Direct Action Against All Bloodsports

Winter
2007/8

HOWL 88

The Magazine of The Hunt Saboteurs Association

NATIONAL & LEGAL NEWS | QUANTOCK APPEAL RESULT | SABBING IN CYBERSPACE | THAT WAS THEN... | AR2007 GATHERING | VERMIN PATROL CRUELTY CASES



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HOWL 88

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Magazine of the Hunt Saboteurs Association
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The Hunt Saboteurs Association has been in existence for over 40 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 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. All posts are voluntary and unpaid – **no-one on the HSA committee is paid** – as we believe that all money raised by membership and donations should go towards the running of the organisation, and to directly help saboteurs in the field. As a member of the HSA your contribution is vital – thank you.

Editors: Bad Penny & Mel
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EDITORIALS

Well here we go again, another season of sabbing. Of to a late start due to the foot and mouth crisis, a scary time for farm animal sanctuaries and of course for the poor farmers who all love their animals so much and hate to see them slaughtered!!
This season should be better than ever, hunts have missed their cubbing season and we have more tools available to us than ever before, the last season showed us that we now have sabbing, monitoring and prosecutions all at our disposal. Lets forget the debate on the most effective tactic to use and use all of them! The more aggressive we see hunt scum getting, the more we know they are under pressure and desperately clinging to their pathetic little sport and the more we can laugh at them.
Now is the time to get out there, we need to get the message out to new people that despite the ban, our wildlife is still being harassed and murdered and sabs who've been slogging away at it for years shouldn't give up now and miss the end! Our wildlife is under so much persecution, it is being hunted, shot, trapped in the name of sport or so called conservation. Our woodlands are becoming full of pheasant pens, squirrel traps and snares, lets get out there and do what we can to stop these murdering freaks.

Mel

As we put this issue together news on the hunting front was somewhat mixed... First, news broke that my favourite Tory, Anne Widdecombe, (ok, so she doesn't have much competition, despite Cameron's pretty boy looks...) is trying to bang some heads together to get the police to enforce the Hunting Act, and to look at tightening those pesky loop-holes that the CA keep trying to use as an excuse when caught blatantly hunting. Good on you Anne – that's precisely what's needed, and what the HSA attempted to highlight when we wrote to all the police forces in England and Wales last season stating the same thing. Thanks goes too to all the HSA members and supporters who completed and sent off our 'For Fox sake, Enforce the Ban!' postcards to the Home Office – such actions can seem small and insignificant at the time but rest assured they all add up. And thanks (again) of course to the League for continuing to put their money where their mouth is and continuing to do what the cops and the CPS should be doing – catching and prosecuting the hunters. We've always said the hunt ban is an enforceable piece of legislation - it just bloody needs enforcing! Then there was the news that the appeal by Tony Wright (and all at the CA of course) against the first private prosecution 'guilty' verdict was lost – and much talk heard of the need to tighten up the law before any more legal moves are made. We can't argue with tightening the law up – especially as that tends to indicate it's being tightened with a few to future use by the powers that be – but the appeal result was of course a disappointment. But we should fear not – it's still all to play for and most positive movement is on our side!

This Howl most likely* represents my last high-fallutin' role with the HSA, so I take this opportunity to say thank you to all the friends I've made along the way, many of which will no doubt be some of the best friendships I ever make. Some of the stuff we've had to go through can't be imagined by Joe Public, but then again for the most part Joe Public never got off his/her arse to stand up for what they believed in. I'm proud to have stood as a sab in the fight against hunting, and am proud of those that stood with me. And thank you to the HSA itself for being a steadfast, in your face, principled organisation. Long may it continue.

Bad Penny

*Life has taught me to never say never. So I won't!

NEWS ROUND UP

WIDDECOMBE MAKES FIRST MOVE TO TIGHTEN BAN' STOP PRESS STOP PRESS

As Howl 88 goes to print, reports are afoot that Anne Widdecombe has successfully got things moving towards both tightening up the Hunting Act 2004 and asking the police to enforce it correctly.

