The Magazine of The Hunt Saboteurs Association Summer 2021 (Issue 126) £2 (free to members)

HOWL

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

Dealing with Stewards

Harassment in Herefordshire?

Locating Badger Barns

Northern Ireland HSA

Vegan Victory

Moor Trouble

Punk Sabs










LETTER FROM THE CHAIR:

Once again, we must record that one of our comrades has been injured in the fight against those who think it is fine 'sport' to torture and kill animals. As many of you will have seen from Manchester Hunt Sabs Facebook page and the HSA's own press release (which was then followed up by most of the national media), a lone sab from Manchester who was out surveying badger setts (a task that hunt saboteurs across the country have taken up in the absence of anyone else) came across five badger baiters. He was knocked unconscious most likely with a spade, enduring such horrific injuries that the perpetrators must have thought they had left him for dead. Happily, that is not the case, but he will need extensive plastic surgery. This lethal intent is implicit by the extent of his injuries. A 'normal' gang of five people caught in a criminal act by a lone person would have hightailed it away, safe in the knowledge that their numbers gave them immunity; but animal abusers are a different breed, feeling that they have the right to inflict pain and suffering and to express outrage at anyone who opposes them.



Let us be in no doubt, badger baiting is part of the 'hunting to hounds' community. There is little separation (despite what the Pony Club riders might like to believe), and the nonsense that the Countryside Alliance would sell to the media.

I have proof. In 2018 the Master of the Dwyryd Hunt, David Williams Thomas, was imprisoned for his part in badger baiting. Pre-Ban the famous Captain Ian Farquhar of the Beaufort hunt was convicted of interfering with badger setts on National Trust land. He was convicted because he refused to give the names of the 'earth stoppers' of his hunts. Terrier men ('countrymen', in the Countryside Alliance parlance), still a major part of fox hunting - but with no real purpose if the hunt is acting legally - have been found to partake in badger digging and it is rarely investigated beyond the offence, especially as to what would have happened to the badgers if the diggers had not been stopped. Andrew Bellamy of the South Devon Fox Hounds was convicted of digging a badger in 2011, and in 2019 a man (allegedly) connected to the Ledbury hunt was filmed digging a terrier out of a badger sett.

I could go on digging through the HSA's archives for more examples, but the evidence is there. Hunting in whatever form it takes today has strong links to badger baiting. It is just part of the cycle of wildlife abuse the hunting community supports. As the Hunting Office video clearly shows (see HSA web site), hunters are not only carrying on as normal, but their expressed aim, from the very top, is that a holding pattern will endure until such time as (they hope) the Hunting Act will be repealed. They will return to their above ground (pun intended) animal abusing ways... just legally. The only way to prevent this nightmare scenario is to destroy the foundations of hunting, and each hunt that we force to close brings us that one step closer. The Hunting Act may one day be improved, but even then, we will need to keep up our vigilance until the day those in red coats stop riding to hounds. The government must take some blame here, with their immoral badger cull setting the clear tone for the way badgers should be treated by people.

But to return to our brave Manchester hunt sab's horrific experience: I have rarely met a long-term hunt sab who has not received an injury of one sort or another. He, unfortunately, is just the latest. This is not to downplay the situation in any fashion. It angers and infuriates me that the systematic campaign of violence against hunt saboteurs is not treated in the same way in which other organised crime is dealt with by the police; but then, we know from history that the authorities systematically ignore crimes against all activists. This does not deter us but strengthens our resolve in the fight.

As has been said: hunt saboteurs are the 'thin black line' against animal abuse, and we are not going anywhere....

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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
Contributors All groups who sent group news in.
Photos www.stacywoolhousephotography.weebly.com, www.richardbowlerwildlifephotography.com HSA Archive, Sab groups everywhere - Ta folks!
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Howl is printed on 100% recycled paper using vegetable inks.

EDITORIAL

Welcome to another edition of HOWL, the magazine of the country's leading anti-hunt organisation. This is the third edition produced since the Covid-19 pandemic and the first where there was virtually no hunting in the period covered by the magazine.

However - as you will see - sab groups have been as active as restrictions would allow and we feature several articles from our ever-growing network of affiliated groups. These include our brave comrades in Northern Ireland who have to contend with entirely legal hunting, relatively new groups like Herefordshire and Calder Valley, and old timers like West Sussex who have been on the frontline for decades. We also feature excellent articles on (deep breath...) the badger cull, facing 'stewards', punk rock, fishing, veganism, and our usual trip down memory lane in *Back In The Day*. Our thanks to all contributors.

Despite the lack of hunting, the other side have rarely been out of the news. Whether it was the Western Hunt killing a much-loved rescue cat, the Quorn Hunt breaking lockdown or badger baiters trying to murder a hunt sab, our opponents have given a truly dreadful account of themselves.

Finally, HOWL is very sorry to hear that legendary hunt sab and investigator Mike Huskisson has been ill. We send him our heartfelt best wishes and know he will face his recovery with the same courage and determination that has sustained him as an activist for over fifty years. We love you, Mike!

Enjoy the magazine and please pass it to a friend when you have finished reading it.

Ed Howl

P.S. Please note that our AGM - scheduled for the 24th July 2021 - is cancelled due to continued uncertainty over Covid-19. On the upside, this gives you another year to practice for the horn blowing competition!



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 2021.

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.

DEALING WITH STEWARDS:

WE GET KNOCKED DOWN, BUT WE GET UP AGAIN!



By Herts and Northants Hunt Sabs

Well, where do you start?

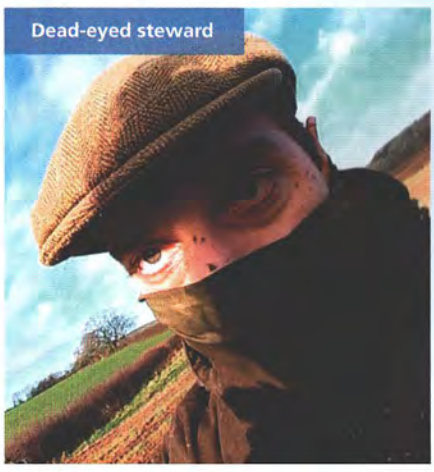
I'll tell you where we're going to start... these people are not stewards, they are thugs - plain and simple - and should be referred to as just that.

They are employed by the Cottesmore Hunt, a notoriously violent and aggressive fox hunt based in Rutland, Leicestershire. For the past three seasons we have taking on this hunt in a relentless joint campaign. Let's make it quite clear: our aim is to shut this hunt down.

The Cottesmore have always employed thugs to try to stop us, and it has not and will not work. This past season we have seen a decrease in our numbers due to the Coronavirus situation and a large increase in their numbers. At any one time the Cottesmore can have between ten and fifteen hired thugs out giving them much-needed protection.

They try to target certain individuals, usually those with more experience. What worries them is that when we get in the field, as we are looking to cause as much disruption as possible and at the earliest opportunity we will use direct action to try to stop them. Despite being outnumbered week in, week out this past season that is something we have continued as much as possible.

There was a period this season alone where three weeks out of four one of our horn blowers was able to take the whole pack of hounds away from huntsman Chris Edwards leaving him in a state of complete embarrassment in front of the paying field and his hunt masters. Not a good look, Chrissy. They have even resorted to drafting in thugs from neighbouring hunt the Fernie to help deal with us. So, we must be doing something right! But it's not been easy. There have been times during a day's sabbing where the numbers game has been able to prevent us from getting into the field, but we do not give up and we find a solution.



Dead-eyed steward

So, just how violent are this hunt?

One sab had his rib broken by a thug , others have been repeatedly chucked to the floor with real force and had their equipment stolen. Yet another sab was strangled and viciously attacked on a public footpath and, after pursuing it through the legal system, the thug was found 'not guilty' in court despite clear video evidence. One of our sabs is a long-standing NHS nurse and had her tooth knocked out and her wrist broken by these bully boys.

Another sab has been strangled on a couple of occasions using the cord around his neck which holds the hunting horn, had bruise upon bruise to his arms, so much so that nerve damage has become apparent to one of his arms.

We've had our tyres slashed, windscreens smashed, lights broken, vehicles surrounded, one sab even getting grabbed from the roof of our vehicle whilst spotting for the hunt. Personal equipment has stolen from our vehicles, sabs ridden at and alot of this has happened in the last season.

Of course, all groups face aggression and violence from the hunts but what we've got here is a consistent battle, the same numbers, the same level of aggression and always the same threat of physical violence every single week from these hired bullies.

So how do we deal with it?

The way to deal with a bully is to stand up to them, and that is what we do.


We get knocked down, but we get up again


Sabs still take the pack!

We don't run away, we don't take a week or two off, we don't look for excuses or try to find a way out.

We go back every single week with the same attitude. An attitude of determination, strength, and a desire to win. Across the two groups we are very close knit, we take care of each other on and off the field.

We support one another and we have each other's backs at all times. As long as they keep hunting, we will keep sabbing. No matter what they try to do we are getting in between the hunt and the hunted.

In just three seasons we've got the Cottesmore Hunt on their second huntsman. First, Andrew Osborne and now we have Chris 'two hounds' Edwards.

He is cocky, but very different to the experience of Osborne. Osborne would lie to your face and try to turn each sab against one another, Edwards just runs and calls in the bullies.


Never back down


Cowardly thugs attack outnumbered sab

working for the vets and riding with the hunt. You work the rest out. The corruption is shocking.

The Cottesmore Hunt are now hunting in black to keep a low profile...but a with a pack of hounds and a flock of field riders they can never really hide. Here is a 355-year-old hunt - one of the oldest - who traditionally wear hunting pink, but it looks like that is one tradition they've dropped.

The next step putting them in the history dustbin where they belong.

We will win this war, by whatever means necessary.

A day we will never forget

Saturday 16th February 2019.

A fox was killed by the Cottesmore hunt within 10 minutes of leaving the meet. Leicestershire police took the fox under section 19 PACE and was he then handed to Nottingham University. The post-mortem of the male fox alleged it wasn't killed by hounds. As the days, months and years have gone on we have exposed who's


The Walking Dead

JUSTICE FOR ETHICAL VEGANS

By Jordi Casamitjana

Ask the Hunt Sabs

In 2004 I joined the League Against Cruel Sports as their hunting campaigner. The Hunting Act had been passed but was not yet implemented, but I did not know much about hunting, so I had to learn, and learn fast. And who do you approach if you want to learn about hunting? The Hunt Sabs, of course. During my first months at the League I joined several sab operations as an 'observer' so I could learn what hunts actually do. I then developed a method to gather evidence for prosecutions, and persuaded trustees of the League that we should start private prosecutions as we could not rely on the CPS. I ran the first prosecutions against hunts. I then left to carry on this work at IFAW (where I managed the investigators, achieved more successful prosecutions, and wrote the *Trail of Lies* report).

"I investigated and discovered that funds were invested into unethical companies that test on animals, such as GlaxoSmithKline and British American Tobacco."



Jordi at an anti-hunt march

Pension Tension

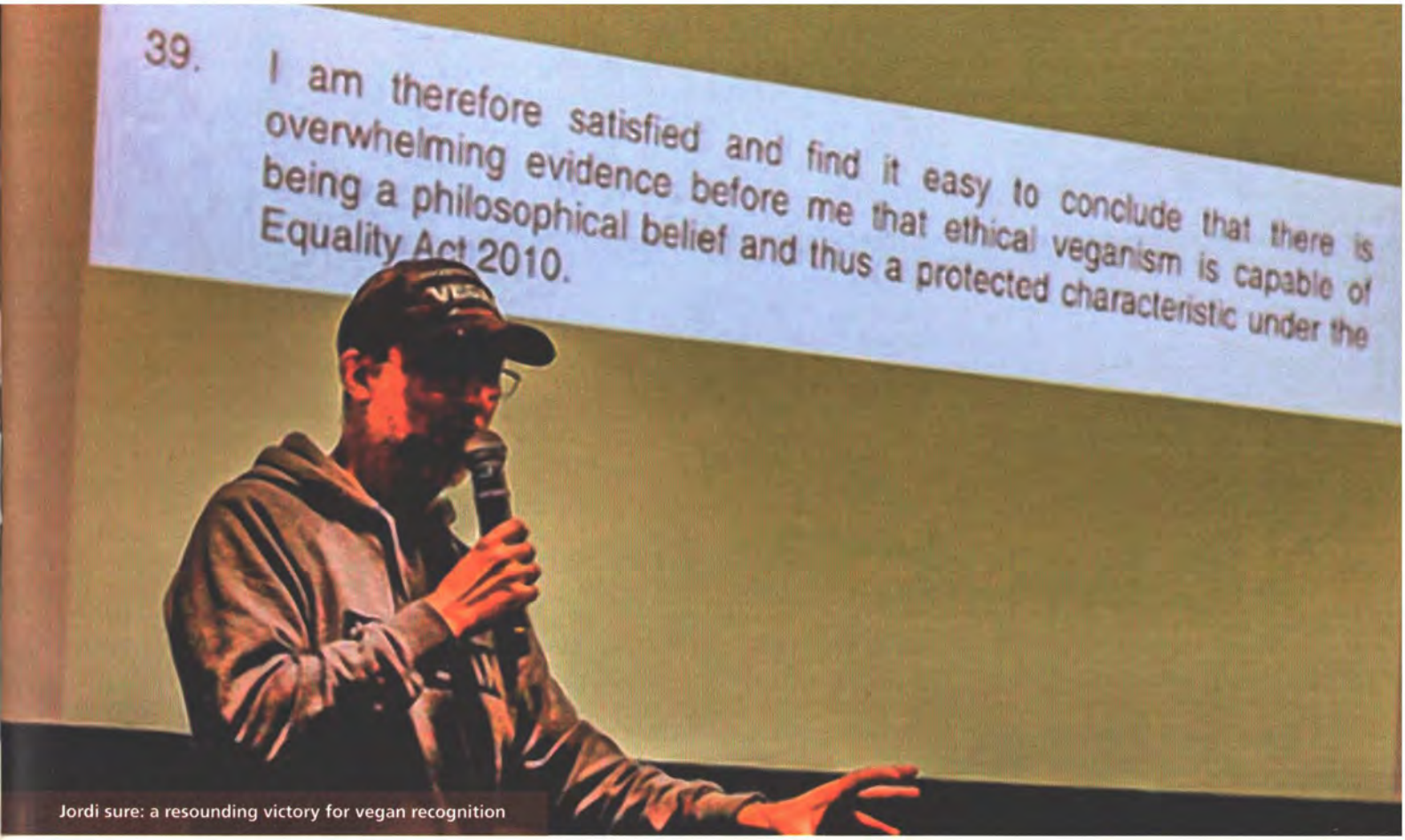
In 2016 I re-joined the League as its Head of Policy and Research. When I had first joined, I was enrolled into a pension fund that was labelled as "ethical", but when I re-joined years later I was surprised that the pension fund that I was auto-enrolled into did not have the term "ethical" anymore. So, I investigated and discovered that funds were invested into unethical companies that test on animals, such as GlaxoSmithKline and British American Tobacco.



