw numerous foxes to safety. Here's to even better sabbing in 20/21 and the continued demise of hunting!

Glasgow Hunt Sabs

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Find us on


Brave sabs refuse to leave an illegal digout

In the second half of the season, Glasgow almost exclusively visited our local hunt, the Lanarkshire & Renfrewshire FH. It has been a delight to plaster on the pressure and witness one of the oldest hunts unravelling.

Unfortunately, things kicked off on a sour note as a fox was killed during an illegal digout - terrier and not bullet getting to the animal first. The digout was away from the hunt and we were moments too late to intervene. The following week hounds chopped a fox who was laying low in gorse and again, there was sadly little that could have been done.

We managed to whip up quite a lot of negative attention for the L&R however, turning bad to some good. There was coverage of the digout, as well as many outlets running with footage we had collected of the neglect and abuse L&R inflict on their hounds. Surmounting in quite the backlash.

We had a good season in all, with no more kills. Highlights being an epic three-hour digout, where sabs prevented a death in some of Scotland's worst weather. Despite being assaulted and having our vehicle so smashed up it was written off, ever-biased police were keen to arrest only us and ignore the fact we were sat atop an active badger sett, therefore preventing rather than committing a crime.

Closing meet was indicative of most the season and rounded things off nicely. We were ahead of the hunt all day and took control of the pack numerous times, leaving L&R little chance to pursue wildlife. An aggravated hunt with little to lose saw sabs kicked and punched to the ground, but we were undeterred and protected each other and wildlife for the rest of the day and will continue to do so for as long as it takes.

Grampian Hunt Sabs

grampianhuntsabs@yahoo.co.uk

We managed to hit both the Fife FH and the Lanarkshire & Renfrewshire (L&R) hunt multiple times each during the second half of the season along with friends from Fife & Central Scotland sabs, Glasgow sabs and even Cheshire sabs!

Fife FH usually hold a fancy meet with breakfast at Kinnaird Castle around the end of February but we believe this was cancelled due to wet ground, however this didn't stop a large group of sabs showing up and shutting them down at their new meet location. The following week was their closing meet, where the previous year they had brutally killed a vixen on a hillside but we managed to prevent a repeat of this and were happy to report no kills at their closing meet.

The L&R hunt and their supporters assaulted sabs, vandalised cars and were caught being violent towards their hounds on numerous occasions this season. We had predicted they would be the first Scottish hunt to resort to violence, and while we have luckily not yet seen violence and aggression on the same level and scale as our southern comrades we wouldn't be surprised if it continued to escalate over the next season.

We certainly seem to be seeing a change in tactics from the Scottish hunts, with increased violence from the L&R and more sneakiness from Fife FH. Fortunately for wildlife we won't be put off and will (unfortunately) see them all again next season.


It's all glamour at the Fife Foxhounds

Guilford & North Downs Hunt Sabs

Find us on


Two wheels good: Guilford's elite bike unit in action

North Downs & Guildford sabs had a good end to the season concentrating as usual on the Surrey Union FH. In January at a meet on the expansive Thursley Common, we deployed our mountain bike squad who relayed the hunt's position to the various foot teams ensuring they couldn't evade us. We also visited the Hampshire Hunt a couple of times normally ensuing they packed within an hour and stopped a pheasant shoot as a bonus. In February some of our group travelled to darkest Devon for a mid-week hit on 3 hunts and managed to help the local sabs.

The end of the season was full of drama. At the end of February, after sabbing the Surrey Union, we had nine tyres on our two landies slashed in a pub car park leaving the sabs stranded and over £1000 down in damages, but a magnificent response from the public raising over a grand in a couple of days. The following Saturday when the Surrey Union met at Shackleford saw a great response when we asked groups from the south east to help. Almost all groups turned up to help us with transport, the 60 sabs swamped the hunt getting them off 3 foxes and the hunt were depressed to see our two landies with freshly fitted shiny tyres turn up in the afternoon.

This was the last hunt of the season because Covid-19 finished all hunting , we have learned that because of losing their fundraising events like the point to point and the hunter trials the Surrey Union are over 35k down and are in financial trouble; our group on the other hand are doing very well and are determined to finish the Surrey Union off once and for all!

Herefordshire Hunt Sabs

Ko-fi.com/herefordshirehuntsabs
herefordshirehuntsabs@gmail.com

We continue to focus mainly on the North Herefordshire Hunt. The second half of the season started as the first half of the season had ended, with two of our sabs preventing a dig out at a badger sett. We went on to sab the North Herefordshire a further four times and joined South Wales to sab them when they snuck off to the Valleys for a joint meet with the Gelligaer Farmers Hunt.

We hear from multiple sources that the North Herefordshire Hunt are struggling due to lack of funds and it is obvious to us that they are losing access to more and more of their country. On a good day they might muster a field of fifteen. Covid-19 restrictions make it unlikely that any of their planned fundraising events will go ahead this summer, and whenever hunting commences again we will continue to put pressure on them by exposing their illegal hunting.

We hit the previously unsabbed Radnor & West Herefordshire Hunt twice, packing them up early on the first occasion, leaving us time to act on a tip off and catch up with the North Herefordshire by mid-afternoon. One of our sabs monitored the Ludlow Hunt on midweek meets and gathered useful evidence of breaches of Forestry Commission licences.

We are now the proud owners of Bertha, our seven-seater group vehicle which means we can get more sabs out in the field. Big thanks to everyone who has supported us financially in the past year and made this possible. To round off the season we had two successful fundraising events, our inaugural 'No Hunt Ball' and a stall at the Hereford Vegan Fair.


The Radnor's Mr High-Viz ... in a bit of a tizz.

Please keep contacting us with information about meets and bloodsports in general and we will keep taking direct action to protect our wildlife.

Hertfordshire Hunt Sabs

hertfordshire-hunt-saboteurs@riseup.net



Cottesmore drowned out on New Year's Day

We hit the new decade with a bang by organising a protest at the Cottesmore's NYD meet at Melton Mowbray. With at least 50 protesters mobbing the event huntsman Edwards didn't even attempt his usual speech. The Cottesmore have moved their main hunting day to Tuesdays in a bid to keep us away from their highest paying subscribers. So, thanks to our new recruits we were able to hit them twice a week in January and February. Our many moles in Rutland tell us the Cottesmore are experiencing some financial difficulty, we are happy to help them with that.

As well as our campaign against the Cottesmore we have been keeping an eye on matters closer to home also often splitting our resources to hit two hunts on the same day. We have visited the Puckeridge, Cambridge & Enfield Chace, Thurlow, Essex & Suffolk, Pytchley as well as teaming up with several other groups to bring a nasty hare shoot near Bury St Edmunds to a stop before a shot was fired.

At HHS we don't believe in an "end of season," when the fox hunts stop, we just divert our resources to fighting other areas of animal abuse. At the time of writing we are still under lockdown however we have been putting our daily local exercise to good use by ridding our local countryside of illegal snares and traps and inspecting badger setts for signs of interference from undesirables.

The early cessation of the fox hunting season has been advantageous not only for the foxes, but it has allowed us to start reorganising sooner. We are spending our time planning recruitment, training, outreach, tactics (both field and legal) and keeping a close eye on the approaching badger cull.

Kernow Hunt Sabs

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www.kernowsabsmerch.weebly.com
Find us on

Kernow Sabs should have been kept busy until mid-April this year, Cornwall always being one of the last counties to finish, but the COVID-19 outbreak ended the season a month early. The prolonged wet weather had a big impact on ground conditions, and when the severe storms hit in Feb/Mar many Cornish hunts chose not to meet, which is very unusual as we have often sabbed in gale force winds and torrential rain. 2020 saw Four Burrow Hunt let hounds chase through privately owned nature reserves again, prompting landowners to get a story on BBC Spotlight, much to the annoyance of the hunt. They responded by making a ridiculous show of forming a cordon of hunt staff and support along one of the reserve boundaries at the next meet in that area, it was hilarious.

Drunken redcoat hassles sabs



The bad publicity and constant sabbing appears however to have upset Four Burrow, as on one outing they got the landy pulled by 3 police vehicles on a fake call out, then their support blocked us in prompting a second disgruntled police visit that day. Some of the officers were most definitely biased against us, and if they had checked their facts properly would have discovered that the pro hunt people had wasted their time twice on purpose.

Western Hunt seem to be in disarray with dwindling field numbers, huntsman Charlie Watts leaving and various rumours about their future, and Cury Hunt have shrunk to 4 field riders!

The team managed to help numerous foxes to escape this season amid blatant illegal hunting. At time of writing it's unknown what the coming months will bring but we will be ready for the cull and cubbing season.

Lancashire Hunt Sabs

Paypal.me/lancashiresabs
ko-fi.com/lancshuntsabs
Find us on

We had a busy second half to the season, with sabs from Lancashire being present at the Cheshire Hounds, the Wynnstay Hunt and the Lunesdale FH on New Year's Day. The following weeks saw us paying visits to the Blencathra FH, the Melbreak FH, the Ullswater FH and the Cumberland FH.

Barry TODHUNTER fails to live up to his name...again.



We were joined by Liverpool sabs in February to successfully sab the Ullswater FH in an area which is new to us, owned by the Ministry of Defence. The fell packs are desperate for hunting land as they have lost a lot of their previous areas after the National Trust decided to stop licensing them following the campaign by National Dis-Trust (now called Stop Hunting on the Nation's Land).

The newer campaign, Stop Hunting on Lake District National Park Authority land, focusses on the pro-hunt corruption within the Lake District National Park, where illegal hunting is being licensed by LDNPA representatives who are actively involved in hunting.

On our last visit to Cumbria our sab vehicle broke down. It was Saturday morning, it was drizzling, and we were stuck on the hard shoulder of the A66 just outside Threlkeld, home of the Blencathra FH. To cut a long story short, we needed to be towed home. With 5 sabs and only 2 spare seats in the tow truck cab panic set in. On being told that we could have a courtesy car we let out a collective sigh of relief. As we drove away, we all concluded that leaving the last sab of the season in a little red city car was more embarrassing than the scum hooting, tooting and whooping.