Media reports state that both police and politicians are due to meet at Westminster, following concern that hunts are routinely breaking the law and killing foxes illegally. Ann Widdecombe, the Conservative MP for Maidstone and the Weald, is a prominent opponent of the sport and is to show video footage that she claims includes 'dozens' of instances of 'blatant' flouting of the Act, as well as an alleged assault on a hunt monitor.

Twenty people have so far been convicted under the Hunting Act, with a further 17 due to be prosecuted - including the television cook Clarissa Dickson-Wright, who is facing hare-coursing charges. However, many investigations have failed. Opponents claim this is because the Act has not been properly enforced by police and prosecutors. Miss Widdecombe said: 'The Act is not being enforced. I want to talk to the police and explore possibilities about how this can happen.' The report stated that the MP wanted to see the introduction of licenses for hunt monitors and for it to be a criminal offence to obstruct them.

RAIN STOPS PLAY AT GAME FAIR

The Country Land and Business Association (a firm friend of the CA et al) Game Fair due to take place in late July at Harewood House, near Leeds was cancelled due to adverse weather following 48 hrs of heavy rain. The organisers expected massive financial losses and the overall economic impact of the cancellation, including spending inside the show and in the local region, will be in the region of £50million...

HSBC PROMISES TO HELP LAW BREAKERS

HSBC, Britain's biggest bank, is set to insure dozens of hunts against the costs of a court case if they are prosecuted for illegally hunting foxes. The bank has said they will pay legal fees for hunt employees even if they are found guilty.

According to figures collected by the League Against Cruel Sports, the bank is insuring as many as 125 hunts, an arrangement the League claims gives those taking part confidence that they can break the law without suffering excessive financial hardship. The insurance was organised through the Masters of Foxhounds Association (MFHA), which represents 174 packs of foxhounds in England and Wales and a further 10 in Scotland.

Under the hunting ban introduced in February 2005, prosecutions can be brought either against hunts as organisations or against individuals such as hunt masters and employees, riders who take part in illegal hunts or landowners who allow them.
John Cooper, a barrister and chairman of the League since 1995, said he was 'shocked' at HSBC's actions, and that he would be writing to the bank's chief executive to query the arrangement. Cooper said: 'Millions of people bank with HSBC. I am sure they do not know that the bank is using their money to help bail out criminals. What next, insurance for burglars and shoplifters?'
Action Point: Please contact the HSBC to voice your disgust at their support for criminal activity! Contact your local branch, call them on 0800 881 155 (or 01226 261 020 for those with free mobile minutes, but not to 0800 numbers!), or fill in the online complaint form at www.hsbc.co.uk (use the 'Contact Us' link at the bottom of the page, and then chose the 'How to Complain' section.

THREE OTTERS DIE IN ILLEGAL TRAP

Three otters have drowned after getting caught inside an illegal trap, designed to catch crayfish, set in the River Cam in Cambridgeshire. Environment Agency staff who recovered the trap said the entry to the wire-mesh cage exceeded regulations, it measured 130mm whereas the legal limit is 95mm. While the Environment agency has no objection to the trapping of crayfish, there is regulation to protect endangered species.

The agency said if the culprit is caught they will face prosecution which could result in a heavy fine or jail.



Robert Howarth @ Dreamstime.com

ATTEMPTS TO SMEAR LEAGUE AGAINST CRUEL SPORTS FAIL



The RSPCA concluded in July that no offence was committed by the League after a farmer filmed a stag having its throat slit on land owned by the League Against Cruel Sports. They also criticised Countryside Alliance member Steve Coates for being reluctant to co-operate in the inquiry. The organisation took action after Mr Coates sent in video footage of the ailing deer being slaughtered at the Baronsdown Sanctuary, near Dulverton on Exmoor, on April 1 (see Howl 87 for original news item).

Mr Coates claimed it seemed that the man who killed the deer, Geoff Hayes, spoke to League staff as if he knew them. Coates also claimed that he hoped his complaint would lead to an investigation into the League's sanctuary, a place of safety for hunted animals.

An RSPCA spokeswoman said: 'The investigation did not reveal that any offence had been committed, and there was no suggestion that the man who slit the deer's throat had any connections with the League Against Cruel Sports.'
She added: 'The deer was badly injured, and it was essentially dying. It had a trauma to its side, which we think was probably caused by a road traffic accident. It also had internal injuries and couldn't stand. It would have had to be put to sleep. He put it out of its misery to prevent it from suffering. We had some difficulty with the evidence, as there was some reluctance on the part of the person who had made the complaint in helping us with our enquiries.'