Want to know hunting? Ask the hunt sabs

In January 2017 I informed the League's management about my discovery. They all agreed that it was wrong, and that the problem had to be corrected, so they said they would change the pension fund. I asked for my contributions to be stopped while the change was arranged. But months later I discovered this had not happened. In October 2017 management sent an email to all staff saying that an ethical fund had been found and that, by November, all funds would be switched to this new one, unless individual staff told them not to do so.

However, in January 2018 I learnt that the switch to a new ethical pension fund had not happened. Staff did not know this, and many of them were ethical vegans like me. So, in February 2018, after a series of email exchanges with the new



Jordi sure: a resounding victory for vegan recognition

acting CEO, I sent an email to all staff letting them know what I had discovered. That was the email that got me fired as, two days later, and without any formal investigation, I was invited to a disciplinary hearing for "failure to follow reasonable management instructions", which would be chaired by the acting CEO. He claimed that I disobeyed his orders and had put the League at risk because I was giving financial advice to staff without being qualified.

Judge and Jury?

After I complained that there could not be a fair disciplinary process if the "accuser" was the same as the "judge" and no impartial investigation was carried out, they changed the chair and a formal investigation began, but then I was suspended and a new charge of "serious insubordination" was added. The investigation concluded that there was no case to answer for "gross misconduct" and, after a hearing in April 2018, I was summarily dismissed. I was not allowed an appeal hearing. Through the disciplinary process my "ethical principles" had been mentioned several times, suggesting they made me biased and clouded my judgement. I realised that I had been discriminated against because of my beliefs.

I decided to bring a claim against the League at the Employment Tribunal and, in June 2018, used crowdjustice.com to fund my litigation. The League's official response included that veganism was not a protected belief, so they asked for a pre-hearing so the judge could assess this. It was initially set for March 2019, but a few weeks before, after we provided to them with the more than 1,000 pages of evidence we were planning to use, they conceded that it was indeed protected. But the judge ruled that such concession was not enough, so the pre-hearing had to happen anyway as the tribunal had to assess if ethical veganism fulfilled all the conditions for such protection. After several postponements, the pre-hearing took place on the 2nd and 3rd January 2020, and the judge ruled that ethical veganism is indeed protected under the Equality Act 2010, and that such protection covers all genuine ethical vegans, not just me. It was a great result, and the news circulated all over the world.



Vegan Victory

My trial continued 24th February 2020 and after five days both sides agreed a settlement in my favour. The League published a statement which includes this phrase: *"The only reason for the dismissal of Mr Casamitjana in 2018 was his communications to his colleagues in relation to our pension arrangements. Having revisited the issue we now accept that Mr Casamitjana did nothing wrong with such communications, which were motivated by his belief in ethical veganism."*. And eight months after I was fired, they eventually changed their default pension fund to one labelled as "ethical".

It took me three years to solve the "pension problem" - two of which I had to fight while unemployed - but in the end, we made history.

MEET YOUR COMMITTEE: HSA CHAIR



In keeping with its grassroots direct-action ethos, the HSA is run by a volunteer committee of twelve people. In this series we meet some of those involved.

How did you get involved in sabbing and animal rights?

I saw an advert for the HSA in the Daily Mirror, which some clever sod had wangled for free I was later told.

Do you remember your first sab? What happened?

I was just a meat-eating 17-year-old (soon went vegan). I had to walk two miles to the meet up, wearing a new blue jacket by mum had got me for Christmas. During the hunt, supporters attacked the group and I was manhandled over a fence and my jacked got ripped on barbed wire. I threw away the jacket after returning home and never told my mum that I had een attacked, or more importunately, that the jacket was ruined. However, I was hooked so quickly purchased a more suitable for sabbing combat jacket and was back out the following week.

Why did you want to get involved in helping to run the HSA?

This is my third and longest stint on the HSA committee. In the past I have been both Campaigns and Legal Officer. The first time was because of the attempt by the then HSA committee to move the organisation to a non (or reduced) direct action organisation along the lines of Greenpeace, just having a few staged events a year and no weekly sabs. I rebelled alongside several others and we ousted that committee and kept the HSA true to its roots. This last time I was hassled back onto the committee as the numbers of committee members was dropping and we were in financial trouble due to lack of focus. Over 10 years later I am still here, surprised to be one of the old timers but I came back with the single intention of making sure the HSA survived, and so we could funnel money out to groups. A decade ago. we could only give out a few hundred a year, now we give out close to 100,000 in grants each year.

Tell us about the role of HSA Chair

I chair the AGM and meetings, although we do rotate chairing of general meetings which is good practice and gives other committee members people a chance to and me to be more vocal. In the event of a split vote, I get the deciding vote, which is not as fun as it sounds. In the past ten years I think I have had to use that deciding vote just 3 times and each time was a dilemma as you know you will annoy at least 50% of the committee. I also physically represent the HSA to other organisations, MPs and agencies, which means I have been in the House of Commons more times than I ever expected to be (i.e.never) and even got to hob-knob with some celebrities (not as fun as it sounds). I also pick up stuff which I feel needs doing and does not fit into a present committee role. Not surprisingly, I also get lots of threats - death and otherwise - but gave up reporting them to the cops years ago.

What's the best thing about the role?

Working with and making friends with people I would never have met otherwise from across the UK. We don't always agree but you know that that they are all dedicated to fighting bloodsports and over the past few years we have achieved amazing things which puts all other anti-hunt organisations to shame.

And the worst?

Activists within the movement seem to think that the committee is a hive mind agreeing on all decisions. I must at times defend a stance or decisions I actually voted against. That can be hard but as a committee we have to stand behind the groups decisions or it would not work.

Any final words?

Helping to keep the HSA going over the years and working to make us the best and most dangerous (to hunting) organisation is one of the proudest achievements of my life. Any committee position is not easy, receives little thanks or plaudits, but each year when we see hit reports from groups using vehicles or equipment we helped to fund, saving animals lives, knowing that you helped them to do that makes it worth it. And that's not even mentioning areas like the the Hunting Office leaked video or the badger cull!



The Chair is in there somewhere

sabgroupnews





Group News - where the HSA's affiliated groups record their actions over the last few months - is the beating heart of HOWL magazine. Unlike the Quorn Hunt, hunt sabs have respected Covid-19 guidance and so this Group News is smaller than usual. It's still a pretty damn impressive account of what can be achieved within the constraits of a global pandemic.

Bath Hunt Sabs

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Find us on

After the last issue, in which we forgot to mention the Badger Cull which our sabs worked on 24/7 for months, this group news has seen no sabbing!

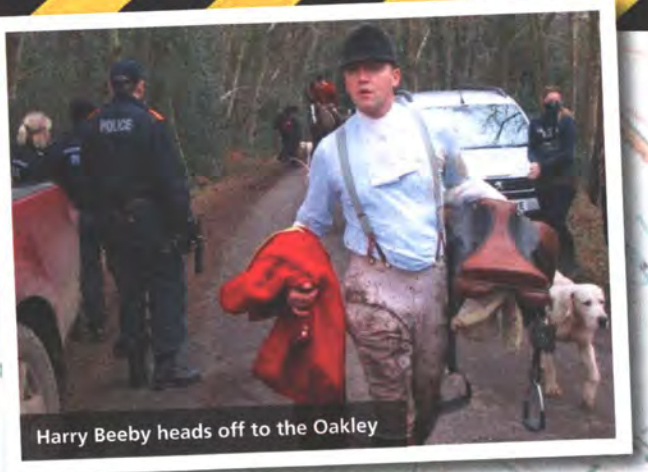
That said, we have been busier than ever. We have been campaigning hard against hunters like Jonathon Seed becoming Police and Crime Commissioners. Special mentions for our incredible image and film makers who make us look very professional.

Sabs have also been heavily involved in the Kill The Bill movement, again putting many hours of work in. The demos are ongoing, and we won't be stopping any time soon. We urge anyone reading to get involved in that and the campaign for a right to roam.

That along with finding the odd trap on our countryside travels! It does not really do justice to the many hours of work researching, flyering, and writing we have done against hunters and draconian legislation. As ever our Landies are being worked on and readied for a summer sabbing mink hunts.



Busy times for Bath Hunt Sabs



Harry Beeby heads off to the Oakley

Beds & Bucks Hunt Sabs

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Find us on

It's obviously been a very quiet winter in terms of direct action as the Covid situation continued to keep the hounds in kennels. However, like many other sabs around the country, we made use of our exercise time to keep an eye on our local badger setts and areas which are likely to suffer wildlife persecution. Shooting is big business and despite the pandemic, keepers would still be out setting traps and snares, well away from the prying eyes of the general public, however we were still able to get out there and do our bit.

One location which had been under observation for some time revealed quite a few snares, in fact it was the biggest single haul in one operation. Thirty of these barbaric and indiscriminate devices were found.

We were also pleased to note that the Oakley huntsman Simon "Shaky" Hand is leaving. He came in talking tough on how he was going to sort us out and barely lasted two seasons! Also leaving is the obnoxious little whip "Paperboy" Henson. The next huntsman will be Harry Beeby. We know all about Harry and how hapless he can be. We're looking forward to taking the hounds off him at every opportunity. Let's see how long he lasts!



Bristol are on the case

Bristol Hunt Sabs

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Find us on

After we joined Cirencester Illegal Hunt Watch and Mendip Hunt Sabs at the Beaufort Hunt at the start of January (with over 100 hunt riders and supporters gathered in blatant disregard of Covid concerns), the hunting season was brought to an abrupt end with the third national lockdown.

Our group made the most of the down time with a number of training sessions for sabs, and since restrictions have started to lift, we've got back into the swing of things with group meetings, forward planning and some TLC for our Landy.

With summer beginning and the mink/otter hunting season now underway, we're now turning our attention to tracking down these riverside vandals...

Calder Valley Hunt Sabs

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Find us on

Things have been a little quieter than normal, but we have used this time to make connections with local groups working to highlight thewrongs of the Walshaw shooting estate which dominates our valley. We are proud to report that this kind of activity is wildly unpopular within our local community, so many concerned citizens are getting involved, stepping up and taking action against the thousands of snares and traps and other vile 'management' practices that scar our uplands.

In other news, our members have also played a role in organising and mobilising against the threat of local fash and we have been supporting the mass protests against the Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Bill. As summer approaches we look forward to trashing some mink hunts. Watch this space.



In pursuit of the Dove Valley Mink Hounds!



"Get orf my land!"

Cirencester Illegal Hunt Watch

cihwatch@gmail.com
Find us on

The Badger Cull stopped for 2020 and the kill figures are truly shocking. According to government figures 38,642 badgers killed – an increase of over 10% on 2019's figures, and 140,991 deaths overall since the policy was adopted in 2013. This figure will continue to rise and predicted to go beyond 200,000 by the end of 2022. As usual the government tried to mislead the public saying the cull was coming to an end but there are four-year licences still to run. So with this in mind sadly we continue to survey and check setts in preparation for the 9th year of inhumane, unscientific cull.

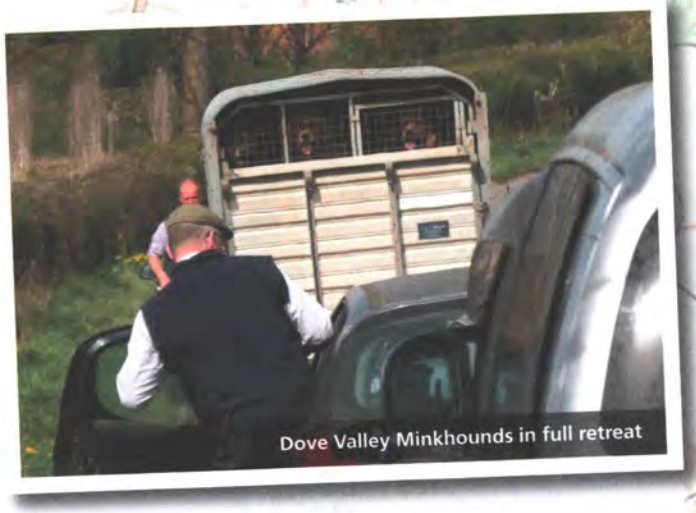
Covid-19 restrictions and lockdowns severely interrupted the hunts thank goodness and wildlife enjoyed some respite. Unfortunately, not all criminals were grounded and when we could get out [according to rules] we continued to find wildlife persecuted by psychopaths without empathy for animals. Several dead foxes have been found dumped around Gloucestershire often near shooting estates and badgers killed then cruelly skinned left for passing walkers to discover. People that do this are seriously disturbed. We always report to the police but rarely leads to a prosecution through lack of evidence. On a happier note, we often get called out to help with local wildlife rescues several resulting in happy endings.

The hunts are on the 'back foot' now with some having to fold through lack of funds. We will be out sabbing again when cub hunting starts in the Autumn. The Beaufort, VWH and Cotswold can expect a visit! If you would like to join us in the field or help, please be in touch.