We now need a new vehicle and since we are in full lock-down, most of our planned fundraising events have been cancelled. Please help us get another vehicle in time for the next sabbing season.

Deadline for next Howl Group News submissions is 1st September 2020.
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!







Lincs sabs on the case

Lincoln Hunt Sabs

www.ko-fi.com/lincssabs

Find us on

2020 got off to a strange start, the hunting season severely afflicted by the very wet weather we encountered with many of the shire packs calling an end to their seasons early, and now the country is on shut down due to coronavirus... so, what to say?

Since the last HOWL, we have continued sabbing the Belvoir and Quorn with Notts up until they both finished for the season, we squeezed in a few midweeks at the South Notts, Cottesmore, Fernie, Grove & Rufford, Barlow and Middleton. We worked with sabs from West Yorkshire, Sheffield, Hertfordshire, Northants, Peterborough, Manchester, North Wales, Cheshire, and Staffordshire in the process.

We attended the closing meets of all the above hunts except the Grove and the Barlow but did manage to catch the Blankey and Burton for their "grand finales". We can happily report they were all well and truly sabbed with no known kills. One trip to the Fernie - their closing meet - culminated in a several violent attacks on sabs and our vehicle sustained damage to the bodywork and driver's wing mirror.

We also joined other groups for a couple of mass sabs at the beagling festival and the hare shoot, stopping off at the Thurlow on the way home. We arrived at a crucial moment as we caught them in hot pursuit of a fox that we were able to distract the hounds off and allow her to make a safe escape, how different it might have been had we not found them.

Our summer plans of fundraising have taken a bit of a battering as vegan fairs we would usually have stalls at, benefit gigs and Charity Pot party plans have all had to be put on hold, so if any readers want to help out towards next seasons insurance that would be most appreciated, you can donate at: www.ko-fi.com/lincssabs

Liverpool Hunt Sabs

Find us on

We certainly had a busy few months getting out and about until the end of season madness was curtailed. We've travelled North South and East with visits to the Barlow to support Sheffield after their nasty Boxing Day incident, the Ullswater in Cumbria to help out Lancs Sabs and the Warwickshire to give West Mids some much needed support. We joined many groups to successfully shut down the beagling festival in January.



Liverpool's mascot, Charlie, assesses the opposition

In between we've mainly sabbed Cheshire FH and North Staffs. We've teamed up with Manchester and Staffordshire sabs, near the end of the season we helped new group Shropshire sabs on the North Shorpshire. Two hunts we usually visit, the Holcombe and Meynell, were both affected by flooding with one cancelled meet providing the opportunity for an excellent training exercise for newcomers. We finished the season with an unplanned hit on what turned out to be a joint meet of the South Shropshire, Wynnstay and Albrighton. We met with Shropshire sabs and Shropshire Wildlife Monitors and were later joined by Manchester, North Staffs, and North Wales sabs. The hunts we'd all independently intended to sab decided to meet up, so we met up too! A long and tiring day with the hunt out for 7 hours determined to hunt, but with tenacity, resolution, excellent communication between the groups and sabs at peak fitness we foiled their desperate attempts for a last meet of the season kill.

This has been a good season for us, building up our communication and tactical skills. We've generally been splitting up into smaller groups to maximise effectiveness with new members being swiftly skilled up. As soon as we are able, we'll be out checking our badger setts ready for whatever the future holds.

Manchester Hunt Sabs

join.manchesterhuntsabs@gmail.com

Donate: ko-fi.com/manchesterhuntsabs

Find us on

Manchester Sabs have been busier than ever in the second half of this season, with sabs managing to get out two and sometimes three times a week, which has allowed us to keep the pressure on some meets that would have otherwise had no sabs present.

Christmas and New Year was a busy time for us with a couple of visits to the North Staffs, and one to the Barlow all in the same week. January saw us keeping the pressure on the North Staffs, as well as a visit to our old pals the Meynell & South Staffs Hunt where Terrier Men Andy and Sam were so excited to see us that they could not keep their hands to themselves. We also paid a long overdue visit to the Rockwood Harriers, a hunt that in previous years has been very violent towards sabs. It seems they have fallen on hard times though as despite having no sab presence for several years they still only managed to rustle up about five riders, we are hoping they are on their last legs.

We spent three days in the Midlands helping to shut down a Beagling

Guerrillas in the mist: sabs close in on the Midlands Beagling Festival



Festival, but after the first day they cancelled the whole thing, so we used the opportunity to pay a visit to the Quorn who were less than pleased to see us!

The rest of the season we divided our time between the Albrighton, Meynell, and Middleton Hunts.

Just like last season we have welcomed lots of new sabs to our group, and it has been great to see them picking up new skills and getting stuck in. If you are interested in getting involved in sabbing next season, then please get in touch with us through social media.

Mendip Hunt Sabs

Tip-Off Line: 07493 363134
Email: mendiphuntsabs@gmail.com
Website: https://mendiphuntsabs.wordpress.com
Find us on



Taking back control: Mendip sabs in action

It's been another monumental few months for MHS as we've kept the pressure on our local scum squad the MFH. They are a hunt in turmoil, with a constant sab presence and shrivelling support. Not only are their field riders diminishing, but the red coats too! With their whipper-in sacked and many no-shows from master George, towards the end of the season it was often the case of huntsman Kent the Loneliest Redcoat out with a field you can count on one hand.

In desperation, this failing hunt have resorted to dragging in even more thugs and bully-boys in a frantic bid to keep us and our cameras back. Assaults, threats, and vehicle damage are par for the course, as is them calling the police on us. At one meet, this culminated in an armed response of six cop cars being called to a small group of our sabs for false reports of them having a handgun. Whilst sabs were handcuffed and searched, the huntsman blew for a kill in a nearby copse. Despite all the additional challenges, we remain defiant and have saved many foxes from the MFH hounds.

We have continued to support our local sab groups in combined hits of many other hunts over the past few months. We also took a trip to Ireland to join with the amazing new sab groups there and welcomed them back to sab with us shortly after. A bloodbath was averted at a memorable joint meet of the Cotswold Vale & Vale of White Horse hunts, in which MHS, HSI and Three Counties sabs saw seven foxes and helped them escape the hounds.

Norfolk & Suffolk Hunt Sabs

ns.sabs@yahoo.co.uk
https://ko-fi.com/norfolksuffolkhuntsaboteurs
Find us on

The second half of the 2019/2020 season was more of a mixed bag for our group, with visits to the Waveney Harriers, Dunston Harriers, West Norfolk Foxhounds, Suffolk Hunt, Essex & Suffolk Hunt and one trip a little further afield to the Mid Devon Hunt.



Beautiful fox seen to safety by sabs at West Norfolk Foxhound meet

Our usual hunt, the Waveney Harriers, still received the lion's share of our attention, but in the latter part of the season we didn't need to do much as the hunt seemed to do a good job of sabotaging themselves. On 18th February (the 15th anniversary of the law banning hunting) one of our colleagues from the Norfolk & Suffolk Against Life Quarry Hunting group filmed the Waveney hounds chasing and savaging a muntjac deer. The footage was horrific and received coverage in local press as well as the Mirror newspaper with Ricky Gervais commenting that hunters "should be prosecuted and made to seek psychological help". Just a few days after the footage was made public, the monitor who filmed the deer being savaged had a dead badger dumped outside her home. This was clearly an attempt to intimidate but it backfired somewhat as local press and The Mirror once again covered the story. The final incident of self-sabotage was when the Waveney Harriers killed a second deer on the A143. On this occasion no sabs were in the area but the chase and kill were witnessed by two members of the public and two council workers. Unluckily for the hunt the same monitor happened across the aftermath of the incident and managed to interview those who had witnessed the kill.

In February we also joined other groups at a mass hare shoot at Ixworth Thorpe. Due to the number of sabs in attendance from numerous sab groups (some of whom had travelled a considerable distance) not a single shot was fired.



They can't shake Northants sabs

Northants Hunt Sabs

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www.paypal.me/ENABS

As 2020 dawned, sabs from Northants and Hertfordshire, continued as they'd started the season, hard on the heels of Cottesmore hunt. It's fair to say that the Cottesmore started the New Year as they ended the last one, in a state of incandescent fury at the attention they received from sabs.

With sabs now attending weekday meets, the Cottesmore were beginning to understand we wouldn't be intimidated. Nothing really changes in the mind-sets of the Cottesmore's band of quad bike riding 'enforcers'. Bouncing around fields like gangs of out of work clowns, they are forever a 'rabble without a cause'. Their leader and Cottesmore huntsman, Christopher Edwards, continued to do his best impression of being in charge. However, Chris has the charisma of a gate post.

The Cottesmore hunt support is undoubtedly dwindling. Sabs never far away, even the Cottesmore faithful are beginning to question their allegiance. How long will it be before even they, with their limited capacity for rational thought, realise the game is up. Watching a hunt being sabbed is what they have come to expect, and they can rest assured it's not going to change.

We can of course offer them a way out. Not that a bunch of misfits with the collective IQ of a storm drain are ever going to recognise they are part of tiny and shrinking minority. It's time to stop pretending they are engaged in anything legitimate. The Cottesmore, like all hunts, are nothing more than a gang of thugs and like all such gangs, their demise is in no small part down to their own arrogance. We promise that sabs won't turn their backs or walk away. The only thing in an uncertain world you can depend on is this, if you continue to hunt, we will continue to sab you!

North Dorset Hunt Sabs

NorthDorsetHuntSabs@activist.com

Having completed some successful sabbing of the local mink hunt during the summer we started concentrating on watching kennels from mid-August and were there for the opening meet of the BSV hunt who were openly fox hunting from day one; filmed trying to head a cub leaving a maize field. The Portman began a few weeks later and we joined other sab groups to disrupt their opening meet despite the hunt employing their own stewards who proved useless .

September was particularly busy with both Portman and South & West Wilts hunts being visited and numerous foxes saved including two being run to ground by the Portman that would no doubt otherwise have been killed.