A big thank you to all our supporters and donators!

Derby Hunt Sabs

derby_sabs@outlook.com
Find us on


Dove Valley Minkhounds in full retreat

The global pandemic has not deterred Derby Hunt Saboteurs as the group continues to grow. During lockdown daily exercise has taken us all over Derbyshire. We are pleased to be finding healthy active setts within the Derbyshire badger cull zone. Venturing into the High Peak, we have been monitoring the moorlands, for horrific snares and traps targeting the Peak District's last mountain hares.

The High Peak Harriers fired their huntsman, Phillip Watts, following two incidents where he lost control of hounds: once chasing a calf and another time killing a pet cat while out exercising a short distance from their kennels.

Watts has had a very short season at the High Peak, with his departure in early 2021 making him their 7th huntsman in 6 years. While the hunt struggles with its staff turnover, the opposite is true for Derby Hunt Saboteurs as we are invigorated with new strength in our current incarnation.

With Covid restrictions stopping some hunting, it has provided the perfect opportunity to train our new recruits, practicing horn and voice calls, map reading skills and other tactics.

Fox Hunting is no longer financially lucrative, therefore hunts now rely on fundraising and hosting non-hunting events to stay afloat. The recent Hunting Leak revealed that the Barlow Hunt were organising fun-rides under the name "Challenge Smeekly" in a bid to seem separate from the hunt. We thought we would remind people it wasn't. We flew a plane towing a banner that read "THE BARLOW HUNT KILLS FOXES" over the Kennels during their fundraiser.


Sabs score a Birdie on the links

East Herts Hunt Sabs

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Find us on

After the last few years of regularly sabbing the Puckeridge, this year has been strange to say the least. Although lockdown hasn't been great for our levels of fitness, we're sure our foxes have appreciated a bit of peace over the last few months! We've still kept very busy – using our daily exercise to check up on vulnerable badger setts and surveying new areas where we've dealt with numerous illegal snares and traps.

As many will know, golf clubs regularly use pest control but what we've established is that not even the golf clubs are fully aware of what is being culled and this includes foxes during cub season. After receiving a call, we attended Letchworth Golf Club to find two men with rifles who were happy to inform us they were there to shoot rabbits and foxes. After being challenged, they called the police and when two vehicles and numerous police rocked up, we had no hesitation in stating we weren't leaving and would walk up and down all night if necessary - this resulted in the shooters packing up. We were joined by some of Beds & Bucks Hunt Sabs, who stayed on to make sure they didn't return. Meanwhile, a member of our team went to check an area where fox cubs had been found earlier that day with their dead mum and located a 4th cub and took her into rescue. Since the incident, the club have released a statement confirming there will be no culling of foxes whatsoever!

We're now sorting out our equipment, will be looking to raise some funds and get some more recruits for the up-and-coming season. If you'd like to join us, please get in touch.



Sick: keepers gibbet line of moles

East Yorkshire Coast Hunt Sabs

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Find us on

EYCHS have been enjoying social distanced walks in the surrounding beautiful countryside. We have been lucky enough to discover some new and very active badger setts which we will be monitoring closely from now on. We are fortunate that North Yorkshire does not fall in the cull zone but it has a high level of wildlife crime, so we are forever vigilant on the lookout for anything suspicious.

Along with monitoring setts we often come across illegal traps placed around the grounds of the local estate renowned for hosting shoots and hunts. A lovely Sunday mornings walk, the peace was shattered by the constant blast of shotguns. Our hearts bleed for the poor victims of this frivolous country pastime. The ground littered with bodies that will not be eaten but left to rot. Other victims being squirrels and moles.

Corvids often fall victim to ruthless gamekeepers but with the help of our dedicated members we are forever on the lookout to rescue these helpless casualties of purely money-orientated pursuits.

We joined other local sab groups in Leeds to make people aware of AXA. This business is insuring that a good days hunting will be covered by their insurance policy should they have their plans scuppered by sabs. It comes to something when you can insure for that but not for your house flooding!

Glasgow Hunt Sabs

glasgowhuntsabs@riseup.net

Find us on

It's been an unusually quiet time on the sabbing front, due to Covid-19 regulations putting a stop to regular hunting, but as a group have kept busy and focussed. Election time is due in Scotland in a matter of weeks, and with the SNP, Greens and Labour pledging a full ban on hunting with hounds, this is sure to be an interesting time. We're not ones to get too hopeful when it comes to party politics however, but cautious optimism is certainly there. Of course, until every huntsman and woman has hung up their boots for good, we will not either.

The downtime has been turned into an opportunity to prepare - with upcoming training days, when restrictions allow, and plenty of fundraising opportunities organised. We're also thrilled to hear that a new group is forming in Scotland - Borders Hunt Sabs - with most the Scottish hunts being situated along the border, we are excited to work and train alongside our new comrades. This helps no end in making sure the small number of Scottish hunts that receive limited attention from sabs, can now feel the pressure.



Oooohh...scary!

Pressure like the sort of which we have piled on the Lanarkshire & Renfrewshire Hunt. We're pleased to say that an arrest has been made regarding the attack on our driver, at the start of last season, and other investigations are still ongoing. Our relentless sabbing of our local hunt has also caused huntsman Tom Haddock to quit, a move we have long been anticipating.

We're mere days away from finding out who we have to torment next, but whatever the outcome from that and whatever happens (or doesn't happen) in the elections, come the start of cubbing we'll be back out in force and stopping the hunts in their tracks.

Herefordshire Hunt Sabs

Ko-fi.com/herefordshirehuntsabs

herefordshirehuntsabs@gmail.com

Find us on



The one where Ross turns into a trail hunt

Lockdown ended our local hunts' seasons at New Year. We have kept busy though, while adhering to lockdown restrictions (take note Quorn mastership!). Solo sett surveying in February turned up a badger cage littering the countryside after last year's cull, in breach of cull guidelines. We are now meeting as a group for regular sett surveying and have welcomed two potential new sabs along.

We attended a protest to mark World Day for Animals in Laboratories at Sequani in Ledbury and a Kill the Bill protest. To mark the anniversary of the Kinder Scout mass trespass, we carried out a symbolic land trespass at MP Philip Dunne's Gatley Park Estate at Leinthall Earls.

Ross Harriers huntsman Garry Williams' trial date for assault on two of our sabs is set for June. He has lost his job at the Harriers as a result, and further big changes are afoot at the Harriers. They are moving kennels to Ryeford, along with the Leadon Vale Bassets, and one Saturday late in March we went along to observe their attempts to morph into a legitimate trail hunt. It's early days and it was clear there were concerns it would take hunt staff from both Harriers and the Leadon Vale Bassets to stop the hounds if they caught a whiff of hare, but all our sources suggest the intent to no longer hunt live quarry is genuine. Meanwhile, struggling local hunt the Cotswold Vale Farmers Hunt, has brokered some shady amalgamation deal with the remnants of the disgraced South Herefordshire Hunt. We watch both situations with interest.

Hertfordshire Hunt Sabs

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Find us on

While illegal fox hunting has been on hold during the pandemic (every cloud), Hertfordshire sabs have not been resting.

We have been continuing our mission to protect persecuted wildlife in whichever way we can. We have covered hundreds of miles cleaning up the countryside while trying to still enjoy its natural beauty.



Madness: magpies are caged, so pheasants can be shot

We have scoured the local countryside for its dark underbelly; all manner of traps, snares and hides which are placed there by the grim reapers who pertain to be 'guardians of the countryside'. We long for the day our beautiful countryside is a safer space for all wildlife free from these cruel devices, much of which is left lying around long after it's intended use. The limited guidelines in place seem to be largely ignored with many instances of illegal usage discovered. We could have started our own scrap metal business with the trash we have found.

Several of us attended various demonstrations outside laboratories on World Day for Animals In Laboratories bringing to the public's attention the cruel and unnecessary practice of vivisection/animal testing.

We continue to fundraise for our group; to ensure we have reliable and fully equipped vehicles going forward into this season's cub hunting, the badger cull and 'hunting proper'.

Kernow Hunt Sabs

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www.kernowsabsmerch.weebly.com
Find us on

During lockdown the Kernow team used exercise time to get out sett surveying, dealing with various traps, helping with wildlife rescues and keeping an eye on some of the hunts. Thankfully at the end of March the Cornish hunts didn't resume as feared.

Aside from lockdown giving foxes some respite, it appears to have taken its toll on some of our hunts with at least 3 huntsmen leaving and adverts being placed for amateurs, suggesting financial struggles. We are interested to see what happens when the next season starts.

The team will be preparing over the summer for the cubbing season and the next round of badger culling, which sadly may see a new zone added in the county.



Pixie performs a traditional folk dance



Lincs unveil their anti-cull missiles

Lincoln Hunt Sabs

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www.ko-fi.com/lincssabs
Find us on

Thank goodness the hunting season never really got going, so here in Lincolnshire we were close enough to treat surveying as permitted exercise, in line with government covid legisl.....blah blah blah.

What have we been doing? We've been looking into holes, lots of holes: holes in woods, holes in bushes, holes in sidings, holes in fields and people's gardens, but what have we found?

Lots of fresh badger activity, enough to tell us we still have a healthy population despite many losing their lives in an unjust and morally bankrupt cull. Enough to tell us we have something worth fighting for: life. This has spurred us on and given us hope we are making a difference, every badger saved is a victory and the fight continues.

We showed solidarity with our brothers and sisters when a couple of us joined the very successful demo against the Barlow Hunt, thanks for making us feel so welcome (nice touch with the plane).

The battle for our badgers is about to pick up again...join us, our stripy friends need us.

Manchester Hunt Sabs

join.manchesterhuntsabs@gmail.com
Donate: ko-fi.com/manchesterhuntsabs
Find us on


Heroic Manchester sab back out protecting badgers

Like most groups, the Covid lockdown restrictions put a sudden halt on our activities as hunts were no longer allowed out, and we could not leave our local area. However, this did not mean we were completely inactive.

We received some information that people were out shooting foxes at a farm local to some of our sabs, so we started using our daily exercise to sab them. The local community were appalled that the shooting was taking place on their doorstep, so we now have plenty of eyes and ears in the area to inform us if they try it again.

Once lockdown restrictions started to ease, we were able to attend a demo hosted by Derby Sabs against the Barlow Hunt. It made the local press as they flew a banner over the area with THE BARLOW HUNT KILLS FOXES which was great to see.

We also managed to squeeze in a visit to the Dove Valley Mink Hounds in April, which resulted in them abandoning their day's hunting, and instead heading back to the kennels, where they then called the cops and accused us of having a shotgun!

We have also been using our free time to monitor several local Badger Setts. You will likely have seen that one of our sabs bravely confronted some badger baiters at one of these setts. He was very badly assaulted, and a police investigation is ongoing. Despite some serious injuries our sab is okay, he is on the mend and was even back out checking setts again within 48 hours. Northern Sabs are made of tough stuff!
If you would like to get involved, then contact us via social media and we will get you signed up.

Mendip Hunt Sabs

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

Covid-19 restrictions meant we sabbed only a single foxhunt during 2021, a snowy meet of the Beaufort Hunt on January 2nd. Despite this, we have still been extremely busy in and out of the field. We have sabbed shooters and found multiple traps and cages in our area. Our sabs are tirelessly checking badger setts and have been called out to several incidents of wildlife persecution.

Sabs were in court twice to secure our first convictions against supporters of the Mendip Farmers Hunt. One supporter was found guilty of "using threatening or abusive words or behaviour likely to cause harassment, alarm or distress", relating to an incident in February last year when the sab vehicle was rammed with a quad bike. Another hunt supporter was found guilty of assault and criminal damage during an attack on the driver of our sab vehicle in August 2019. With several ongoing cases, we expect these convictions to be the first of many.

Our sabs have been active protesting the PCSC Bill which endangers the right to protest and would criminalise trespass, directly impacting sabbing and many already marginalised communities. As well as attending local demonstrations, we joined local a mass trespass on wildlife mass-murderer Tory MP Richard Drax's country estate in Dorset, which saw us occupy Charborough Tower and provoked an exorbitant police response.


Mendip Flying Foxes are GO!

On World Day for Animals In Laboratories, Mendip sabs attended protests and vigils at Bristol University and Porton Down to stand up for the thousands of animals tortured there every year.

We all send an enormous thank you to everyone who donated towards our drone fundraiser. This new kit will prove invaluable and we're getting plenty of flying practice ready for the mink hunts!

Melbourne Hunt Sabs (Australia)

Find us on
MelbourneHuntSabs@protonmail.com


Smash the 'roo cull!

Sadly, two weeks before our fox hunting season begins and three weeks before the duck shooting season Melbourne Hunt Saboteurs were asked to assist with kangaroo cull (aka killing), happening on a golf course of worldwide acknowledgement (apparently, tho we don't golf).

What we found was a community outraged that a mob of loved and cherished kangaroos in numbers of close to two hundred, were going to be killed simply for existing. Heritage Golf & Country Club Chirnside Park, Victoria Australia have paid for this shooting.

The docile and beloved mob of kangaroos that cross into the club from Mt Lofty State Park were due to be killed for pet food on 27 April. The community stood together in defence of the kangaroos and we stopped the slaughter taking place that night. With saboteurs, alongside other dedicated crew taking to the golf course to ensure no shooting.

Given the devastating impact the bush fires have had on Australia, we are disgusted that our governments allow this brutality when we should be doing everything we can to ensure the survival of all creatures great and small.

We will stop this, we will sab the fox hunters and join our friends to stop the duck shooting season starting in May. A busy time for us indeed.

Norfolk & Suffolk Hunt Sabs

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



The 2020/21 hunting season was almost over before it began and with no apparent hunting taking place in Norfolk and Suffolk since 24th December 2020 it has been our quietest season on record. We have nonetheless still been active responding to enquiries and requests for assistance from members of the public in relation to all manner of wildlife issues.

On 3rd April we held an impromptu demo in Norwich against the Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Bill. Then on 24th April we held a demo at the AXA office in Ipswich in response to the disclosure over AXA's insurance of hunts across the country. For about two hours we handed out leaflets to interested people, AXA employees and customers. It was a very successful public engagement event considering there were only a small number of us present.

The break from active sabbing has given us a chance to reflect on past events and to revisit some of those events on Facebook. At the end of February, we posted previously unseen footage of the Easton Harriers openly chasing hares on Boxing Day 2016. The Easton Harriers have thankfully since packed up hunting hares and have converted over to bloodhounds. At the beginning of February, we also revisited the 2011 and 2014 Raveningham Hare shoots. These Facebook posts are an effective way of showing our supporters the sort of work that we do. Such work is only possible because of the kind support that we receive. We are truly grateful to everyone who supports us.

North London Hunt Sabs

Find us on
07539 385224
northlondonhuntsabs@gmail.com

Despite not being in the field due to Lockdown 3, the first few months of 2021 have been busy for NLHS. We have been recruiting, vetting and now, with lockdown easing, we are starting our training days for new recruits.

Together with Action Against Foxhunting we have held several online meetings with Essex Police. We have used the leaked webinar footage (thanks HSA) along with our own covert drone footage of the Essex based hunts, to lobby the Rural Engagement Team and several senior officers.


Redcoat on the attack

The upshot of these meetings is that Essex Police agreed to send their entire Rural Engagement Team to LACS for training in the Hunting Act and what the hunts are really doing. In February Essex Police reported back that the training was a "real eyeopener" and they are going to roll the training out across the entire force. This is in preparation for a greater policing effort against the hunts.

Moving forward, we are preparing to pour cold water on the mink hunters' summer as well as fundraising, outreach...and many more secret plans and clever tricks.

North Dorset Hunt Sabs

northdorsethuntsabs@activist.com
PayPal.me/NorthDorsetHuntSabsth Dorset
Find us on


Sab strolls past ineffective Portman steward

Moving into 2021, we've all had a much quieter time than we anticipated. With hunts and shoots stopping, we found ourselves twiddling our thumbs with not a lot to do on a Saturday. With the Cull extending into 2021, we have been using our daily exercise allowance to find and monitor badger sett activity and gain a better picture of the movements and activities of wildlife around us.

We have also carried out some essential maintenance on the group Land Rover. A new turbo and two new tyres were fitted at a cost of around £500. We have also revamped our comms equipment and cameras on the vehicle to keep sabs safe and in touch with the vehicle when in the field. Keeping the vehicle running is by far our biggest financial expense. If you wish to donate to us to help, our PayPal link is above.

Mink hunts, in particular the Courtenay Tracey will be on our radar for this summer. We successfully stopped them hunting a couple times last season and hope to catch up with them again soon.

We will be carrying out essential fundraising at the Dorchester Vegan Market and Bournemouth Vegan Festival. We are sure we will be able to book more events as the year progresses and try to recruit more sabs via these events.



Keeping a close eye on the Flint & Denbigh

North Wales Hunt Sabs

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Find us on

Well lockdown sure did give the wildlife a rest from the hunts, and by the time it lifted our hunting season was already finished.

We received the disappointing news that the case against the Flint & Denbigh Hunt had been discontinued by Rural Crime Team manager Rob Taylor. North Wales Police themselves are furious that Taylor discontinued a case whilst it was still with the CPS, and the fact Taylor had been told to leave this decision to the CPS. Taylor has a lot of questions to answer in the upcoming months with this now with Police Professional Standards.

With lockdown easing it was a great opportunity to get out and about checking for snares and traps. It's mind blowing how gamekeepers cannot even set these barbaric devices legally. Many a snare, Larsen trap and Fenn trap has found itself in a condition of disrepair.

A summer of surveying is planned for us ready for this year's badger culls.

Nottingham Hunt Sabs

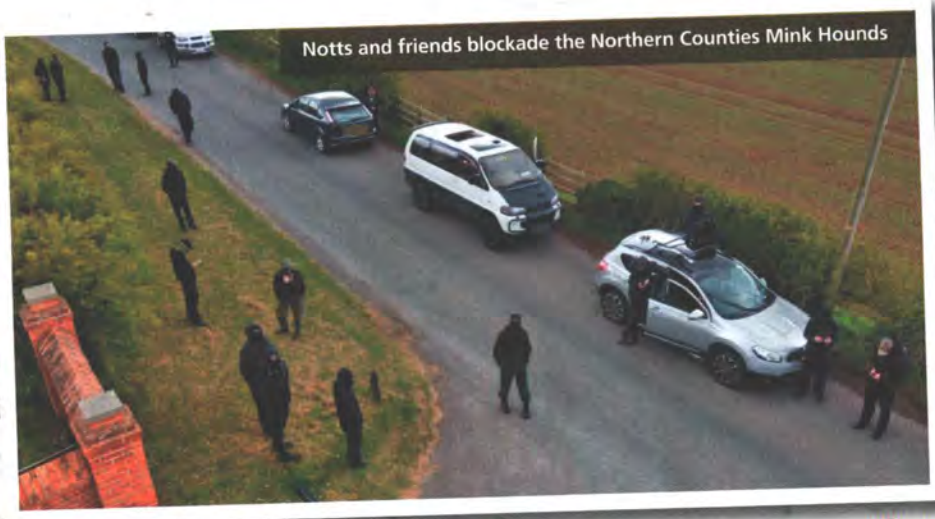
huntsabs@hotmail.com
https://ko-fi.com/nottshuntsabs
Find us on

Thanks to lockdown we've had a slightly more relaxed time than usual, and it's been an absolute pleasure seeing the hunting season completely wiped out. That's not to say we didn't keep ourselves busy during the winter. We've done lots of social distanced sett surveying ready for the second year of the cull in the Vale of Belvoir and as restrictions eased even managed an introductory day for some eager new people. Whilst bimbling about in the countryside we've also cleared a fair amount of rubbish that careless farmers and gamekeepers had left lying around to kill wildlife. We also made a trip to Leeds to take part in the demonstration against AXA who are insuring hunts.

As restrictions lifted even further and hunts started to sneak out we've had a couple of good days with other groups stopping the secretive mink hunts. First up were the Dove Valley who, following a tip off, we found meeting at the Carington Arms, Ashley Folville, Leicestershire. At the first sight of sabs they rapidly boxed up hounds and headed back to kennels. We then had to deal with some ridiculous nonsense from Leicestershire police who insisted on holding sabs for over an hour while they searched us for shotguns!

The following week we headed to the Northern Counties Mink Hounds who were followed from their kennels to the meet at Great Smeaton. Again, once they knew sabs were present, they called it a day. It makes you wonder what these hunts have got to hide that they refuse to go hunting once sabs are in attendance!

Summer will be more of the same – mink sabbing and surveying. Please follow us to keep up to date.



Notts and friends blockade the Northern Counties Mink Hounds

Northants Hunt Sabs

www.paypal.me/ENABS
Find us on

The last few months have been a time for consolidation, reflection, training and now moving into action again. Covid restrictions have given us time to reflect on what we have achieved. Time to undertake socially distanced training. Training for both new and established members of our group to help us be as effective as we can in up-and-coming seasons. We have been lucky that new people have joined us. This means we can continue to grow and oppose the cruelty that comes with fox hunting.

The Cottesmore Hunt gain some funding and new members by holding "fun" rides out. Not only does this bring in badly needed resources, but they have an opportunity to groom potential riders for their hunting activities.



Cottesmore "fun ride" gets the sab treatment

By ensuring we demonstrate and highlight the reality to potential new members, this disrupts their grooming and allows these new people to get a fuller picture about what really happens. Then they can make up their own mind about joining such activities.

Of course, this is opposed by the core members of the hunt, who don't want the true nature of their activities exposed. Even our demonstrations are met with violence and threats. However, we won't stop. The future for hunting is looking bleaker every year.

Everything we can do to help it decline is beneficial to this cause and as long as we have people and resources, we will continue down this path.

Peak District Hunt Sabs

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pdhs.bigcartel.com
Find us on



Too right!

A new group has sprung from the embers of the badger cull. Fed up with the persecution of wildlife and eyes awakened to what really happens in the Peak District, a few of us patrol folk have banded together to form the new Peak District Hunt Sabs. Geographically we are a diverse group, with some of us in the north of Derbyshire and others in the south. Our name tries to capture the extent of all of us. With the input of experienced sab groups Sheffield and Nottingham, the group has gone from strength to strength.

Earlier in the season, pre Covid lockdown, we managed an outing to sab the Barlow Hunt with Sheffield Hunt Sabs, LABH and Derby Hunt Sabs. We also paid our local High Peak Hunt a visit.

Since then, we have been mostly focusing on moorland monitoring, sett surveying ready for the cull, and getting to know our local hunts. Mink season is upon us, so we are hoping to work with some other local groups.

With the recent Covid restrictions, we have been having some fun with online training, including a very informative map reading workshop and hunt tactics skills hosted by Nottingham and Sheffield sabs.

Our big focus over the coming months will be fundraising for next season, and we have just launched our brand-new line of merchandise in our online shop.

Hunting seasons may be over, but we are only just beginning. Watch this space.

Peterborough Hunt Sabs

peterboroughhuntsabs@gmail.com
ko-fi.com/PBsabs
Find us on


Peterborough sabs celebrate 'Earth Awareness Day'

Since we last wrote an update for HOWL there have been a grand total of zero hunts out in our local area! Success for wildlife, not so great for the group news, you may think.

However, we were tipped off during the most recent hunting-lockdown, that our local hunt the Fitzwilliam had been busy installing a new artificial fox earth near Huntingdon. This shows the complete disregard that hunts hold for the law over sixteen years since their despicable sport was outlawed. Fortunately, they were so paranoid about being watched and filmed, that after getting wind that their construction project was being staked out, they completely removed the new earth and levelled the site a week later! Even when there is no hunting, our eyes are watching.

Elsewhere, a member of the Peterborough group was able to make a brief appearance on ITV news to discuss the ill-fated and secretive "Quorn Birthday Hunt". National news coverage of this act pushed at least two hunt masters to be suspended, with a police investigation ongoing.

Reading Hunt Sabs

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readinghuntsabs@protonmail.com
Find us on

With normal hunt season coming to an end, it's been a quiet one for our usual targets. The third lockdown put a stop to the hunts going out and reports keep flying in about hunt groups losing money left, right and centre – nothing makes us happier!

Our sabs kept busy though, using the time to check up on wildlife and responding to tip offs. Several Goodnature traps were discovered in one woodland. These cruel traps are intended to kill grey squirrels and work by delivering a strike to the poor animal's head with a captive piston powered by compressed air. We've also followed up on reports regarding Larson traps in a few areas – we offer a free countryside clean up service to those pesky litterers.

We've been out checking on local badger setts, and discovering healthy and active setts we didn't know about. We were incredibly saddened by the news that the latest cull had killed 38,642 badgers, bringing the total for the entire cull to over 140,000 killed. Oxfordshire was a new cull zone for 2020, and 1040 badgers were needlessly slaughtered.

To end on a brighter note, one of our sabs set up a trail camera in a local woodland to make sure the wildlife there was happy and healthy and captured some beautiful sights – foxes, badgers, rabbits, squirrels, muntjac and even a glimpse of a cute little stoat!

Thanks as ever for all the support we've received over the past few months and remember to tip us off if you have any info on local hunts, shoots, traps, etc – 07432 643728 or get in touch on social media (all completely confidential).

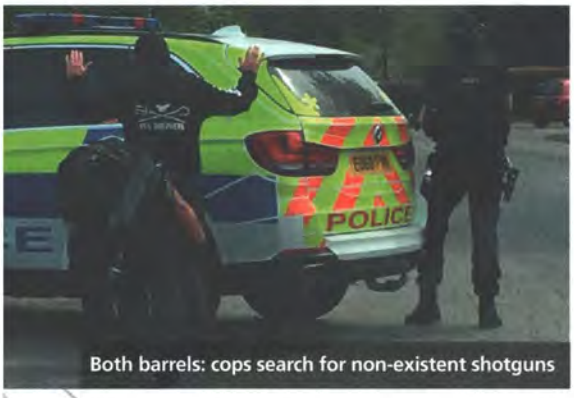
The seriously mis-named 'Goodnature' trap



Sheffield Hunt Sabs

sheffieldhuntsaboteurs@riseup.net

Find us on .



Both barrels: cops search for non-existent shotguns

It's been a busy times fo SHS. The horrendous end of last year's 3434 cull figures haven't deterred us from sett surveying in preparation for this year's cull.

The footage of the High Peak chasing cow and calf has seen the end of their huntsman Phillip Watts, who is due in court on 21/4/2021 over the footage.

We have continued paying attention to the Barlow, who are struggling financially with plans to sell property and to hide behind the Smeekley Challenge for fundraising. Up to their usual dirty tricks the Barlow have been keen to put their vote behind a pro hunt police crime commissioner, with Jo Riley, the hunt master, claiming the Tory as 'our candidate'. Sabs paid a visit to the Smeekley fundraiser in the form of a demo, to remind the Barlow we know all their tricks.

We had just enough time in the shortest season ever to pay the Middleton a visit and find out they were not at all bothered about social distancing, rule of 6, or any of the covid guidance.

World Day for Animals in Labs saw sabs protesting outside Sheffield Uni - highlighting to the public how many animals were killed for 'research' and asking Sheff Uni to find alternatives. A successful day with the demo hitting media.

We've been busy with mink season. A recent trip to Leicestershire saw the Dove Valley off before they started, and sabs ended up surrounded by armed police after the hunt told a fib about a firearm!

We've also been supporting a recently affiliated group Peak District Hunt Sabs (#Peaky sabs) with some pre-Covid joint sabbing and online training. We look forward to more future endeavours.

South Cambs Hunt Sabs

schuntsabs@riseup.net

Find us on

Despite having not been out sabotaging hunts over the last few months, it has been a busy time for South Cambs Hunt Sabs.