Later in the cub hunting season some new recruits joined us and we caused the Portman some real grief managing to disrupt them especially with their new huntsman Tom Lyle who has been an embarrassment to the hunt throughout the season, losing hounds on a weekly basis in gardens, on roads and on a railway line. In late November he was caught on film hunting a fox - yet five months later the police still haven't charged him; just weeks later a kill by Portman was filmed and the video reported nationally.

The new year brought no respite but we were by now getting some really good numbers out sabbing with the BSV being targeted in the last few weeks where they were hunting hard but we kept on disrupting them right until their last meet, despite plenty of threats and stolen equipment.

Issues with the group's Landy have dogged us all season so the early end to hunting was more welcome than ever. We would like to thank all the sabs who we have worked with particularly our good friends at WAR and Mendip Hunt Sabs.



Sabs undeterred by the Portman's quad squad

Northern Ireland Hunt Sabs

Find us on

The 20192/0 season has brought us a lot of great success. Several hunts have remarked their numbers have dropped significantly due to our presence, this straight from the "horses" mouth so to speak.

We have noticed that more and more supporters no longer following either. In addition to this the hunts are spending less and less time out hunting, due to being banned. One of the landowners that we came across told us that they won't allow this scum on their ground anymore, as they cause so much mess and hassle to their own animals. They also don't want the publicity of being seen as bloodsport supporters, which they detest.



A belt and braces approach: huntsman gets nicked!

A highlight of the season was season, a huntsman being arrested on New Year's Days for assault and theft. This being one of their most important days of the year and he ended up in the cells. In the current climate there will be no surprise that some of the hunts will go to the wall before 2020/21 starts. We have several hunts that are really struggling and on their last legs and by sabbing them in the new season might just put them over the edge and finish them off.

All wildlife was safe when our presence was at the hunts during the past season. There were some very close calls, but direct action and good use of the gizmo prevented any deaths. We have a lot of new members looking to join us next season and we are looking to ruin more days for the blood lust scumbags.

We just want to wish all our Sab group families the best of luck whatever part of the world you are in, stay safe and look after each other.

North Wales Hunt Sabs

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No rest for the Flint & Denbigh

On New Year's Day we hit the Barlow Hunt with numerous other groups and witnessed some shocking policing. On other trips to Derbyshire we also hit the South Notts and the Meynell packing them both up not long after our arrival. In Shropshire we hit the South Shrops and the North Shrops and out first ever visit to the Wheatland.

In Cheshire we hit the Wynnstay who were as vile as ever, and the Cheshire Hounds who amazingly resorted to following trails thank to all the pressure sabs and monitors have put on them. Back home and our prime target is the Flint & Denbigh, the only mounted hunt in North Wales. But for how much longer? We've been made aware all is not well at the F&D, with a new huntsman coming in next season being the third in as many years. We'll be upping the pressure on them once again next season. With rumours they are financial struggling, and members are not happy with the appointment of sacked South Devon huntsman Robert Metcalf we may finally see a light at the end of the tunnel. We can guarantee we'll be out until the bitter end despite the constant harassment from North Wales police.

At this time we don't know what the Summer will bring but we'll be out again as soon as possible. Stay safe.

Norwich Hunt Sabs

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Why the long face? Norwich sabs keep on top of the Essex FH

The 2019/20 season was a good one for Norwich sabs. We had a steady flow of information coming in from the public so kennel sitting was kept to a minimum and we were able to hit a range of hunts, mostly the Suffolk Hunt but also the Essex & Suffolk Foxhounds, the Essex Foxhounds and a couple of hits on the East Essex Foxhounds. The latter saw the usual 'fun' but we got off lightly there compared to last season. Highlights of that day included a fox and a cat fleeing from hounds through somebody's garden, followed by 10 sabs. The residents came out brandishing an axe which was quickly pointed at the hunt once we explained the situation.

At other times we were able to stay closer to home thanks to some information from locals, and we visited the North Norfolk Harriers on their opening meet and several meets of the once-prestigious West Norfolk Foxhounds where we were confronted by a naked supporter jumping in the river (note: this is normal for Norfolk).

We've stuck with our usual crew – Suffolk/Essex Sabs, South Cambs Sabs and Cambridge Sabs – and have found a solid rhythm working together. On the vast majority of sabs we have had the hunt pinned down for the day and been able to intervene where necessary.



The Midlands Beagling Festival lasted almost 30 seconds

Nottingham Hunt Sabs

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Find us on

We had a challenging start to 2020 as the Belvoir killed twice in January whilst sabs were present. On both occasions we had no opportunity to stop them as the kills were too quick but sadly, we know that hunts kill all the time when we're not present, so this only spurs us on. The second half of our season had a nice hare theme to it as we were involved in totally destroying the beagling festival that was due to take place in Atherstone country in late January. The sight of 50 sabs charging across the fields in the mist was one that will stay with us for a long time. We had a rare tip off that the Oakley Foot Beagles were in the Vale of Belvoir in early Jan so some of us nipped down from sabbing the Burton and curtailed their day early. It was also great to be part of the large group that stopped a hare shoot in Suffolk. Legal or not we'll stop them killing if we can.

The hunts seasons all went a bit pear shaped from February onwards with many days cancelled and seasons ended early due to the wet weather. The Belvoir finished a fortnight early on the 29th Feb and we were there to ensure their season ended with minimal fuss. We finished the season with a bang and were out four times in the final week visiting the South Notts twice as well as the final meets of the Quorn and Blankney. The South Notts had planned to go out on foot on one of these days and the presence of sabs meant they never even left the meet.

Once lock down finishes we'll be spending the summer surveying badger cull zones and hunting the mink hunters.

Peterborough Hunt Sabs

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Since the last group update in the winter issue, our sabbing has involved mud, rain, and more mud. Almost exclusively focussing on the Fernie Hunt in Leicestershire, turning in an overall 27 appearances at this hunt alone over the season (with other hunts sabbed for good measure).

Shortly after the new year, our investigation work paid off and we were able to name and shame the security company of soldiers who had been protecting the Fernie as "safety officers". Following publication in the Sunday papers, they were pulled from hunt security duty immediately...

With constant heavy rain throughout January and February, the Fernie hunt country was beginning to resemble the Somme, but our sabs turned up relentlessly to dog this particularly disgusting bunch of wildlife-haters.
Sadly, they were able to kill on two occasions that we recorded. On one of these days, we were able to record a master of the hunt cynically changing his outfit to avoid recognition, before crawling through a hedge and hiding the evidence of his kill in a black bin liner. Moments like these remind us what we face: heartless killers for whom the destruction of animals is just part of their game.

The vicious weather we endured since January eventually became a saviour, though, as the Fernie ended their season early following weeks of solemn and sodden trudging through bleak muddy fields. This update was brought to you from a locked-down home, wondering what next season will bring. Maybe masks will become compulsory for all, and the hunt will need to find themselves some new clichés...!

A Fernie way to trail hunt: "safety officer" scum tries to block the camera



Sheffield Hunt Sabs

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When we last wrote group news, we were hoping for a positive outcome in the court case of the disgraced judge and Barlow Hunt chairman, Mark Davies for assaulting some of our sabs. Unfortunately, this wasn't to be - he was found not guilty by a fellow judge.

Luke Saddington, you may remember, used his car to ram ours and Manchester Hunt Sabs' cars at a meet of the Grove & Rufford. He finally got his day in Nottingham Crown Court on 27th Feb where he pleaded guilty to dangerous driving and two counts of criminal damage under £5k. You may also remember our vehicle being attacked with a dead fox by supporters of the Badsworth & Bramham Hunt last Boxing Day. An appeal led to names for most of the supporters involved. However, the ringleader, one Robert Nevill, who was filmed smashing the poor fox against our vehicle went into hiding only finally being arrested on 12th March.

It seems that hunt support never learn, with two new investigations underway. The first as a result of our vehicle's side windows being smashed with a hammer by another supporter of the Grove & Rufford Hunt. The second after a rock was thrown through the rear window whilst we were driving, by a supporter of the Rockwood Harriers.

We had an excellent end to last season when we visited the Middleton Hunt and took the hounds enough times that huntsman, Ralph Richardson, got off his horse and threw a strop. Just a few weeks ago we were informed that 8 unnamed mainstays of the Barlow Hunt had been given CPNs (like ASBOs).

We now have an online shop to try and help us raise funds during this difficult time. It can be found at www.sheffieldhuntsabs.com We also now have a tip off phone 07395 631162



Sheffield horn blower pulls the pack

Severn Vale Hunt Sabs

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Dummer Beagles make an urgent call to the HSA tip-off line

Firstly, a thank you to those who supported us to raise money for our vehicle repairs.

We write this in strange times with the devastating Covid-19 pandemic present in the world. This has however allowed lots of wildlife to flourish and we would normally expect to be sabbing mink/otter hunts at this time. We hope hunts will suffer financially due to the events.

We kick started 2020 by stopping the Wilts & Infantry Beagles killing hares on New Year's Day. The hunt who gathered in Heytesbury had a larger than normal crowd of supporters and were rather unhappy to see us!

On the 5th January we were out again, stopping the obnoxious RAC Beagles who decided to walk the hounds around the road for an hour instead of hunting. We went on to pay both hunts further visits. On the 18th we stopped Fourshires Bassets at Charndon, and Old Berkeley Beagles prestigious and large joint meet with the North Bucks Beagles at Middle Claydon with Berkshire sabs.

The start of February saw another very good day for us as we disrupted National Basset hunting day, hosted by the Fourshires Bassets. Again, we saw a large amount of support, with many scumbags from across the country. We stopped the hunt in their tracks on the land of minor celebrity, Jeremy Clarkson (who? - Ed) who lives near Chipping Norton. On our way home we bumped into the Dummer Beagles, forcing them to finish abruptly. Our next targets were the Severn Vale Beagles who we stopped hunting on a mid-week and a Saturday. We turned up just in time on the Saturday as the hounds gave chase and were called back.

February saw some disruption in our part of the world due to bad flooding. Aside from sabbing hunts, a fair few traps and other nasty things have been found this season.