We've participated in several relevant causes including 'Kill the Bill' protests at a local and national level. If it is passed into law, the Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Bill could seriously affect our ability to protect animals in many ways. We believe that it is necessary for us to fight it.

Some of our group have been attending HS2 protest camps protecting important woodland habitats for badgers, foxes, bats, and many other species.

We have received tip offs from residents near two local golf courses with reliable information that the grounds-keeping staff were planning fox culls and we took action to prevent this occurring.

Our group members are also involved in a new badger group and have been, sett surveying and protecting local badger populations. As usual, we would like to thank our supporters and those who have contacted us with tip offs. We couldn't do it without you!



South Cambs say 'Kill the Bill'

South Coast Hunt Sabs

southcoasthuntsabs@gmail.com

Find us on



Shooting estate thugs attack sabs!

After last season and all the shenanigans with tractors, attacks on sabs and stolen equipment we were grateful for some respite from the scum. Unfortunately, early in the year we had a vicious attack on several members of our group near Rushlake Green and were then subjected to the usual police bias whilst in shock and injured and with yet more equipment stolen.

Despite the lockdown we've done our best to protect wildlife. We've supported fellow sabs to stop a cull of foxes at a Coca-Cola site and helped to rescue threatened pigeons. Larson traps have been found and we have supported campaigns against fox and rabbit culls at golf courses. We have been overwhelmed by the generosity from our supporters to enable us to purchase a drone. We also had a great response with our second online Auction.

More positive news, a couple of our group were acquitted of all charges in March after being assaulted by the violent Attwoods and their lackies several months previously. An attempt by the Old Burstow hunts and their sycophants to film, provoke and get known sabs arrested failed after two sabs were found not guilty of aggravated trespass. Scum weren't best pleased. We remain small yet mighty, determined, and disruptive when required.

South Hampshire Hunt Sabs

Find us on

Almost two years after forming the group we are delighted to now be part of HSA as an affiliated group.



Sabbing the once mighty Hursley Hambledon

We've started this past season with sabbing the Hursley Hambledon and Hampshire hunts with our friends from North Hampshire, Reading and Guildford. Even with limited numbers due to the pandemic we managed to have success in spoiling their days. We've also sabbed the New Forest FH and Royal Artillery Hunt.

We've welcomed the news of Forestry England suspending licences on their land as it means the New Forest FH and the New Forest Beagles are without their playground for the foreseeable future. We've seen many more foxes there this spring than ever before.

Since January we've been looking after some local badger setts and answering tip offs from concerned members of the public about wildlife in need of help. So please keep those coming.

Now are getting ready for the mink hunting season and prepping for more sett surveying in the coming months.

South Wales Hunt Sabs

southwaleshuntsabs@gmail.com

Find us on

Over the last year, we've received a huge amount of information and tip offs from the public. As people have been spending time close to home, wildlife persecution is being seen by the public more and more.



Desolation row: abandoned Banwen Miners kennels

Some of the information we received needed further investigation and our group members used their daily exercise to do whatever they could in their local area.

As restrictions lifted, we have been able to cover more ground. Some of our local hunts have moved to new kennels and so we have been getting to know the surrounding land. Always good to be prepared for the new season. One of our hunts, the Banwen Miners, seem to be without huntsman and hounds and kennels at the moment, which is an achievement even by their disorganised standards. Long may that continue.

On our travels we have seen some appalling farming practices, which have been reported to the relevant authorities, as well as the sadly commonplace disrespect and disregard for land and animals.

We are now starting to sett survey in one of this year's new badger cull zones. It's a good time to get involved, as there is time to learn about badger habitat and behaviour before the killing starts. Please get in touch if you'd like to get involved.

Thank you to everyone who has contacted us with information, or supported us in any way, it's great to know that there are so many people concerned about local wildlife.

Suffolk and Essex Hunt Sabs

suffolkandessexhuntsaboteurs@protonmail.com

https://ko-fi.com/suffolkandessexhuntsabs

Find us on Find us on

With Boris cancelling Christmas this also brought the fox hunting season to an abrupt end. However, there are always threats to our wildlife, so sabs have kept busy during the latest lockdown keeping an eye on their local areas and responding to the many tip-offs received. We have found mink traps set by the local so-called Wildlife Trust, snares, Fenn traps, Larsen traps and even the odd shooting tower.

Sabs also assisted with the rescue of some ducklings that were from a hatch kit. They were taken to a duck rescue to receive expert care as they had been hatched too early. Unfortunately, one duckling didn't make it, but the others are doing well. A magpie that was freed from an illegally set Larsen trap also had to be taken to a local rescue as the magpie had no tail feathers but was otherwise in good condition and will make a full recovery.

We have been encouraging supporters to contact their PCC candidates to find out their views on hunting. Sabs have also been involved with protests for World Day for Animals in Laboratories and at our local AXA Insurance office to tell them to stop insuring the Hunting Office.

With May around the corner, we'll be back out making sure the mink hunts don't get to terrorise the wildlife. Thanks to everyone who has donated or sent us valuable information, we couldn't do it without you.



SES uncover horror at the local shoot

Three Counties Hunt Sabs

www.network23.org/3CHuntSabs
threecountiessabs@live.co.uk
Find us on

The start of this year has been very different with many hunts finishing their season when the third lockdown was announced. Between catching up on admin work, sett-surveying areas which may see badger culling start this autumn and working on different projects, we've still kept ourselves very busy.

We attended various tip-offs for hunts and shoots once restrictions began to ease off, communicating with our sister group CIHW, local sabs, monitors and wildlife enthusiasts, and our friends in Mendip Hunt Sabs. We have found new artificial earths, illegally set snares and traps and coordinated with other locals to keep an eye on at-risk badger setts and fox earths, as well as intervening in the shooting of birds.

In the next couple of months, we'll be teaming up with Gloucestershire Badger Office and autonomous anti-cull groups in order to run some "introduction to sett-surveying and the cull zone" training days - in-field workshops for anyone wanting to learn more or become more familiar with local areas and how to fight wildlife persecution. Fingers crossed that some events can happen this summer - keep an eye on our social media for stalls, talks and workshops which we hope to be able to do in the coming months at various fairs!



Another victim of the shooting industry

West Sussex Hunt Sabs

w.sussexhuntsabs@gmail.com
Gogetfunding.com/west-sussex-hunt-sabs
Find us on

With hunting suspended due to Covid 19 Lockdowns we have been able to focus on the rescue of injured wildlife, there has been so many that the rescue centres in Sussex are full. We made good use of our legally allowed exercise time to check traps and snares.



Creepy Crawley...just your average C & H supporter

On March 10th William Bishop, huntsman for the Crawley & Horsham attended Worthing Magistrates court on two charges of illegal hunting. However due to serious failures by Sussex Police and the CPS, both charges were dropped, even though the Judge said that clearly a fox was being hunted. Bishop was back in court on Wednesday 21st April on two further charges of illegal hunting, however these were adjourned until 2nd June.

News broke that the Crawley & Horsham's kennels in West Grinstead had been sold, some of the hounds would be going to other hunts, while the rest would be kenneled at the Southdown & Eridge Hunt kennels in Ringmer. They obviously won't need so many hounds with the decline in their hunting area, also that they would only be hunting one day a week...

While the C&H have a new director, Louisa Charlotte Ann Milne who is a Magistrate and friend of the C&H, their huntsman William Bishop will be retiring from hunting: no doubt fed up with spending so much time in court.

With restrictions ending we have been out and about the last couple of weeks, checking the local mink hunt for any signs they have started to go out. If you see what you think could be a mink hunt while out on your walks along the river, ring the HSA tip off hotline, in complete confidence: 07443 148 426.



At WAR with the Bill

Weymouth Animal Rights

weymouthanimalrights@protonmail.com
www.weymouthanimalrights.co.uk
https://ko-fi.com/weymouthanimalrights
Find us on

Its been an unbelievably busy time, even with no hunting. The first two organisations we targeted, the National Trust and Forestry England, both allowed 'trail' hunting on their land. Putting pressure on via FB, Email and especially Twitter, they both banned hunting for the season.

The South Dorset Hunt have been running at a loss for a few years, relying on sponsorship from wealthy supporters and businesses. Our next target was Volvo, Poole, Dorset. Due to making this public within 24hrs they had retracted their sponsorship and stated that they do not support illegal fox hunting.

Next came Humphries Kirk Solicitors. Not as easy as Volvo as one of the firms 'partners' was formerly Treasurer for the South Dorset Hunt, and the firms address until February, was the registered address for the SD. Due to our email campaign, contacting some of their major customers, and protesting outside their offices across Dorset, they are now reviewing their connection with the SD. Until they do we will keep up the pressure on them.

April 3rd we hosted the Kill the Bill Protest in Weymouth, with some of our Bournemouth Members also holding their own protest. With over 200 people from many different local groups involved, we made some noise!

17th April saw us at our first Vegan event in Bridport, whilst in Bournemouth other members of WAR were protesting outside AXA, who we now know insure just about every hunt.

We also marked the anniversary of the Kinder Scout trespass by taking Charborough Tower. Dickie called the police helicopter out to watch us from above. With all being over by midday some of us then went on to join the vigil at Porton Down to mark World Day for Laboratory Animals.

Stay Safe & FSU

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. Don't expect a reply as there is a limit to the number of letters each prisoner can write.

Joseph Dibee

Joseph Mahmoud Dibee was arrested in Cuba whilst boarding a plane towards Russia after being twelve years on the run. The FBI accuses him of multiple accounts of sabotage carried by the ALF and ELF during the 90s. One of the actions he is accused of is a horse meat packing plant that was burnt to ashes twenty-one years ago.



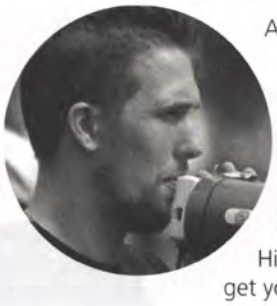
Joseph Dibee #812133
Multnomah County Jail
11540 NE Inverness Dr.
Portland, OR 97220
USA

Please do not discuss anything related to his case, to anything illegal or to any direct actions!

Release date: unknown

Peter Janssen

Peter is awaiting trial accused of an arson attack at a slaughterhouse in the Netherlands.



All correspondence should be unrelated to his case and not contain any reference to illegal activities. You can write to him by sending your letters through an email: forthebulls@gmail.com His support team will then get your words to him.

Release date: unknown, awaiting trial

Marius Mason

Marius Jacob Mason (Marie Mason*) is a transgender anarchist and environmental / animal rights activist serving nearly twenty-two years in federal prison for acts of property damage carried out in defence of the planet.



*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."

Marie (Marius) Mason #04672-061
FCI Danbury
Route 37
Danbury, CT 06811 USA

Release date: January 10, 2027

Ladislav Kuc

Ladislav is an animal rights activist accused of illegal possession of arms, manufacturing explosives for a bombing in front of a McDonald's in December 2011, in which there were no injuries. He was arrested in January 2012. In the latest ruling in early 2018, his total sentence was extended to twelve years. All his mail is opened and read. So far, there are no letter restrictions listed.



Uutos, Gucmanova 19/670
Priecinoik 7
Leopoldov 92041
Slovakia

His expected release date is January 2024.

MOOR TROUBLE FOR WALSHAW ESTATE

By Calder Valley Hunt Sabs





Dumped in a stink pit

Although newly formed, our group currently consists solely of experienced sabs who for one reason or another ended up in this beautiful valley. We wanted to take action against the numerous fox and hare hunts in this part of northern England who are almost never sabotaged, with most not having seen anti-hunt activists for decades. But a much more imposing and all-encompassing form of wildlife abuse was also calling out to be sabotaged.

The 16,000-acre Walshaw Estate sits between Burnley to the West, Hebden Bridge to the South East and Haworth to the North East and comprises of a huge grouse moor. The estate is owned by multi-millionaire Richard Bannister, who also owns the chain of Boundary Mill stores. The estate is infamous in its almost industrial persecution of wildlife. With the seven gamekeepers killing around the clock, we had to make a stand and begin the fight to save the many other animals who also know Calderdale as home.



Unchecked snares litter the moor

"One regular sight that we are also witnessing is that many stink pits are stocked with braces of pheasants...this just encapsulated the insanity of the shooting industry: killing pheasants and dumping their bodies to attract and kill foxes, simply so that that there are more grouse to kill."

The majority of the estate's snare sites, stink pits and ladder traps lie on the periphery of the moorland, because foxes prefer the plantations and cover of the valleys leading up to the moors and that sheep farmers, who also wish to see corvids persecuted, surround the estate. This does have the benefit that they are much easier to access than right in the centre of the moors! Many corvids, destined to be shot by whichever keeper or farmer caught them, have been freed and given a second chance. Is there a more beautiful sight than a trapped bird flying away into the open skies?

So many hours have been put in, trudging through the heather, dodging massive bogs and sneaking behind dry stone walls, but we're beginning to see real results. Although it can be frustrating to see snare sites continuously reset and indeed heart-breaking when you stumble across their latest victim casually thrown onto the heap of rotting corpses nearby, we're seeing more and more sites abandoned due to continued pressure.



Ladder trap on Walshaw Moor

One particularly sad morning, before we headed off to sabotage the Hunsley Beacon Beagles, we came across two foxes dumped on a stink pit. Needless to say, appropriate action was taken. One regular sight that we are also witnessing is that many stink pits are stocked with braces of pheasants, tied together straight after a shooting day elsewhere. This just encapsulated the insanity of the shooting industry: killing pheasants and dumping their bodies to attract and kill foxes, simply so that that there are more grouse to kill. During a period of heavy snow over the winter, we also came across snares still set. We could easily tell by the complete lack of any footprints or vehicle tracks nearby in the thick snow, that the gamekeepers weren't checking these snares for days. We dread to think what would happen if a fox became caught in one, left to freeze to death.

All of the estate's Fenn traps were removed following DEFRA's ban on their use for stoats in April 2020. We have noticed a few of the newer, and more expensive, DOC traps, but these are now in far fewer numbers than the old-style springs traps that used to litter almost every clough on the moors – another win!