What a dipstick! Fake breakdown fails to delay sabs

South Devon Animal Rights

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Find us on

The second half of the 2019-20 hunting season saw us as busy as ever, sabbing every Saturday and occasionally teaming up with other sab groups during the week.

Having splashed out on bodycams and new and improved 2-way radios at the beginning of the season, it was a bitter blow on 29 February to be robbed of two radios by hunt thugs from Dawlish. We are most grateful to the kind folk who responded generously to our plea on Facebook, enabling us to purchase replacements.

Most of our sabbing has been directed towards our local South Devon Hunt. With a few notable exceptions, under huntsman Robert Medcalf the South Devon Hunt riders and followers have been courteous and peaceful towards us. Over the years the number of their riders has dropped markedly to around 20-25 on a good day. Four decades ago, their opening meet would muster well over 100 mounted field.

In April we were kindly tipped off that a fake Facebook age masquerading as South Devon Animal Rights had been posting pro-hunt comments on the Cheshire Police Rural Crime Team's Facebook Page. The fake page understandably attracted derogatory comments from opponents to hunting. We have reported this to the Cheshire Police and to Facebook and await their response.

South Coast Hunt Sabs

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Find us on

The last part of the season was strange for us all, cut short as once our local hunts pack up we'd normally be travelling further afield to help out fellow Sabs in the South West.


Sad eye of a weary hound

We experienced the usual physical and verbal abuse from the hunt and their lackies. With some of our sabs specifically being targeted by the hunt sycophants and the boys in blue. The hunts also tried to evade us by going out at strange times.

It was sometimes difficult to figure out which hunt was actually out with the ESRM and S&E sharing their huntsmen, territories, support and even shacking up in the same kennels. We heard that our constant sabbing made a significant impact on these hunts. Could there be disbanding or an amalgamation on the cards. At a meet on the Downs these toffs had five separate falls in a few hours totally draining the NHS with five ambulances and two helicopters.

We continued to be out at least twice a week in some of the worst weather conditions. Together with our star horn blower and good teamwork from us and other groups, we've continued to see foxes, hares and deer to safety. We happily welcomed two new sabs to the group who have shown enthusiasm and commitment. There's always room for more.

South Wales Hunt Sabs

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Find us on


South Wales keep a close watch on the C&L

2020 started bright and busy – with our freshly repaired Land Rover back in action (thank you everyone who helped make that happen!) The second half of the season saw us out with several hunts: the Ystrad Taf Fechan – where every man and his dog claims to be their trail layer (masters, kennelman, supporters) which is odd because we have never seen them hunt a trail yet. We also sabbed the Gelligaer - who make no pretence at doing anything other than trying to kill foxes. They hosted the North Herefordshire hunt one week, so we thought it only right to host Hereford sabs to help them feel at home and great teamwork meant they were not able to kill. The Banwen Miners Hunt for the most part of the season were missing in action - great news. They are currently engaged in their annual transformation of committee, huntsman and masters and we are ready for them when they crawl out from under their rock.

We also worked with our regular comrades, Bath and Bristol sabs – keeping wildlife safe from the Monmouthshire, Ledbury and the Curre & Llangibby hunts.

We were greatly assisted by the weather towards the end of the season with lots of meets cancelled and the joyful sight of empty yards and pub car parks. We can safely and happily say that local sabs are hardier than local hunts. Which is good to know and definitely good news for wildlife.

Thank you and diolch yn fawr to everyone who has helped us out this season – with information, donations, help of all sorts. We really appreciate your support.

Staffordshire Hunt Sabs

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Find us on


Newly-affiliated Staffs doing the business

Last season we saw many successes as a newly affiliated group. With regular strong numbers and working with our good pals Manchester and Liverpool we managed to put a tremendous amount of pressure on the notorious North Staffordshire Hunt. We later heard the news that NS huntsman of 9 years, David Seels, was leaving after having an awful season. Seels spent the whole season running from us and is now running back to the Grafton, however we look forward to welcoming their new huntsman Robert Jarrett from Cottesmore in the new season.

We also regularly sabbed two other Staffordshire hunts; the Albrighton & Woodland and the Meynell & South Staffs hunt, who continue to flout the law despite their convictions. We headed into other counties where we had the pleasure of working with and learning from many different groups and we look forward to working with them again in the future.

We have been overwhelmed with how much support we have gained already and our supporters have been extremely generous with donations and with purchasing our merch! We also have huge thanks for the HSA after they helped us replace our vehicle after it was written off. Throughout the off season we have been continuing to focus on our fundraising and recruitment ready for next season and keeping an eye on our own local setts and wildlife activity as much as we can under lockdown.

With the cull just around the corner we will be busy in our 3 Staffordshire zones and before we know it, hunting season 20/21 will be here!

Suffolk and Essex Hunt Sabs

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Find us on

The beginning of 2020 finished a busy Christmas period for us, which saw our group go out 6 times in just a week. New Year's Day capped it off dramatically, teaming up with Cambridge Hunt Sabs to sab the Essex with Farmers & Union Hunt after their parade in Maldon Hight street. Hunt supporters were aggressive, blocking the sab vehicle in and attacking it, fortunately, no one was hurt. The incident is currently being investigated.

Seven different hunts were hit over the last three months of the season: Suffolk, Thurlow, Puckeridge, Cambridge Hunt with Enfield Chace, East Essex, The Essex with Farmers & Union and Essex & Suffolk, teaming up regularly with our pals Cambridge, South Cambs and Norwich. The HSA tip-off line has been a great help with information on the hunts.

New huntsman to the Essex & Suffolk, Sam Staniland; who also has a conviction for illegal hunting, wasn't happy to see us, with him riding into one of our sabs. On another visit, the hunt roped in more terrier men from another hunt to try and intimidate sabs.

The convicted Thurlow hunt were sabbed regularly on weekdays, with the Puckeridge also hit once at their 'Ladies day' meet. Our sab wagon needed repairs and was out of action for 3 weeks. We drained limited funds to get it fixed. We still got out to sab, thanks to South Cambs and Hertfordshire for ferrying us around.

A hare shoot was successfully hit in Suffolk with 50 sabs from multiple groups. After a few hours of waiting and the shooters realising we weren't going anywhere, they retreated to their base and dispersed. We even had time to sab the Essex & Suffolk Hunt afterwards.

Thanks to everyone that has supported us.

Hounds prefer the company of Suffolk & Essex sabs



Three Counties Hunt Sabs

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Find us on



You should see him without the mask

During the 2019/20 season we attended 104 hunt meets (not including pre- and post-hunt checks, cancellations and no-shows). The latter half of the season saw us sabbing the North Cotswold, Croome and West Warwickshire, Cotswold Vale Farmers, Worcestershire, Heythrop, VWH, Beaufort and the Ledbury (who finished very early indeed).

Flooding had a massive impact on local packs, especially those near the River Severn and we were relieved to see the end of the season when the Hunting Office announced it in March due to the Coronavirus crisis. One of our last meets was on the 11th March, a joint between the Heythrop, North Cotswold and Thurlow (to celebrate Nigel Peel's retirement). As the hunt stalkers are out in force in this area sabs went into known areas pre-meet and waited for the hunt to come. At the artificial earth in Doctor's Walk a sab watched terriermen stand on a badger sett a few fields away as the hunt hunted nearby, other sabs stopping the pack, and was then aware of the arrival of other terriermen who she confronted as they took a terrier to the artificial earth. The hunts were not impressed, and stalkers showed themselves up in their frustration for the remainder of the day.

We've had amazing support, from our donors and sources and those following our page and site, friends manning stalls for us at fairs, new sabs joining us and from 'Those Vegan Pizza Guys' who supported us at fairs and supplied us with pizza! Huge thanks to Mendip Hunt Sabs and Cirencester Illegal Hunt Watch and Ridgeway IHW for teaming up with us this season.

We continue to fight the badger cull, alongside Gloucestershire Badger Office, sett-blocking practices, trapping, baiting, shooting and so on. Fair few projects on the go so watch this space and check us out online!

West Yorkshire Hunt Sabs

Find us on



No wildlife is safe from hunters

Since the beginning of the year, sabs from West Yorkshire have continued to be out week after week until the abrupt end of the 2019-20 foxhunting season, concentrating mainly on the illegal hunting of the York and Ainsty South/Badsworth & Bramham Moor Hunt, who to no surprise, have been back at it this year with their violent tactics. We've also done occasional sabs of The Middleton Hunt, Grove & Rufford Hunt, Rockwood Harriers and The Barlow Hunt.

This season we have been very successful in developing our ability to work together as a team, and in integrating and upskilling our newer members, both of which have led to some highly successful sabbing in the last few months.

The constant violence we faced this season once again did not deter us, and we've seen a huge increase in how effective our tactics have been as we further learn the ways hunts in our area operate.

A highlight of this season for sabs has to be one of the fox we saw to safety just metres in front of the hounds, at a YAS/BBMH meet on 7th March in Burton Salmon. Being able to see the instant effects hunt has, reminds us exactly why we do what we do.

West Sussex Hunt Sabs

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Find us on

As I write this group news during April 2020, our lives have become very surreal, very angst ridden and extremely sad daily, due to the Covid-19 pandemic. Sitting here now it is hard to predict what our lives will be like soon; we can only hope that many lessons would been learnt from this horrendous experience. It feels like a lifetime ago that we were cheering the end of the hunting season and feeling pretty chuffed at how successful we had been at protecting our wildlife. Our group juggled their work and family commitments, so we were able to cover almost every hunt meet of the Crawley & Horsham FH. This meant being out two, often three times a week throughout the entire season.

Currently we have three illegal hunting cases being investigated, along with a dig out at a badger sett on the Balcombe Est during a joint meet of the OSBWK and the Crawley & Horsham. Our video footage shows clear indisputable evidence of two terrier men digging away at an active badger sett; we hope this is being rigorously investigated by the Wildlife Crime Officer at Sussex Police. The end of season meet for the Crawley & Horsham in Angmering Park was a wash out, the entire meet lasting only two hours, when normally it would be six or more. We attended meets of the Chiddingfold, Leconfield & Cowdray Hunt, and joined several other groups from around the country to sab the Surrey Union at Pepper Harrow. Our thanks to all groups who helped us out last season and to all our supporters, we appreciate every single one of you.


West Sussex joined a mass hit on the Surrey Union

Weymouth Animal Rights

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Find us on


Weymouth sabs on the WARpath

We can confidently say that this season, has probably been the worst in the history of landlord and South Dorset Tory MP Richard Drax's South Dorset Hunt! In his first full season as hunt master, Juggers aka Tobias Cole, has managed to lose support from the landowners whose land he hunts on, making their area really small, lose his pack numerous times leaving a trail of lost dogs in his wake, staff that seem to be leaving the SD sinking ship, and riders reduced to a "full" field 10-15!

Their last meet using their own pack was Cristmas Eve, when they spectacularly let the pack get away from them and chase a Fox through the village of Sutton Poyntz. The locals manage to stop the pack and send them back to Juggers. Shortly after we found out the dogs were once again suffering Kennel Cough and as weeks went by and the SD had to bring in other hunt packs, it was obvious that it was more than just the Cough and the TB word started to be muttered. A statement was then issued that it was an Upper Respiratory Tract Infection with other complications! The dogs were not out again for the rest of the season.

On the days that the SD weren't able to find another pack, we visited Lady Townshend's Cattistock, and joined up with other groups and monitors sabbing the Blackmore & Sparkford Vale and the Portman Hunt in North Dorset. The season was brought to a sudden end, with the arrival of Covid-19

With some of our funding coming from local vegan markets and fayres, we are having to think about other ways to try and raise funds. Our attention is now turned towards the fast-approaching Badger Cull, those of us that can are out and about checking on vulnerable setts and also finding some lovely active new ones....

West Midlands Hunt Sabs

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Find us on


They will never stop West Mids Hunt Sabs

The last half of the season saw us sab the Warwickshire Beagles on Boxing Day followed by the Warwickshire Hunt on New Year's Day where they decided it would be clever to hunt a wood next to a main line railway track from Birmingham to London. Unfortunately, the inevitable happened and a fox was hunted across the tracks. With hounds, riders, and foot followers all trespassing on the tracks an oncoming train ended up hitting and killing one of the hounds. In their usual arrogant fashion, the Warwickshire Hunt refused to leave the tracks when asked to by railway workers. Their trail of destruction and chaos continued right up till the end of the season resulting in the Warwickshire Hunt ending up in the press every week for two months solid. Other incidents included killing two foxes in front of sabs and then assaulting sabs as they tried to help the fox, hounds shitting all over a graveyard, hunting through peoples gardens, causing chaos on busy roads and finally hunting a fox in front of young children at school leaving them traumatised. Their excuse for the last incident wasn't so much of an excuse but more of an accusation that the entire village including parents were all liars and that the Warwickshire Hunt would never do such a thing and the hound covered in blood was actually covered in special red mud only found in Warwickshire.

We also sabbed the Grafton Hunt, the Croome & West Warwickshire Hunt and the Worcestershire Hunt who were so pleased to see us they slashed one of our tyres. We also joined up with sabs from around the country to shut down a three-day beagle festival in Leicestershire.

HARE SHOOT SHUT DOWN



All Photos: © AWIS

On Saturday the 22nd February sabs from across the Midlands and Eastern counties got up stupidly early and headed to Suffolk to sab a hare shoot that was taking place in the village of Ixworth Thorpe near Bury St Edmunds. It was an ideal opportunity for such a mass gathering as not only are these hare shoots very secretive and concrete info rare to come by but also due to the very wet recent weather many fox hunts weren't out that day.

The 40 plus sabs met up nearby before heading in convoy to the village and parking en-masse outside the farm where we believed the shoot were due to meet. Unbelievably for a mass gathering of sabs we arrived in good time and the large gathering of shooters and hangers on continued to arrive under our watchful gaze.

After a long stand-off, with lots of anxious huddled conversations amongst the shooters, they loaded up their shoot wagons (sheds pulled by tractors) and headed out into the fields with a long line of sabs following on behind.

"A very bumptious copper informed the gathered sabs that we were committing aggravated trespass and we had to leave the land. He stressed we'd get no further warning and would be nicked if we didn't leave...."





Bad hare day for shooters

They headed right into the middle of the land we expected them to shoot and all decanted and stood by the wagons at which point there was another long stand-off with some good-natured chatting from both sides.

After realising they weren't going to shake us, they started to make their way back towards the road when, surprise surprise, they halted the wagons and yet another stand-off took place. Eventually it became

clear that they'd stopped this time because they were waiting for the police to arrive. This they eventually did, and a very bumptious copper informed the gathered sabs that we were committing aggravated trespass and we had to leave the land. He stressed we'd get no further warning and would be nicked if we didn't leave by the reinforcements that were on their way. Sabs treated his threats with the distain they deserved and calmly waited to be arrested, confident that our continued presence was saving many lives and willing to be incarcerated if that's what it took. It turned out however that his threats were pure bluff, designed to make us leave and let the shoot start their killing. Once it became clear we weren't moving the shoot carried on back to the farm and gradually went their separate ways. Job done!



Big lads...big guns...small minds

As a bonus the sabs present had enough time and energy left to split their resources and sab two fox hunts who were out in the surrounding counties.

We know many of these shoots take place every year and mainly go unhindered but our message to the shooters is – Expect us. More info is coming in all the time from disgusted locals and we'll be focusing more on these shoots in coming years.



Saved by hunt saboteurs

HARE TODAY, GONE TOMORROW

- Hare numbers are declining across the UK. Numbers are thought to have declined by 80% since the late 19th Century.
- The brown hare is classed as a priority species in the UK biodiversity action plan.
- In some parts of the UK they are believed to be locally extinct.
- Driven hare shoots can and do kill several hundred hares in a day
- Many of the shot hares aren't killed "cleanly" and suffer a slow, painful death.
- There is no close season on game shooting, and hares can be shot all year round, even when pregnant.
- The Hare Preservation Trust estimate that up to 40% of the UK wild hare population is shot each year, mainly in East Anglia.

Sabs stand their ground



DRONING ON...

Harry of Kent sabs explain why groups should have an eye in the sky



Why use a drone?

Drones are fast becoming an invaluable tool for a number of sab groups across the country. They allow you to follow hunts over miles across most terrains, direct foot sabs or vehicles to the hounds and film any illegal hunting activity that may be happening. Most drones come with high quality cameras capable of catching cinema-quality footage and evidence. The hunts know this and when a drone is above them most will stop what they were doing. Used correctly a drone can stop a hunt in its tracks and should be in the toolbox of most sab groups. However, if your hunts' country is mostly in thick woodland then a drone may not be for you as it is very difficult to spot a hunt from the air through the trees!



HSA Flying Foxes are go!



Eyes on the pack

Which drone?

There are many types of drone available and as with many pieces of electrical equipment, you get what you pay for. This is one piece of equipment that is definitely worth investing in. A good quality, well-built drone will have the features and durability needed to be useful and survive a sab. The most important things to consider are the drone's range and battery life. The best thing about using a drone is being able to follow a hunt for miles without losing them - if a drone has a range of 100m of course that won't be possible. Aim for a range of at least 2-4km.

"Used correctly a drone can stop a hunt in its tracks and should be in the toolbox of most sab groups."



Checking out the meet

Battery life is incredibly important as it dictates how long you can be in the air keeping eyes on the hunt. Aim to choose a drone that has a battery life of at least 20 minutes. Consider as well how easy will it be to change the battery of the drone during a sab? Expect to change the battery multiple times per sab.

Finally, how portable is the drone? Some drones take up a lot of valuable vehicle space. It can also be useful to take a drone into the field to get to a good vantage point covertly: the smaller the drone, the easier this will be. Some drones fold down to fit into a bag - choosing a model that can do this would be beneficial.



The DJI Mavic range of drones tick all the boxes and come with many extra features such as 'return to home' which will bring the drone back to the operator at a touch of the button and obstacle avoidance.

Drone Tactics

If you turn up to a meet and the conditions are right to use the drone, then aim to get it above the meet a few minutes before the huntsman leaves. This will allow you to track the hunt from the beginning. Always position the drone operator in a direction where you predict the hunt will go. This will mean you get the most time above the hunt from each battery. Make sure the huntsman initially knows the drone is there by flying at the minimum legal limit of 50m above him. This will likely deter any illegal hunting activity while you are there. Plan ahead as to where and when you will change the battery on the drone. Getting this right is crucial to avoid losing the hunt.

If you know the meet well then plan good vantage points and places you can operate the drone from in advance. Aim to have the drone above the hunt throughout the entire hunt. Always make sure the drone operator has at least one sab with them for protection and ideally uses a body cam as a deterrent.

Kill caught on camera



Top Tips

- When first using the drone in your group expect a lot of attention from the scum and police. Push through, keep using it and eventually this will die down (maybe over one season).
- Know the drone code inside out: https://dronesafe.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/11/Drone-Code_October2019.pdf
- A drone operator can legally fly a drone out of sight up to 500m if they have a 'spotter' watching a drone in the field within radio contact...
- Consider operating the drone 50m from a road. This will give you time to get the drone back should the police or scum turn up causing problems.



- Make a drone landing pad out of a bin lid - this can aid you in landing the drone with scum around.
- Buy as many batteries as you can afford. The more you have the more time in the air.
- Use the highest capacity SD card you can afford. Drone cameras are high spec and use a lot of memory. There is nothing worse than filming something and running out of card space.
- Remember drones do not record sound - don't rely on them to prove intent.
- You can still fly drones in windy conditions. Most drones have a 'sport' mode that will increase power but of course will also increase battery usage.
- If you lose the hunt go to the legal height limit of 120m and look for moving dots in the distance grouped together on the horizon - this may well be the hunt.
- Join the BMFA. Membership of the BMFA is cheap and gives you public liability insurance up to £25m should you have an accident and fly in to some scummers. It is also looked upon favourably should your drone flying skills ever come under scrutiny by the courts. https://bmfa.org/

BADGER MILK



Dolly brings a fresh perspective to fighting the badger cull.

photo © www.stacywoolhousephotography.weebly.com

April 2019: I was five months pregnant and attending a walk when someone gave me a leaflet about the badger cull in Derbyshire. I send a message to the contact on the leaflet. Fast forward six months and I found myself entrenched in the anti-cull movement. I've been out badger sett surveying, fundraising and running event stalls all within a month of my due date. Climbing over fences and under brambles is no mean feat with a huge bump!