Industrial scale cruelty

On the Glorious Twelfth, it was heart-warming to be part of 120 sabs who stopped a small, walked up shoot on the estate. With eyes and ears everywhere, we were confident that this was the only shoot that took place that day in the area. On the day in question, a large contingent of scouts were up at the crack of dawn and headed to strategic viewpoints, ensuring that almost every corner of this vast shooting ground was watched over. With 2020 being our first year as group, it was amazing to welcome so many likeminded folk to the valley and take on this grim estate who'd had it easy for far too long. We suspect that the Walshaw Estate may think twice before planning to shoot on the 12th August again!

What's also been great, and something that we are seeing more and more, is the fact that the local population has had enough of the ecological destruction and wildlife persecution by these privileged few. The towns of Calderdale are sadly famous for experiencing flooding, something that is exacerbated by the numerous drainage ditches built by the estate on the moors as well as the industrial burning of heather that takes place on these precious peat bogs from October until April every year. Just one look at the estate on Google Maps can reveal the huge scale of the destruction, with the whole area seemingly like a giant chessboard with burnt patch after burnt patch. This arrogant disregard, not only for the local environment but also the human inhabitants of the area, has galvanised many to take action against the estate.

The days when the gamekeepers of the Walshaw Estate could murder wildlife with impunity are done. As the pressure builds, as more and more locals take to the moors, their vast killing area is slowly, but surely, becoming less deadly.

Does this look like conservation?





THE CRASS WE BEAR

In the beginning, there was Crass.

For those of us from the anarcho-punk scene (78-86+) it's a question of which came first: sabbing or punk?

When I got into punk it was precisely the time that Crass' first EP *Feeding of the 5000* was released with the infamous boycotted first track *Reality Asylum* which the record producers (Small Wonder) refused to press. I am one of the substantial tribe who became politicized by Crass/Poison Girls and their stablemates during this period and, whilst there were factions within the scene, activism was absolutely part of our culture whether it was CND, Rock against Racism or Animal Rights.



Conflict: The Ungovernable Force

When I first joined an actual sab group the majority of the regulars were hippy/folky types or bikers and hardcore socialists. I remember having already gone vegan and weighing in at about 7 stone at the time I'm clambering into a van full of leather jacket-wearing bacon butty-munching bikers from Taunton and, though vegetarianism was growing, it was still quite normal to eat meat and be involved in the anti-hunt movement.



Famous Imposters

Big A Little A

For your Crass punk, direct action felt more relevant than banner protests and as the Animal Liberation Front (picking up on the zeitgeist) used the circled A as their logo, punk activists found themselves more welcome at a hunt sab group than at CND, or Greenpeace-style groups.

The worthy causes in the late 70s (anti-nukes, anti-imperialism, anti-apartheid, early environmental stuff) were populated by the alternative types of that decade. In the early '80s, there was a groundswell of activism, with large numbers getting their boots on. Having been in the thick of it, I would attribute the massive influx of activists to the anarcho-punk movement which was largely brought about by the influence of the DIAL House collective.

I was involved and organising at the time we started picking up hunt sabs from the squats where most of us were now residing. The fervent anarchist activism of Crass/Poison Girls etc. started to grow into something more complex: clearly anti-capitalist, with class consciousness and very much involving animal rights. Whilst for many of us there was and still is a class perspective to sabotaging hunts, the focus on animal rights grew as a natural progression: we regarded animals as another oppressed group that mass capitalism commodified and abused.



Active Slaughter



Anti Sect



Sean Psycho Faction

Town and Country

The tie between the urbanism of punk and the rurality of sabbing may not instantly seem to gel. However, I think the twin aspects of the absolute revulsion of hunting with hounds and, of course, the fact that it was conducted by the ruling class and protected by law, the Government and police, made it a big draw as an opportunity to "have a go back".



Dirt (Deno)

Punk was as demographically popular in places like Yeovil, Exeter, Bristol which whilst being fairly large conurbations, are also nestled in the middle of true blue, Tory hunting country. This proximity enabled a young radical to easily confront his or her enemy.

From about 1981, many of the "Crass family" bands were from very rural locations. Dick (The Mentals, Subhumans etc.) is from sunny Melksham. Joseph Porter (Zounds, the Mob, Blythe Power etc) is from Yeovil as were Zounds and the Mob themselves. Bristol band, Lunatic Fringe, were active in animal rights and it was therefore unsurprising that from Exeter to the south coast of Wales and every large town between Bristol and London had its own hunt sab group, many of which would have joined the sabbing scene on the back of their punk lifestyle.

Bloody Revolutions

The first and second wave of the anarcho-punk bands were generally supportive of any anti-state political activism (sabbing included, but rarely specified!). They inspired us to be out there in the fields, unsuitably shod. Actual animal rights activism became more of a shout of choice for the third wave of bands, who were likely to contain young women and men who had been out there facing the filthy rich scum and their oppressed - but extremely violent - lackies. Bands like the Mob (who I roadied for) or Chumbawumba were writing about peace and protest.... Conflict and Flux of Pink Indians had animal rights songs. Icons of Filth, Rectify and Shrapnel were all sabs based in Wales and the groups of fans that came after that wrote or heard songs directly related to animal rights and even sabbing itself (Active Slaughter, Liberty and Ferocious Dog are more recent examples).

So, punk massively swelled hunt sab numbers. At first mostly spiky haired punks dressed in black (of course) largely from the echelons of that activist/DIY scene. In the late 70's small numbers of hard-core dedicated activists in a Morris Minors gave way to two or three minibuses by the mid-80s. Around this time more mainstream bands hopped onto the bandwagon, particularly The Smiths, whose Meat *is Murder* brought us a wealth of new recruits and soon National Union of Students minibuses from every FE college and Uni in the country were tipping up at hunts.

Sab groups started getting their own vans as we went from being a small activist movement to turning up with 10 van loads of the self-righteous in pursuit of the unspeakable, in pursuit of the uneatable.

It certainly wiped the smiles off their smug faces.

"We can invoke nightmares of revenge, worse than you can imagine!" (Offending Article, Poison Girls 1982)

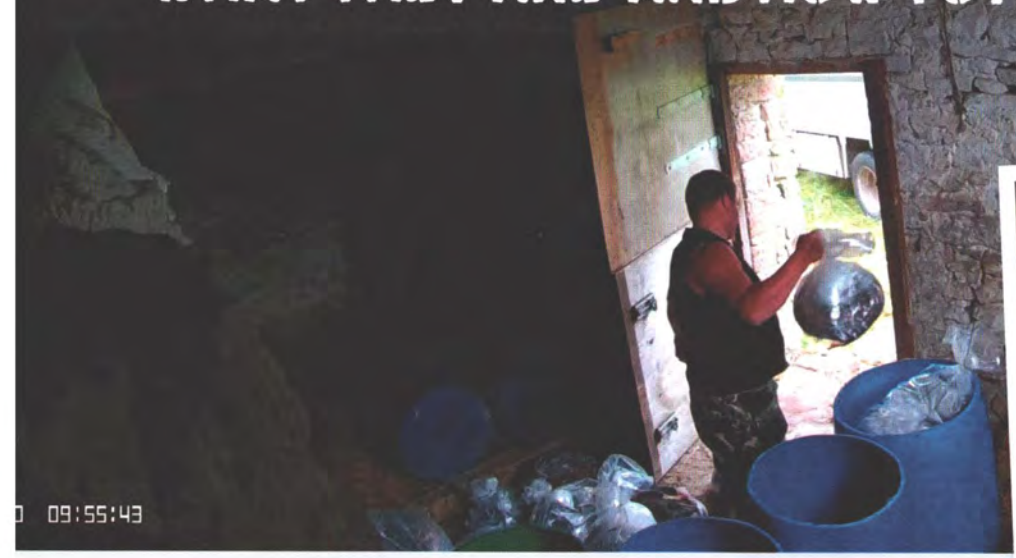
Thank you to Trunt for all of the photos

Punk as fuck: Notts sabs, 1990



BADGER BARNS

BADGER BODY STORES: WHAT THEY ARE AND HOW TO FIND THEM




Beautiful badger

Countdown to Culling

Derbyshire started culling badgers in Sept 2020, after the 2019 cull was cancelled at the eleventh hour, with cages in the fields, and plans all in place. This gave us a precious extra year to prepare and publicise the much-despised cull. Our efforts focused on awareness raising, recruitment, and logging every sett in the suspected zone.

In 2018 and 20919 we organised demos and marched on pro-cull landowners and local tourist attractions Chatsworth and Haddon Hall. In 2020, with lockdown in place, we opted instead for a banner drop. This got the issue in the local papers, and on top of the 'phasing out' façade, the judicial review into 2019's cull cancellation, and the local badger groups' vaccination efforts meant that in Derbyshire badger culling wasn't as well hidden as DEFRA would have liked. We even had our cull boundaries helpfully leaked in some sloppy email forwarding by two pro-cull MPs because of the pressure put on them by our 'write to your MP' campaign.

This all led to a lot of eager badger patrollers signing up, a lot of generous donations, and a lot of support and local knowledge from across the county. Just eight days into culling, DATC members had their attention brought to a barn with odd goings-on, and frequent visits from the local cull organiser. Not long after, it became apparent that this little stone barn, in the middle of idyllic Peak District countryside, was filled nightly with badger bodies, and emptied each morning, heading for incineration.

Caught on Camera

This process was caught on film and made national press when graphic footage of the bagged badgers being thrown in the back of the van was shared on social media. A demo held the day after the exposé discovered that the bodies had been collected early, a swift reaction, and the first of a few changes made as a result of having their process exposed.

Regulations state body stores should not be accessible by livestock, and should be locked, so this stone barn, in a sheep field, with an open window became an anomaly as we learned over the next few weeks. There were body stores located throughout the cull zone, one in each local area, and most, when found and investigated, were fairly similar and easily recognisable.


Badger killers cannot hide



Badger body van

Badger Body Stores

For a badger body store you need a lockable container, big enough to hold a blue barrel or two. This could be a 'stock' trailer, lorry container or smaller metal box. It needs to be away from livestock, and you need to have an easily accessible track leading to it, though oddly it doesn't seem to matter if that track is also a footpath, or shared access.



Trash?

Ideally, you will be a key member of the badger killing community, a parish leader, or farm vet, but anyone in the farming community will be considered. Once a store has been selected it will need to be approved by the Animal and Plant Health Agency.

You will be provided with your body store kit: this includes a combination padlock for security, blue barrels to dump the bodies in, and a palette. Cull contractors are issued with their own cable ties and clear plastic sacks for double-bagging the bodies. Combi locks allow contractors to drop off dead badgers throughout the day and night, cage trappers usually arrive late morning after their rounds, free shooters come late into the night once they have packed up. The body van comes to collect them when needed and take them for incineration.

In Derbyshire 2020, the body van was a fallen 'stock' collection vehicle. A box van - distinctive once you've seen it - but conspicuous only in that it was so clean. Interestingly, the very same model of van was used in Shropshire, although in other years different unmarked white vans have been found to be used. They should be owned by a company with a Category 1 animal by-product waste licence.

During the 2020 cull in Derbyshire, body collections were observed at fairly civilised times in the morning. However, following the exposé collections took place under the cover of darkness.

Weak Link In The Chain

Why bother putting in the time to find these body drops? Because they are a weak spot in the deliberate secrecy that is integral to the cull. In short, they can provide a lot of information. Every dead badger will go through one of these stores, driven there by a shooter, and with some patient observation an extensive list of cage trapper and contractor vehicles can be built up. It's also a clear sign the owners of that land are involved in local cull organisation and will almost certainly be free shooting or cage trapping on their own land if not on neighbour's land too.

Once you start investigating, it all starts to link up. A vet who worked at the same practice as one of the nine vets who signed a letter supporting culling in the county after the 2019 cancellation. Another of the nine, works for the TB Advisory Service, a body who advise farmers on how to deal with TB, they also wrote the leaked email containing the cull zone boundaries.

The cull is hugely unpopular, and deliberately hidden from the public eye as much as possible.

It falls on us to expose the horror, and those who are behind it.



Badgers thrown away like rubbish

FISHING IS A BLOODSPORT



Angling is often looked at as a harmless pastime, something a youngster will do with a grandparent while learning about nature. While this may be true in some cases, angling is still a blood sport.

I know for a fact that many anglers are against the other forms of hunting and will be openly vocal with their disapproval, however the majority will still be very much in bed with the more high-profile forms of animal abuse and quietly hope they won't be the next real target on the sabs hit list.

Angling types

Anglers in freshwater can be broken down into various groups, Coarse (pleasure, match & specimen hunters) and Game. Coarse fishing is fishing with rod, line and bait (or lure) for species like Carp, Tench, Bream, Pike, Chub, Perch and Roach – basically, these are fish that are traditionally not eaten.

Game anglers will also fish with rod and line but only using artificial fly or lure. They will target species such as Brown Trout (our native trout) Rainbow Trout, Sea Trout, Salmon and Grayling.



Kingfisher killed by fishing line



Let fish live fre

Much like the hunting world there are also classes of angler. Game angling can be VERY expensive. A day ticket on a prime stretch of the river Test during the mayfly hatch can cost over £500 and similar on the famous beats of the Salmon rivers in Scotland when they are running whereas a ticket for the local canal can be had from the council for a few quid.

"Discarded fishing tackle is one of the most common reasons for the death of water birds and mammals, line and hooks left on the bank or hanging from trees are death traps..."



Otter severely injured by fishing line

Do fish feel pain?