Badger march

My baby is now here and I'm breast feeding. This is enough… but I don't want to stop fighting for the cause I believe in. I agree to set up and run an online Etsy shop to raise money for the fight against the badger cull. This is when I discover "baby brain" is a real thing: trying to process, pack and post orders with a baby is tough!

When baby hits eight weeks it coincides with the start of the cull in Staffordshire. Every other Tuesday I drive the hour and a half to Uttoxeter. In order to do this, I spend two weeks expressing milk prior to the day which becomes affectionately known as "badger milk". I'm very sleep deprived: I'm out campaigning, and I leave the car not only unlocked but the driver door wide open! Leaving my new-born at home is emotionally difficult. I spend from 9-5 in the fields still trying to keep up my milk flow, expressing with my hand free pump. Some weeks I choose to drive all day as people need lifts to save badgers. This is far easier with the milk pumping.

There's culling in Cheshire too and some nights I go out under the cover of darkness to look for badgers and ensure their safety. Getting into bed at 2am and waking up at 5am for my baby is tough.

I think it hits home - my double life as a new mother and animal activist - when I'm washing nappies and thinking about the protest march I need to organise for the coming weekend! With just a few days' notice enough people rally to meet and share information to the public about the badger cull when we reach the six-week mark.

Some weeks I feel guilty for leaving my new-born. When the baby is bigger, he comes to the marches with me. Some weeks he attends the events or meetings I do. In my mind it's possible to be a new mum and fight for a cause you believe in. You just need to get past what society tells you being a mum is. Oh, and you need plenty of badger milk ;-).

The recent publicity of the Barlow Hunt case, where a judge accused of assaulting a hunt sab was cleared of any wrongdoing prompted me to write this. According to media reporting the accused judge at the centre of the case, in court stated that anyone involved in hunt sabbing or animal activism are *'anarchists waging a class war.'*

I felt compelled to write a piece reflecting the dedication that exists within animal activism. I am a qualified professional with a young family. I was new to direct action within animal rights and I can say for certain everyone I've met is far from anarchists waging a class war (*not that there's anything wrong with that - Ed*). We are normal people who have jobs, families and lives. We just happen to care about fighting back against those who think it's okay to destroy our wildlife and native beings. Everyone I know has been welcoming and does everything they do because they love animals.

If I can get involved and offer my support as, first, a heavily pregnant woman and now as a mother with a child under one, I would say anyone can. There are a lot of different roles and a lot everyone can do. Just having passion and caring about animals is more than enough.

I'd suggest people ignore the media and contact your local badger or hunt sab group to see how you can get involved.

HUNT SABOTEURS ASSOCIATION

SUPPORT HUNT SABS FROM THE SAFETY OF YOUR TABLE!

WITH

abillionveg

WE GET PAID FOR YOUR FOOD REVIEWS!

The Hunt Saboteurs Association are pleased to announce that we have partnered with the abillionveg app (www.abillionveg.com/) to not only promote vegan food and restaurants across the world, but also to raise funds for hunt sabotage.

You can help us raises funds by following these simple steps.

1. Download the abillionvegapp onto your Smartphone
2. Setup a login
3. Start to review any and all Vegan food you buy or meals your purchase, you will need to photograph them. Note: you do not need to be Vegan to do this but the food needs to be.
4. As soon as you reach 10 reviews, you can through the app make a $10 donation to the HSA.

So for each 10 reviews you make and donate to the HSA we will receive $10, around £8 at present currency rates. It's as simple as that to help boost the funds of the HSA and help us support hunt sab groups.

So what's the catch?

There isn't one. The app is financed by external funders wishing to promote vegan food and animal rights groups. We are one of very few UK based organisations so have the potential of reaching out to new supporters as well as raising funds.

The possibilities are endless: if all our supporters reviewed just a few products each month we could raise a lot of money to fund our work. All it takes is a little bit of time by each person and at present our supporters have already made over 1000 reviews.

So, if you want to help Hunt Sabs from the comfort of your kitchen, please download the app and get reviewing today...





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.

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."

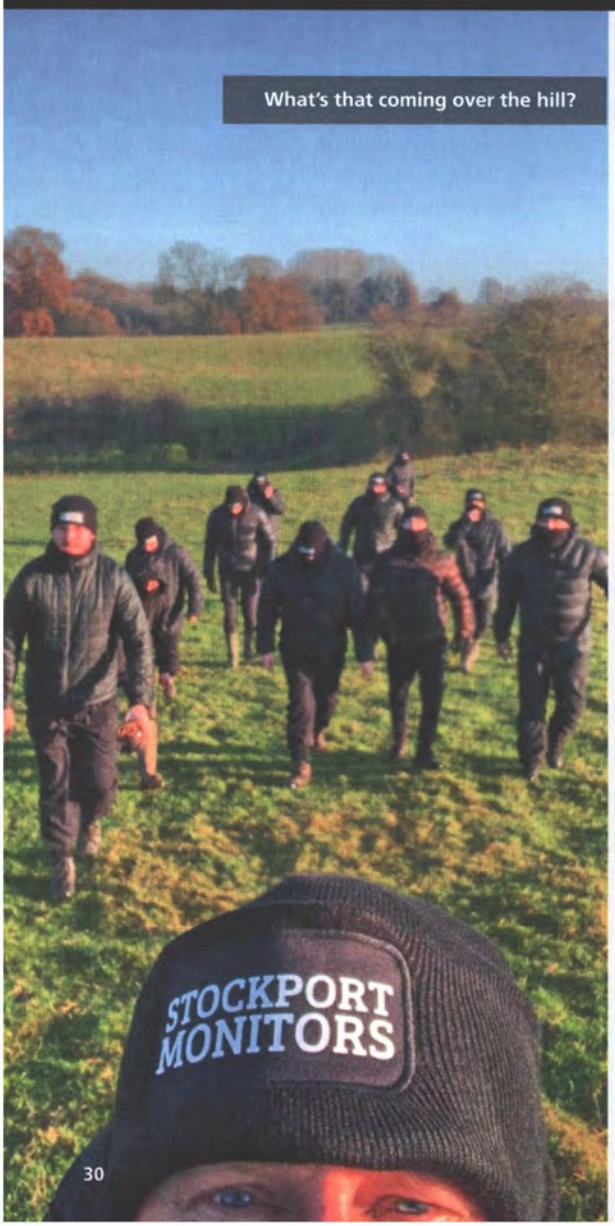
Brian Vaillancourt #M42889
Danville Correctional Center, 3820 East Main Street, Danville, IL 61834, USA
In February 2014, Brian was sentenced to 9 years in prison for a McDonald's arson.



THE RISE OF THE STOCKPORT MONITORS



What's that coming over the hill?



I'd just like to start off by saying how proud I am of my mates, The Stockport Monitors. Thank you and Respect for everything you have done in the 2019-2020 season. Personally, I think it's been a very successful season in Cheshire.

I'd also like to thank Cheshire Against Blood Sports, Cheshire Hunt Sabs, Independent monitors, Cheshire monitors, North Wales Sabs and Welsh Border Sabs, it's been a pleasure working with you all. We had the Cheshire Forest trail hunting all season; even the Cheshire Hounds started trail hunting towards the end of the season. We also gave the Wynnstay a little bit of attention at the very end of the season just to let them know we weren't forgetting about them.



The only downside to our success was the unbelievable bias from Cheshire police and one incident in particular was the arrest of seven of us in January this year for apparently swinging a chain around our heads and suspicion of assault. We were detained at the roadside for about four hours before being taken into custody. The media gave us a mention and we were even on the six o'clock news.

We couldn't believe how much they were making out of it considering we knew what really happened, which wasn't what the police were saying. It was blown totally out of proportion and after a couple of weeks we were all NFA'd which came as no surprise to us.



Stockport Monitors get down to business

There's a really good video on the Hunt Saboteurs Facebook page from May last year and it probably describes hunt sabotage to a tee. To stop an animal being ripped to pieces is one of the most rewarding things you can do. That's the reason we're out twice a week during hunting season. Looking forward the Badger Cull which will soon be here and with the way things are at the moment it could be even more challenging. A few of the lads have said they'll get involved which will be very helpful and then the new hunting season will be here again.

There's been a lot of changes in Cheshire with both Jake (master) Tom (whip) both leaving the Cheshire Hounds because they've crumbled and Andrew German (master) has left the Cheshire Forest. So, if the new guys think they're going to come into Cheshire and kill wildlife they're in for a shock. I'm sure all the various groups will give them a very warm welcome. Thank you to HOWL for giving us this opportunity of putting a few words together.

Take care everyone and stay safe, love Stockport Monitors 🦊

I suppose everyone can relate to this police bias because it seems to happen up and down the country at most hunts during hunting season.

Then you've got the social media side of things like that absolute parcel Tim Boney from the Countryside Alliance who says he loves the countryside but wants to kill everything in it.

Hunting for Truth are another bunch of parcels and the videos they put of us on their Facebook page have us in hysterics.

At the end of the day though, what really matters is taking part whether that be sharing a Facebook post, donating, driving on a hunt day or being in the fields, everything helps.



The lads keep watch



Stockport Monitors at the Cheshire Christmas Ball

BACK IN THE DAY...

SPYCOPS AND HUNT SABBING



Undercover cops who went out sabbing in Southern England (that we are aware of):

Deployment	Name
1984-88	Bob Lambert (Robinson) - London Greenpeace
1987-91	Jon Dines (Barker) - London Greenpeace
1991-96	Matt Rayner - West London sabs
1994-99	Christine Green - West London sabs
1991-95	Andy Coles (Davey) - South London sabs
1997-2001	James Straven (Posh) - South London sabs

In the 80s, sabs might have been aware their post was being opened or their calls being eavesdropped but to think that a whole team of plod was dedicated to trying to get inside their groups and minds seemed a bit far-fetched. Quite why the police (and secret state) found the HSA so interesting may never be fully known but their attention during the 1980s and 90s did indicate they were worried about the effectiveness of direct action and the concern they had about people organising with major public support.

Matt Rayner ('Chiswick') Glorious 12th with Countrywatch security goon c1994



I believe I first came into contact with undercover officers from the metropolitan police's special demonstration squad (SDS) in the mid-80s, when I became involved with South London hunt sabs and had been attending London Greenpeace meetings. A cop known as Mike Blake (real name Chitty) attended meetings I was at, but I don't recall him sabbing with us. We did have an undercover tabloid 'journalist' come to some meetings and subsequently bring us to the attention of police Special Branch. Strange things happened in our homes with burglaries but nothing valuable taken and someone in our group was detained twice in a week for alleged armed robbery near their home, even being dragged off a bus one night by an armed response unit. All tactics to let us know they knew who we were, where we worked etc.

The levels of surveillance and interference employed at a time before mass mobile communications and the internet were truly frightening when you think all we were trying to do was save animals from being hunted every Saturday. The state view

Andy 'Van' Davey, sabbing in 1992



was that sabbing led on to 'other things' as well as upsetting the most powerful and influential in the country, and by any means, we needed to be stopped.

Some hunts had higher police presence due to the influence of their members (from Prince Charles - Quorn/Meynell/Duke of Beaufort, to the editor of the Daily Telegraph - East Sussex & Romney Marsh to Mrs Thatcher's advisor Michael Richardson at the Crawley & Horsham) and sabs we now know to be cops were always on the lookout for information on actions against those hunts.

It must have been weird for the London Greenpeace cops like Lambert and Dines to see how biased their country cousins were and they had to put up with being attacked like the rest of us - I wonder how they covered that in their reports?

Bob Lambert was very personable and (unsurprisingly, looking back) keen to know about and encourage direct action. He used his van to ferry people around to various locations in the dead of night and to go out sabbing occasionally. Jon Dines took over from Lambert and again, seemed decent enough. He could handle himself when we had stand offs and punch ups with hunt supporters in Surrey and Sussex and he was actually good to have around.



Surrey Union nr Tilford - pre-planned roadblock and mass arrests, '93

Brixton sab beardy John arrested in Surrey during pre-planned road block in 1993



Undercover cops made good use of the fact that sabbing was quite transitory with people getting full on for 3-4 years and then burning out. It fitted with their deployments, I guess. One group they all tried to get embedded with was Brixton but, due to the close knit nature of the group, and to be honest, the different reality most of the group existed in, they found it difficult and as far as we know only ever infiltrated around the edges.

Brixton sabs were like nothing else and I'm probably over-romanticising to say people would have died for the group, but it came close on several occasions and there is stuff no-one now would believe happened. It had an attitude that was ungovernable and irresistible and the group wasn't just involved in sabbing, it was everywhere - AFA Waterloo, Thamesmead, Welling, Euston, RTS, the Criminal Justice Act actions - anything that would kick off to be honest. We only know a little of what the police knew but interest in the same names came up time and again and you could feel the vultures circling by the mid-90s.

During cubbing, dedicated sabs would wake the squats around Brixton, Stockwell and Clapham an hour before the land rovers did the circuit to pick people up for the days sabbing.

Sometimes there were 3 full vans and land rovers out 2 and 3 times a week and I guess the police wanted early warning of where this potential public order situation might be headed. How noisy, camouflaged and grilled vehicles packed with army surplus clad, bickering squatters never caused more fuss in Brixton and Stockwell at 4 in the morning, I don't really know, but then the area never really slept and there was always something dodgy going on. Where else but Acre Lane would you see a pink Chieftain tank with a huge model pig dressed as a cop astride the gun drive through of an afternoon?

Brixton had mobile phones before they were common, an HQ, a quartermaster (I kid you not) and an effective fundraising setup with gigs, benefit cafes and street collecting. No wonder the police wanted to know more. The cops that managed to get in with other groups - Matt Rayner, then Christine Green - always made an effort to come over to chat but I don't remember any of them being too obvious, so they had some craft.



Christine Green at Vale of Aylesbury FH cubhunting Ford nr Aylesbury c1997/8

West London were a right mix of eccentrics anyway, so everything was off the wall with them apart from their sabbing skills!

The cops did try some high-profile actions to put Brixton out of operation, and one Saturday morning in 1993 on info provided by Andy Coles they arrested 17 sabs at a pre-planned road block near Tilford in Surrey. It later fell apart before getting to court and although Coles wasn't arrested that day, it might have blown his cover if questions were asked in the dock. The hunt let slip to one of our insiders (after the event) that they knew it was going to happen and with TV cameras present and custody wagon already waiting at the meet, alarm bells were ringing. Many sabs later received over £2000 each in compensation from Surrey Police.

There were almost certainly undercovers in until 2005. Since then, with the apparent demise of the SDS / Forward Intelligence Group and the increase in surveillance and mobile technology, it probably isn't far-fetched to think human undercovers are rarely needed now - all they need for a bugging and tracking device is carried in everyone's pocket with their general acceptance - the smartphone.

I don't feel particularly surprised or betrayed to know that a fair few of the people I risked my life with were undercover police, I take it as an acknowledgement that we were effective and a threat to the establishment. However, I am aware that some of them violated the trust and innocence of young women in the groups in the most appalling ways and for that, there can only be hatred and disgust. I hope the inquiry into undercover policing does throw a light on their activities and at all levels, and they are made to pay for their behaviour.

Obituary

John Bryant

(16th June 1942 – 21st Feb 2020)

Former HSA Chair Dave Wetton remembers his friend and comrade

I first met John in 1970 at an RSPCA AGM which had been swamped by hunters. Determined to right this wrong we, with others, formed the RSPCA Reform Group. John became its Chairman and, with back-up recruitment from the HSA & LACS, the group eventually managed to change the Society into a more radical one concerned about far more animals than just cats and dogs.

John grew up in Yeovil and became a Westlands Helicopter engineer. He became interested in caring for injured animals and helped the Dorset based animal rescue and sab group CROW (Campaign for the Relief of Wildlife). He gave them information on local hunt meets but paid the price when local hunt supporters slaughtered the rabbits he was caring for and left them in his garden.

John eventually became manager of Ferne Animal Sanctuary in Dorset for seven years where, again, he faced intimidation from hunters angered by his ongoing opposition to their activities and his 'Snatch a Snare' campaign. They chain sawed the gates and hung dead animals on the fences. Ferne became one of the go-to places for animals liberated by ALF teams. From laboratory guinea pigs to the two infamous ICI Smoking Beagles, Major & Noddy, all were welcome. When the police came searching for the dogs John kept them talking while they were spirited away to safety.

But John was a campaigner too, primarily against bloodsports. That 1970 RSPCA AGM experience had taught us how important it was to control the Society because of its political value. HSA members joined and gradually we got more radical Council members elected. John became Vice Chairman to Richard Ryder's Chairman – a really radical duo, although Richard had to face the media flak after John awarded Prince Charles 'Hooligan of the Year Award' for his bloodsports activities. It was during this enlightened period that we managed to change the Society's policy to opposing hunting. John shocked the audience at the RSPCA's 1977 Animal Rights Symposium in Cambridge by playing a tape of a sab's car windscreen being smashed by a fox hunter and the sab screaming in pain.

John became a LACS committee member during his tenure at Ferne and eventually moved to London to become the League's very pro-active Press Officer. His astute political sense of direction inevitably led to his working with the political team. Together with them John recruited ex-Prime Minister Harold Wilson to spearhead a campaign that led to the first ever official commitment by a major political party to outlaw bloodsports.

In conjunction with MPs and Peers the team drafted bills that led to vital legislation such as the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981, the Protection of Badgers Act 1992 and the Wild Mammals Act 1996. When Mike Foster MP announced his intention to introduce an anti hunting Bill in June 1997 John was an integral part of his drafting team but sadly Tony Blair wasn't prepared to give it government backing.



John addressing an HSA march, Trafalgar Square,1981

During this period John became co-Executive Director of the League but, after twelve years, internal politics forced him out. In the absence of effective campaigning by the League, he became a consultant to the International Fund for Animal Welfare (IFAW) who, working with the RSPCA, were largely responsible for the eventual hard-won success of the Hunting Act 2004. However, upset with the subsequent abuses of the Act, he teamed up with hunt monitoring group POWA (Protect our Wild Animals) to promote the strengthening of the Act.

He became a wildlife consultant for Animal Aid and its first Chairperson of Council in 1984. He also set up his own humane wildlife deterrence service. He wrote books on the subject and on animal rights philosophy - his 'Fettered Kingdoms' was on most activists' shelves. The early anti-angling slogan 'Hook, Line and Stinker' was his. His only novel 'Lady Penelope' was written during his chemo sessions and featured characters based on his old comrades.

In 2014, in recognition of his passion, hard work and service in the cause of animal welfare, John was awarded the Society's highest award - the Queen Victoria Gold Medal, being only the second person at the time to receive it.

John's final days were spent tranquilly in a local hospice with daily visits by Teresa and their rescue dogs Ruby and Jack and old friends and multiple messages of love and respect from many more of his old pals. His coffin was constructed of Somerset willow – a fitting link to his grass roots.

John was a calm, rational, deeply motivated and much respected man who spent his whole life fighting for the rights of animals. I'm proud to have known him.



John (left) with friends at Ferne Animal Sanctuary, 1975

Once I knew a man who ran with the hounds...