There has long been the argument that fish do not feel pain in angling circles. In the recent Netflix documentary *Seaspiracy*, eminent marine biologist Dr Sylvia Earle scoffed at this idea:

"To me, it's remarkable that the question is even asked that, "Do fish feel pain?" As a scientist, it's common sense. They have a nervous system, fish do. They have the basic elements that all vertebrates have. They have the capacity to feel on a level that I almost can't imagine we can. We feel pain, we feel touch. But fish have a lateral line down their sides that senses the most exquisite little movements in the water. So you see a thousand fish moving like one fish. Those who say, "Doesn't matter what you do to a fish, they can't feel anything. Their consciousness, they can't relate to pain, or they can't sense danger in the future." Well, they haven't really observed fish. I think it's a justification for doing dastardly things to innocent creatures."

Of course, it is impossible to definitively know whether another creature's subjective experience is like our own. But that is beside the point. We do not know whether cats, dogs, lab animals, chickens, and cattle feel pain the way we do, yet we still afford them increasingly humane treatment and legal protections because they have demonstrated an ability to suffer.

In the past 15 years other fish biologists around the world have produced substantial evidence that, just like mammals and birds, fish also experience conscious pain.

Conflict with Nature

Commercial fisheries are frequently a cause of conflict with nature. These are usually manmade lakes designed purely for the angler. They have good facilities, and the lakes are stocked to a far level higher than would be considered natural. This means the fish must compete more for the available food and this makes the angler's baits more appealing and so more are caught.

The return of the otter to our waterways is something to be celebrated, however you can't expect any predator to turn down the chance of an easy meal so they will raid the commercial fisheries where the fish have grown fat on high protein baits. While organisations like the UK Wild Otter Trust work with fisheries and advise them on how to keep otters out and will even gain licenses to trap and remove animals humanely before releasing them into a nearby water course, there remains a growing feeling of animosity towards the animal from angling circles with the Predation Action Group keen for the removal of their protection so they can be killed with impunity.

Angling can and does do lots of other damage to wildlife. Discarded fishing tackle is one of the most common reasons for the death of water birds and mammals, line and hooks left on the bank or hanging from trees are death traps, I've even seen a bat tangled in this hateful stuff.

Angling and Sabs

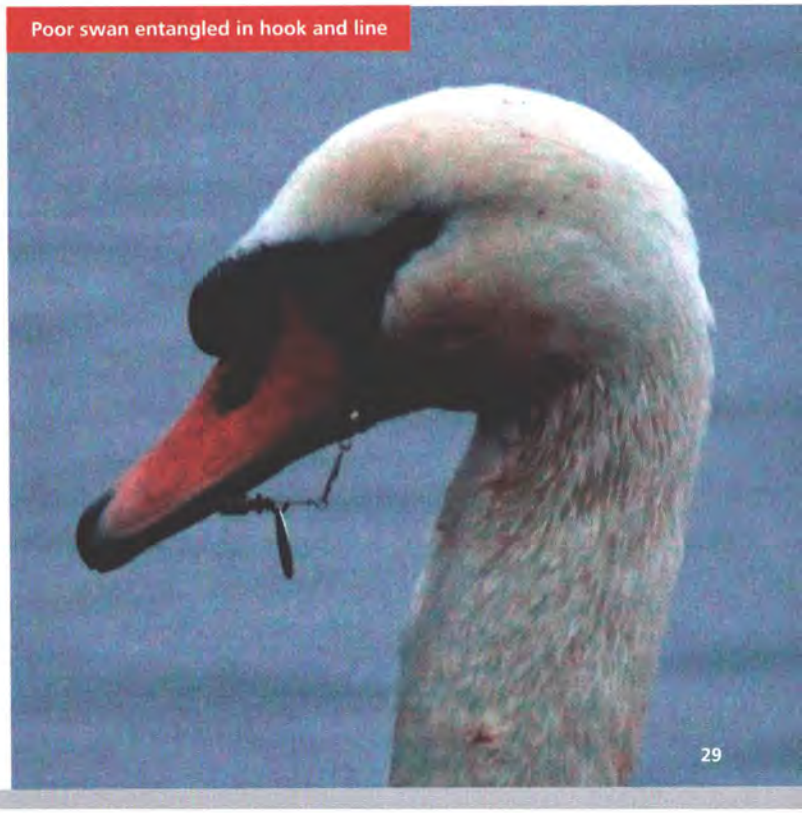
Fishing matches vary in size and status. A lot of money can change hands at these events and the numbers taking part can be huge. Club matches on the local river or canal might only attract 20-30 people but Open matches and the Nationals can have literally hundreds.

Matches are often advertised in the angling press. Anglers attending these events usually draw for a peg beforehand to randomly decide which section of the water they will be on. These are arranged into sections (A, B, C etc.) and then numbers within that section. It has been known for people to get to the stretch early and play around with the peg markers. This tends to cause all sorts of havoc as anglers will not know where they are supposed to fish!

The fish in venues that have water traffic will be used to such disturbance however a whole bunch of canoes going up and down, especially on a canal should do the job. Fish have a lateral line which runs the length of their bodies. This is made of sensors that detect vibration and is an essential part of their awareness under water. Therefore, making noise and vibration on the bank is surely going to affect the fish and annoy the hell out of anyone close by.

While throwing things into the water may seem like a good idea it's best avoided for the safety of all concerned and that includes the local wildlife. Anything which disturbs the animal inhabitants of the banks should be refrained from. Pre-feeding the fish may seem like a good idea but it's more likely to assist the anglers in that area as fish will be drawn there. You would need an extraordinary amount of ground-bait to cover the whole stretch of the match and the high stocking leve ls on a commercial fishery would mean the fish would soon clear it all up.

Remember folks...just because the fish doesn't scream doesn't mean it's not murder!



Poor swan entangled in hook and line

I've a few friends from Tyneside Class War who haven't onerously equated eating meat with enhancing their working class credentials and I'm glad to see Mad Dog and Rooster roll up at Central Station on Wednesday. Just as well because the van was repeatedly rammed by a local foxhounds supporter, only backing off when Rooster showed him what a four way wheel brace does to windscreens. I spent much of the day with Sheppie in the van. Apart from being stopped by Masonic Cops and questioned about threatening to kill someone, I didn't see much, but the presence of Class War did much to stop them hunting.



Sabs swarm on the hunt

Thursday and there are more sabs for the long climb above Garrigill. We missed the Colne Valley in the morning but found the Westerby Bassets. The Daily Telegraph's (until then) biggest liar Willy Poole tried to engage with the HSA Press Officer which didn't end well for Willy. I remember getting to the top and looking over Cross Fell, there was twenty-five of them, five of us, not good enough odds even for the stubborn line-holding bassets, and they packed up.

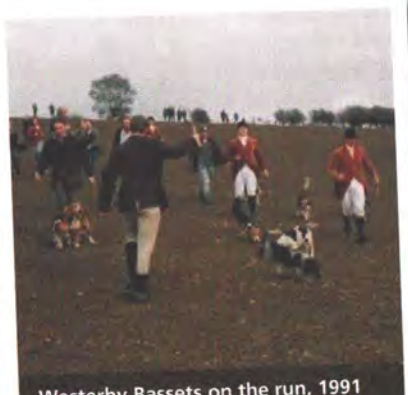
We had an interesting final day around Wintershield and Spadeadam, Rooster capping off an eventful week by being detained by MOD police for espionage. I was relieved the week was over. After the last meet a number of the support tried to jolly us and I broke the habit of a lifetime by obliging them, looking at their photos and identifying the hunt staff to their delight. Then they asked me if I was against fishing.



A range of emotions at Alston Hare Week, 2014

"Frankly, we are against everything" I told the bastard, and we absolutely are.

The Alston Hare Week stuck in my craw. The arrogance, the bullying, the snobbery, the chummy idiocy, the freemasons, the belief in unconsidered opinions that leads ultimately to being a 'Gammon'. Privilege is exploited by a narrow minority, who's unending inheritance of favour and fortune relies only upon the continuing subservience of others; its no wonder they hate us.

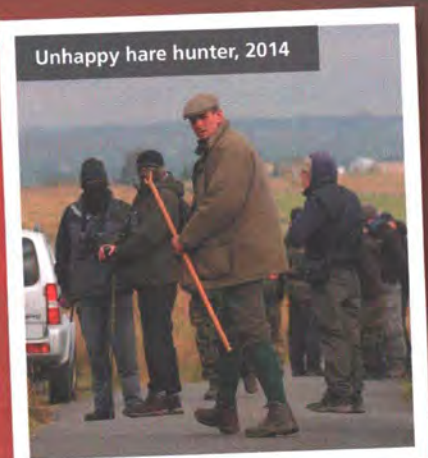


Westerby Bassets on the run, 1991

It was the same group of people every year who gathered at Alston, stayed at the same hotels, had the same venues for their drunken singing and they were easy to keep tabs on. The discussion on the likelihood of sabs at the Alston House Hotel let slip a few things and we were listening. The 2014 HSA demolition of the Alston Hare Week only happened because of the fun they had mocking Mike Hill's death in 1991. I recognised a woman from a quarter century before; *"Bastard. You Bastard!"* she tearfully cried at me. I was euphoric and it was over.

The author and editor have hunted high and low for photos of Alston '91. We couldn't find any. Instead, we've illustrated this article with images by Murray, Cumbria sabs and the 2014 sabbing of Alston Hare Week.

Dedicated to the sabs that made it through that week, especially to Nottingham's Nerk and Ol, to Tyneside's Mad Dog, Rooster, Laura, Stuart, Ben and Sheppie, to Big Alan and Dave C. from Carlisle and Cleator Moor hunt saboteurs. And to Mike Hill, it took 24 years, but we got the bastards in the end. Rest in Peace.



Unhappy hare hunter, 2014



HARASSMENT IN HEREFORDSHIRE?

SPOILER ALERT: NO.



"If every hunt that has antis made sure that they made one complaint and there was one prosecution a year, my goodness would it make a difference..." **Lord Mancroft, chair of the MFHA, advises hunt masters in the leaked Hunting Office webinars. How better to divert attention from illegal hunting than by accusing your opponents of breaking the law? What follows is an account of one of our sab's yearlong battle against a charge of harassment.**

Herefordshire Hunt Sabs

Our group formed in 2018 aiming to target Herefordshire hunts that did not get sabbed. Of the nine hunts kennelled in the county, only the Ledbury and the Ross Harriers were regularly sabbed. Two seasons later, the North Herefordshire, the Clifton on Teme and the Radnor & West Herefordshire plus south Shropshire based Ludlow Hunt had seen sabs for the first time.

By the 2019/20 season we were focusing on the troubled North Herefordshire Hunt. Now on their third huntsman in as many seasons, losing support and country, in financial difficulties and plagued by infighting, they seemed like an obvious choice.

PIN Letter

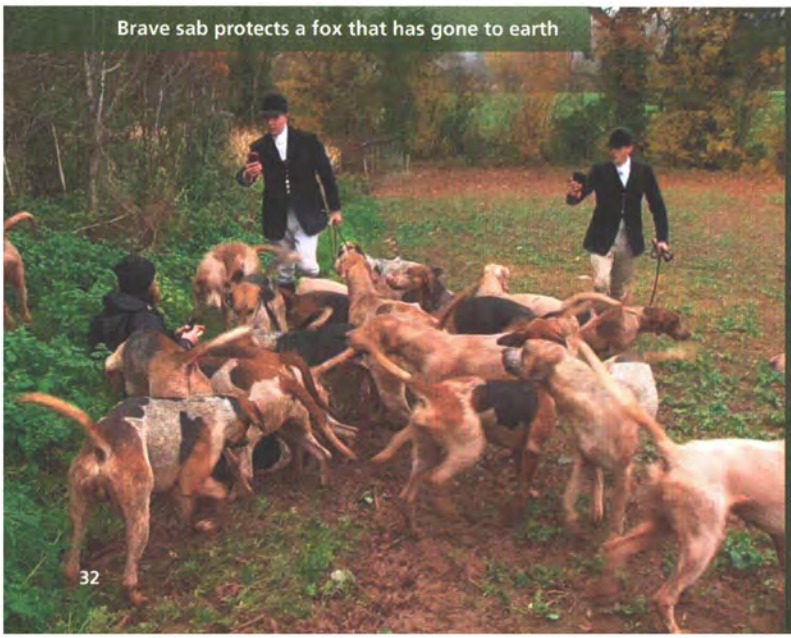
New huntsman Ryan Woodfine arrived in summer 2019. He made a habit of filming sabs on his phone at every opportunity, accusing us of "harassing and intimidating" him and saying how he felt "alarmed and distressed." It was clear where this was headed, and on Friday 21st November one of our sabs received a Police Information Notice. Woodfine had made an allegation of harassment against them and the letter was to warn that if the alleged behaviour continued, further action would be taken.

Voluntary interview under caution

We knew we had the hunt under pressure and had no intention of backing down. Our repeated presence had forced them to circulate meets via a private WhatsApp group. However, plenty of annoyed locals were still happy to pass on meets and other intel.

A trial amalgamation with the North Ledbury the previous season had failed, with the NLH hounds, and a valuable source of revenue, moving to the Clifton on Teme. It was rumoured the Wyre Forest Beagles, who shared their kennels, might follow suit. The MFHA had been called in after a complaint about the state of the kennels.

In December, our sab was asked to attend an interview under caution at Herefordshire Police station. They arranged



Brave sab protects a fox that has gone to earth

"We knew we had the hunt under pressure and had no intention of backing down."

to be accompanied by a solicitor experienced in protest who advised them to 'no comment' the interview. We continued to hit the North Herefordshire most Saturdays.

Charge and plea hearing

The case should have never progressed beyond this point, but in April our sab was charged with Harassment without fear/harm or distress under the Protection from Harassment Act 1997. This was a summary, or minor, offence that would be heard in a magistrate's court, but it still carried a fine or up to six months imprisonment. In July, at their plea hearing, our sab pleaded not guilty and a trial date was set.

Case for the defence

Under Section 1(3) of the Protection from Harassment Act a defence is allowed if the offence 'was pursued for the purpose of preventing or detecting crime. This formed the basis of the defence case.