Back in April, many HOWL readers got in touch about a poem relating to sabbing they had heard on Radio 4. HOWL contacted the poet, Kim Moore, who has very kindly allowed us to reproduce her work below. Kim explains, *"I wrote this poem as part of a commission from the BBC to write a new version of William Wordsworth's Lyrical Ballads. In The Lyrical Ballads there is a poem called 'Simon Lee, the Old Huntsman'. Reading this reminded me of a conversation I had a few years ago with a hunt sab and I wanted to try and tell his story. Although I can't remember where I met him or what his name was, what he told me about his experiences of hunt sabbing have stayed with me."*

The Huntmaster

Once I knew a man who ran with the hounds. He would stand on a hill and watch the pack pass by, then imitate the Huntmaster's commands, calling the hounds to him and patting their heads, letting their thick tails thump against his legs. Sometimes he looped as many collars as he could around their necks then let them run, pulled along behind them like a kite. Other days he'd lay down in the heather and watch the clouds form and reform above his head, and tell the hounds the story of Actaeon, how he was ripped apart by his own dogs, how their teeth closed on the throat of a stag, but really it was their master's blood which filled their mouths and splashed across their chests. He told them the story of the last wolf, killed on Humphrey Head, told them this wolf was their brother, and not the grey enemy they'd been taught of. They listened to him gravely, their tongues lolling from their jaws, their great heads resting on their paws. When it was too dark to hunt, he took them back to the Huntmaster, still quartering the fell in his blue livery-coat, calling their names until his voice was a scratch on the sheet of the night. Then the man who ran with the hounds was happy, because there was one more flame of a fox still burning somewhere in the dark, but he was also sad because the man who owned the hounds also owned the woods and the hills and the fields and all the things that moved through them and beneath them and though he vowed that he would never be owned, he knew the night would always be a slate with half of its story untold.

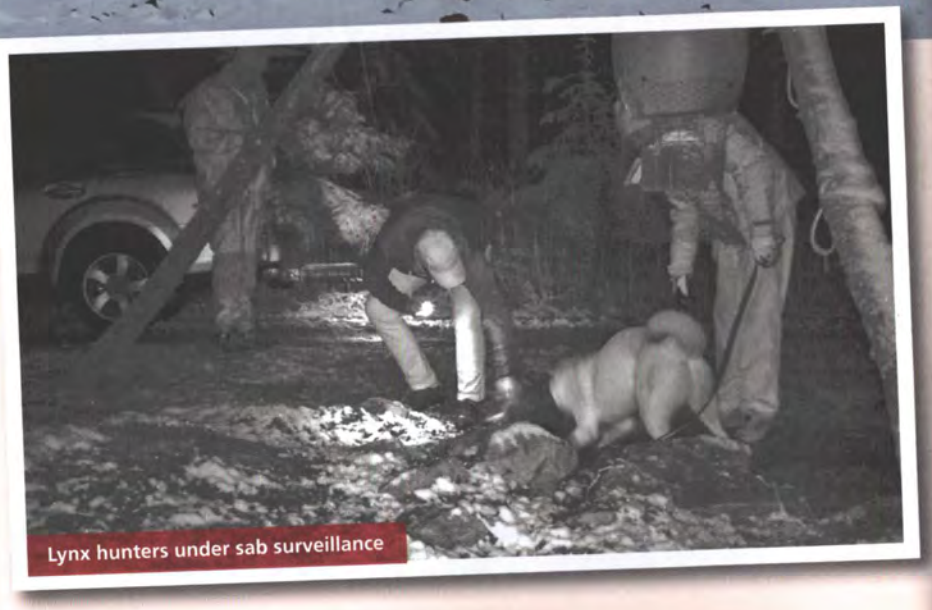




SABBING THE SWEDISH LYNX CULL

with Hunt Saboteurs Sweden and Underground Badger Syndicate

The licenced hunting of lynxes in Sweden was scheduled for the duration of March, with the state-sanctioned killing of 108 of these magnificent wildcats in 11 vast cull zones. With the front of an appeasement to farmers, who claim vast sums in compensation for losses to reindeer herds allegedly attributed to the mere 1200 lynxes in Sweden, it is in actuality an annual trophy hunt, driven by shooting lobbies and hunters desperate for bragging opportunities and their own lynx skull and skin.



Lynx hunters under sab surveillance

With the usual safety of the snowscape plagued by traps and high-vis clad hunters, Underground Badger Syndicate and Hunt Saboteurs Sweden joined forces in a bid to protect these shy and elusive felines, and make a lot of hunters very sad along the way. With many similarities to the UK badger cull, it was a perfect pairing of local expertise and seasoned anti-cull strategising and rabble rousing.



Boots on the ground where it matters

The first of two hunting methods is the use of traps to catch a lynx who is later shot inside. Lynx traps are huge, made of solid wood and too big or heavy to even consider moving by hand. They are often hidden amongst the trees, but – if you're lucky – you might just spot one nestled into the corner of a farmer's field as you drive by.

The vast majority of lynx hunting is carried out on foot, with small groups of hunters and their GPS-tracked dogs.

The most vital component in the hunt is snow. The hunters first locate their quarry from their paw prints, then release their dogs to scent out and chase them, barking to alert their masters. Most lynx seek refuge up a tree, in a bid to evade the barking nightmare tailing them. When the hunters catch up, they praise the dogs and shoot the defenceless cat from below. They are probably still alive when they tumble down into the snow.

Tactics for stopping the hunters are similar to sabbing hunts in the UK – prior intelligence gathering, listening out, and locating the hunters to force them to break their guns.

Citronella spray will cover the scent if necessary. In theory, it all sounds rather straightforward, but in practice things are a little more challenging.



The Lynx Effect

The distances covered and the size of the cull zones are, frankly, enormous. Driving the length of just one cull zone can take 2.5 hours. Multiply that by 11 zones, then add in the distances between some of the zones and you can begin to appreciate the scale of the operation required. Most of the cull zones are in the north, where there is only a small human population but a higher density of lynxes. Enduring snow, higher target numbers and fewer sabs in the north gave those hunters an easier ride.

The sheer desperation of the hunters to kill one of the few permitted lynxes is off the scale. We were warned by the local sabs that the first week would be critical. What we didn't realise was how intense and important the first day would be. Weary from an overnight bus that had been delayed an hour for a customs search, we hopped into a sab vehicle and headed into our designated cull zone at dawn. Three lynxes were destined to die here, and we sped through the snow towards their killers.

Hunters are obliged to report their kills to the authority, and a phone number with a recorded message is used to inform other scum of the numbers and locations of lynxes killed and where licences remain. As we drove, the Swedish speakers repeatedly phoned to check, and within half an hour the first lynx had been killed. More phone calls – a second lynx killed. The sun hadn't even risen before we got news of the third; in less than an hour on the first day, the murder quota in our first zone was reached.

After the initial massacre, the intensity of hunting reduced and the effectiveness of our campaign increased. We adapted our strategies as our familiarity with the forests and the hunters grew and did all that we could to stop them. Throughout the duration of the cull, we ensured maximum disruption and sabotage of any hunters or hunting-related activity we came across.

In Sweden, there are plenty of traps and cages intended for other species, and hunting towers plague just about every field and forest clearing imaginable. The salt licks and feeding stations used to lure animals towards the guns are often monitored by trail cameras, sending live images to a shooter's phone.

We also utilised trail cams, but instead to track the hunters. When subtly placed in the right locations, a lot can be learnt about a hunter and their activities from the images and videos captured. In Sweden, anyone can find out someone's name and address from their vehicle number plate. This makes investigating, locating, and tracking hunt scum a simple task when they gift us photos of their trucks!

As April began, we received the news that the hunting licences were to be extended until April 15 in several zones where they had not killed all the intended lynxes. As time drew on, increasing snow melt made hunting more difficult and increased the remaining lynxes' chance of survival. At the time of writing, the hunting extension has finished but the official number of lynxes killed has not been released. But we know every single death was a travesty and we'll sure as hell be back to sab the cull again next year. For now, our focus shifts towards the badger cull (which is currently still expected to go ahead), when UBS and HSS will unite once more to resist the killing.



Worth fighting for

PLEASE JOIN THE HUNT SABOTEURS ASSOCIATION

Why should I join?

The HSA is the country's fastest-growing and most effective anti-hunt organisation. We are 100% volunteer-run so much more of your subscription goes directly to saving hunted animals.

What do I get?

You will receive HOWL magazine three times a year - it's packed with essential news and articles that you can't read anywhere else. You receive exclusive mail shots throughout the year, keeping you up-to-date with campaign news from the front line. You also get a new member's pack and have the right to attend our AGM.





Still need convincing?

Tim Bonner of the Countryside Alliance recently described hunt sabs as the "primary concern" for most hunts!

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 -

USEFUL CONTACTS

Most of the groups below can also be found on Facebook and Twitter

Accidental Activist
www.morethanjustbadgers.net

Action Against Foxhunting
www.actionagainstfoxhunting.org/

Animal Justice Project
www.animaljusticeproject.com

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

Animal Welfare Information Service
PO Box 8, Halesworth, Suffolk IP19 0JL
www.acigawis.org.uk
acig@btinternet.com (publishers of Outfoxed Take Two and Outfoxed Again)

The Campaign to Ban Trophy Hunting
www.facebook.com/bantrophyhuntingcampaign

Coalition to Abolish the Fur Trade (CAFT) www.caft.org.uk

Fox Project
www.foxproject.org.uk

Hare Preservation Trust
www.hare-preservation-trust.com

Hunt Investigation Team
www.huntinvestigationteam.org

Hounds Off
www.houndsoff.org.uk

Moorland Monitors
www.facebook.com/MoorlandMonitors/

National Fox Welfare Society
www.nfws.org.uk

Stop Hunting on the Nation's Land
https://www.facebook.com/Stop-Hunting-on-the-Nations-Land-110530057004500/

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

Sea Shepherd
www.seashepherd.org.uk

SPEAK Campaigns
www.speakcampaigns.org

Stop the Cull
www.innocentbadger.com

Vegan Prisoner Support Group
www.vpsg.org

Vegan Society
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.....



HSA IN NUMBERS 2019-20

£62,300 to affiliated sab groups

£20,000 for Badger Cull:

£10,000 for fuel;

£10,000 for military-grade night vision equipment

55 affiliated groups

10,000 HOWLS delivered

1,000s of merchandise items sold

313,784 reach on Facebook

2,000 calls to Tip-Off line

30 free horns at the AGM

HSA wages: £0:000 (zilch, zero, nada, sweet FA)

www.huntsabs.org.uk