Video clips showing Woodfine or other members of the hunt potentially acting illegally in contravention of both the Hunting Act and the Protection of Badgers Act were produced to support this. Additional footage showed people associated with the hunt being threatening towards sabs – on one occasion while Woodfine was busy telling a 999 call-handler that he felt intimidated. A local made a witness statement describing how Woodfine had called



Vain huntsman takes a selfie



Herrie hunt sabs out in muddy fields

Prosecution case

The prosecution evidence was weak; two witness statements from Woodfine and ten clips of poor-quality video footage. Bizarrely, in his second statement Woodfine made the completely unfounded allegation that our sab had broken into the kennels and stolen two terriers! He had no evidence to support this and it only served to undermine the rest of his evidence.

police (two cars and a van were deployed), while he and the hounds were trespassing on land the hunt had no permission to access.

The defence asserted our sab's right of freedom of expression and assembly, allowing them to protest at a location and in a manner that was appropriate, even if it caused disruption. These rights are currently protected under Articles 10 and 11 of the European Convention on Human Rights and this was a key part of the defence. Should the Police, Crime, Courts and Sentencing Bill be enacted in its current form, protest that is considered 'disruptive' will be illegal.

Case dropped

Shortly before the trial date, the solicitor submitted a skeleton defence and video footage to the CPS requesting that the case be dropped as there was no chance of a guilty verdict. The CPS claimed that they were unable to view the footage but passed it to police to review the evidence. Having done this the police contacted the CPS. Just two days before their trial, our sab was informed the case had been dropped as there was no reasonable chance of a conviction.

We believe that West Mercia police now have evidence that the North Herefordshire Hunt are illegally hunting – without the constraints that providing sufficient evidence for a prosecution under the Hunting Act entails. We're not holding our breath, but in future we want to see the police targeting the real criminals and enforcing the Hunting Act. Until that happens, we will be out there taking direct action to protect wildlife in the Herefordshire countryside.



Hunt conflab during cubbing



"THE MOST VIOLENT HUNT IN THE COUNTRY"

Sabbing the Crawley & Horsham


Millard gets moody

West Sussex Hunt Sabs and Monitors have memories dating back four decades of the notorious Crawley & Horsham (C & H) Hunt. It has been described as 'the most violent hunt in the country', and during the early 80's and 90's it was almost impossible to sab them without at least 40 sabs, who would be met by masked up hunt employees and supporters, wielding iron bars.

Protests were regularly held outside the entrance of the kennel lane, and with the help of the Shoreham Live Export Protestors during 1995, there would be between 70-80 people protesting there. The police attending told the protesters "If *there was a hundred people, we would stop the hunt going out"*, so a hundred people attended, and the hunt did not go out.

In 2004 and just prior to the Hunting Act one of the hunt masters, Kim Richardson, issued this chilling warning to sabs, *"You are all fair game now, I've fucking told everyone."* When C & H huntsman Andrew Phillis was cleared at Crown Court of riding down and injuring a sab, it is alleged Richardson said to the husband of the injured sab: *"Next time we'll kill your wife."*


Injured sabs in ambulance

From 2006 to 2008, the hunt tried using the Bird of Prey Exemption and bought in an army of aggressive stewards. They were employed to gather evidence, to film our every move, and to prevent us getting anywhere near the hunt. Tim Bonner was a frequent visitor to the C & H during this time, and we now know, was working on a legal plan to prevent sabbing nationwide. We were the test case.

So, in 2008 the hunt, along with 85 landowners and assisted by the Countryside Alliance and MFHA, launched legal action in High Court for trespass, nuisance, and harassment against members of our group deemed to head the Unincorporated Association. This was heralded as a landmark case, with plans to request an injunction to stop sabs going on any land they hunted on. If successful it would be used to prevent all sabbing nationwide!

Evidence of 269 recorded incidents, along with film footage, had been gathered for three years. However, we had conclusive evidence of illegal hunting, including hidden camera footage by an infiltrator which had not been given to the police.

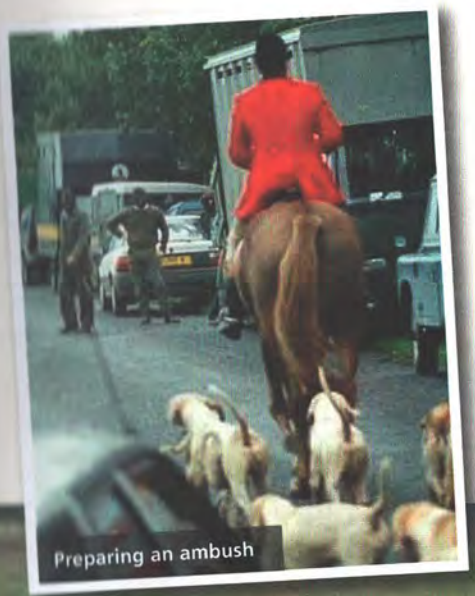

C & H on the attack!

On Saturday 19th February 2005, thirty-six hours after the Hunting Act came into effect, we were at a meet of the C & H with many supporters and police. The hunt killed two foxes, throwing an old dead one to the hounds in front of everyone to make a point. Our van was rammed and pushed downhill towards a telegraph post, we were pushed, punched, and spat at. This was the day we decided to totally dedicate our time to the C & H knowing what a vile lot they were!

This showed the principal plaintiff, Simon Greenwood hunting a fox to ground and calling terrier-men to dig out a fox and then throw it to the hounds. The trespass and nuisance claims were thrown out as "fundamentally flawed" after two aborted trials and in 2009 the plaintiffs decided to drop the harassment case and pay defence costs of over £120,000, rather than have the undercover footage shown!

Also in 2008, we filmed Nicholas Soames MP driving an overloaded quad and pulling a trailer full of unrestrained adults and children on a busy lane during a New Year's Day hunt meet of the C&H, which he hosted: he was fined and given a driving ban.

In 2012 we secured our first conviction against three members of the C & H, Neill Millard, Rachel Holdsworth and Andrew Phillis who were found guilty on five counts of illegal hunting; their fines and costs totalled £11,000. The following year, in September 2013, there was a second conviction when the huntsman Nick Bycroft pleaded guilty to hunting a fox.


Preparing an ambush

We filmed terrier-men several times digging out badger setts, especially on the Balcombe Estate. In 2012 we filmed the C & H entering a terrier into a sett on the Balcombe Estate and secured a prosecution. While it was thrown out as an "abuse of process" during their trial due to CPS errors, it had a powerful effect, ending the employment of terrier-men on the hunt, and the neighbouring Chiddingfold Hunt got cold feet and stopped using terrier-men too!


Kill...December 2018

In 2019 one of our sabs went on trial charged with two counts of stalking after checking the hunt kennels. The fabricated allegations were made by the terrier/kennel man for the C & H, and his partner. These two claimed they were subjected to continuous harassment from 2014 to 2017, with no evidence to substantiate their allegations. After a trial lasting five days, the jury took just thirty minutes to find her unanimously not guilty, with the judge refusing a request by the prosecution for a post-trial restraining order. This was clearly another attempt by the hunt and the CA to get rid of sabs, and again, they failed.


Guess who turned up like a bad penny?

On March 10th this year, huntsman William Bishop appeared at Worthing Magistrates Court to face two charges of illegal hunting. Once again due to failures by Sussex Police and the CPS both cases were dropped. Bishop was back in court in April 2021 on two further charges of illegal hunting, which sadly, were also messed up by the police, but at least Bishop has now been sacked.

The C & H are by known by sabs as the Criminal & Horsham and for good reason. We have been beaten, bullied, and falsely accused by them, while they have changed hunt days, blocked us in and taken court actions to get rid of us: but we are still here, and it is the C & H that are going.

With news that the kennels are being sold, and the C & H hounds will be kennelled with the Southdown & Eridge and hunting only once a week, we have to wonder...is this the beginning of the end for the Crawley & Horsham Fox Hunt?


The C & H don't like cameras!





NORTHERN IRELAND HUNT SABOTEURS

As we write, we have some good news and some bad news. There is currently a bill going forward here in NI proposed by a local politician to have all hunting with dogs banned. If it goes through, it will take us from the most liberal hunting laws to the tightest laws across the UK & Ireland. The bad news is that, while we may be in 2021 and supposedly have become a more civilised society, hunting with hounds here in NI is legal. Each week during hunting season, foxes, stags, rabbits, and any other wild animal that have the audacity to live become a target of the bloodlust junkies.

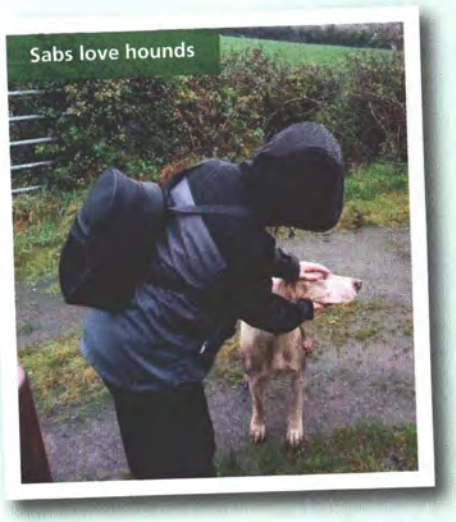
As a group, we formed back in 2013, meaning that the hunting season of 2013/14 was our first. We were just a group of animal lovers horrified at the cruelty happening in our countryside. (Anyone can start up a Sab group in their local area, and we advocate that hugely).

Prior to hitting the fields that first season, we spent a lot of time researching what we needed to do to be effective in stopping hunts. We got great advice and support from the HSA on how to be effective in sabbing and the best techniques to use.


The thin black line

Now, what makes us different from England, Wales and Scotland is the fact that hunting is legal. While the hunting ban exists across the water (Even though we know that hunts continue to flaunt this ban). The Law is on their side over here, which makes things more difficult. This point of legality came as a surprise to a lot of people in NI as they assumed it was banned.

In the early months of sabbing, very little was known of us and, due to decades of conflict here, some were asking who these masked people were. However, as our profile grew on social media the penny began to drop that we were animal activists looking to stop the murdering of wildlife in the countryside. The support that we got and continue to get really shows that the majority reject hunting.


Sabs love hounds

As our videos and damning photos of what hunters are doing started to spread, this led to more and more people starting to speak out. Our membership continues to grow each year and as we grow, hunt membership continues to drop and drop significantly. We know one specific hunt we sab on a regular basis has seen their membership drop by over 65%. It is a dying "sport" but one that continues to hang on for its life.

As one ex hunter said to us: *"We thought that you would be around for a few months and then lose interest"*. We have steadfastly continued our campaign to chip away and erode what we can of the hunting community, leaving them nowhere left to hide, and exposing their cruel, depraved blood lust. In doing so, we have also shone a light onto an issue that many here believed was already banned. Most of the great people of Northern Ireland are disgusted by this so-called sport and like us at Hunt sabs (NI) want it resigned to the history books once and for all with no loopholes whatsoever.

The tail end of the 2019/20 and most of the 2020/21 has been affected due to the current pandemic we are currently in. This has in the sense of wildlife here in NI been good and they have had time to live without the threat of being ripped apart. We know that in this period hunters will have had withdrawal symptoms, and no doubt they will have had many sleepless nights because they can't get their blood fix, but guess what life goes by now and hopefully you have learned some valuable lessons and stop your massacre of wildlife. Look at it this way hunters, you will have had more time to spend sleeping with your sisters, brothers and maybe if you're lucky the in laws and if your super lucky all at the same time.



NI sabs have it covered

But none of this will deter us in the slightest and while wildlife is being persecuted by hunters, we will always be there to stop them. Because if not us, then who?

Our hope for the coming years is that a ban will come into law, and while it is very unlikely, we hope for a countryside that is free from death and destruction. One thing is for sure we will not be going anywhere, and if hunt you will be stopped.

Thanks to the HSA for giving us the opportunity to write a piece on what is happening in NI. Remember folks, we're the only organisation that save lives in the field through direct action.



Sabs save lives

Over the years that we have been sabbing so far, we have seen horrific sights and we have been on the end of many assaults. Due to hunting being legal there isn't much protection for us, but while this may be the case this certainly won't stop us ever. If we are the ones getting abused both physically and verbally by hunters that means that wildlife is getting a break. As our numbers grow, this is making us stronger and stronger and allowing us to sab hunts more effectively and the results is no wildlife victims at the hands of hunters.

We have seen horses beaten, stuck in rivers for long periods of time, and without us being there, knowing that these horses would have been shot there and then. Hounds in the most horrific of conditions, scars all over them, untreated wounds, limping and starving. How these hounds' poor conditions are allowed to continue is a shame to the authorities who turn a blind eye. Sabs beaten by bars, hammers and guns pointed at us. Even when we get an assault charge to court with great video evidence the justice system was on the hunter's side.

"As one ex hunter said to us *We thought that you would be around for a few months and then lose interest."*



Two worlds meet

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*)

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

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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

Cumbria Hunt Sabs blog
www.cumbrianhuntsabs.blogspot.com
Exploring the history of Cumbria Hunt Sabs (1987 -2015) written by those involved.

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



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To submit articles, photos, or anything else for publication, please contact the Editor on: howl@huntsabs.org.uk



Please note that the copy deadlines for Group News and all other HOWL content are 1st January, 1st May and 1st September every year.

To inform us of a change of address or anything else to do with your subscription, please contact the Membership Officer on: membership@huntsabs.org.uk

Please also contact the Membership Officer if you would like to receive future editions of HOWL as an interactive PDF flipbook. Receiving HOWL electronically reduces postage costs for the HSA, meaning even more of your subscription goes to supporting hunt sabs in the field.

RUN WITH THE FOX

Help save lives after you've gone





Making a will is the only way to ensure that your wishes are followed after you've gone. If you can, please consider leaving a legacy gift to the HSA after you have taken care of your loved ones.



With no paid staff, you can be sure that your gift to the HSA will be used where it is needed most - out in the killing fields.
The HSA strongly recommends that you use a solicitor when you make or update your will.

If you would also like to discuss leaving a gift or legacy to the HSA please contact our Treasurer on: accounts@huntsabs.org.uk



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