Barry Hugil, spokesman for the League against Cruel Sports, said the outcome was 'exactly as expected'. He demanded an apology from the Countryside Alliance, and said: 'I think this was a dirty trick to smear the League's name, but it has backfired.'

APPEAL COURT VICTORY FOR ANIMAL AID CAMPAIGNERS

Two Animal Aid supporters have won a landmark Appeal Court victory over police attempts to criminalise them for running a high street information stall, from where they sought public support for a ban on primate research.
Miranda James and Tracey Rawlings set up their stall in Barnet, North London as part of Animal Aid's first Primate Action Day in November last year. Police officers falsely accused them of obstructing the public highway, and when they came before magistrates in June, the charge was upheld, even though they were granted an absolute discharge.

Animal Aid commented 'Amanda and Tracey were determined to clear their names. Animal Aid shared that objective and we also wanted to defend the fundamental right of other campaigners to engage in peaceful protest. We sought the help of human rights organisation Liberty and, on Friday September 7, an appeal was heard at Harrow and Wealdstone Crown Court.'

Judge Mole cleared the pair and, in a swipe at the police, said 'In granting an absolute discharge, the magistrates no doubt felt that this was a prosecution through which no useful purpose was served, and we share that view.'

Animal Aid Director Andrew Tyler, who gave evidence at both the magistrates and Appeal Court hearings, said in a statement 'We are very grateful to Liberty for securing this important victory... Animal Aid wanted a message to go out to police forces around the country that they will be met with a fight if they try unlawfully to suppress legitimate campaigning activities... Two days before the Appeal Court hearing, a giant step forward was taken when a banning petition was closed after attracting the signatures of more than half of all the European Parliament's MEPs. It is now that Parliament's official policy to seek an end to all research on apes and monkeys.'



Jack Scrivener @ Dreamstime.com

PHEASANTS UNDER FIRE

The pheasant shooting season got underway on 1st October, and around 35 million farmed pheasants will be used as live targets for shooters during the season, which runs until 1st February.
For those living close to shoots, the 1st October can signal the start of four months of misery. The League Against Cruel Sports said that they are regularly contacted by people with concerns about the behaviour of their local shoot. Complaints range from excessive and constant noise to harassment and intimidation. There are reports of shooting over private land - and even into gardens - and of footpaths being blocked by armed shooting parties.
Many people who contact the League are too scared to raise the issue locally and wish to remain anonymous. The League commented 'Shoots should not be able to get away with this bullying behaviour and the League is determined to make sure they don't.' For advice on what to do if you are affected by a shoot nearby contact the League on 0845 330 8486 or see website at www.league.org.uk

GREYHOUNDS 'DOPED WITH COCAINE'

Cocaine is being used by some Northern Ireland greyhound owners and trainers in a bid to win races, a report into doping in the sport has revealed. Eight people have been fined after their animals tested positive for banned substances including the Class A drug. One Lisburn owner has had to surrender prize money and pay a ł,000 fine after his dog tested positive for cocaine following a race at Lifford. Other substances found were amphetamine, otherwise known as speed.

The report, which is the first from a new independent watchdog in the Republic, also documented one County Donegal greyhound enthusiast being fined after his animal was found with traces of herbal ecstasy in its system in April of this year. More than half of all doping offences highlighted in the report were committed by people in Northern Ireland.

BIRDS OF PREY PERSECUTED BY GAME KEEPERS



Birds of prey, including the golden eagle, peregrine falcon and red kite, are being poisoned or shot in Britain's uplands on a scale unprecedented in modern times, accordingly to figures released by the RSPB in October. The organisation stated that crimes against wild birds are now at record levels, with 1,109 confirmed incidents last year. This is a 50 per cent rise on 2005, twice 2004's figure, and compares with an average over the preceding five years of just 625. Raptors bear the brunt of the worst of this persecution. In 2006, there were 98 reported poisonings, plus 185 shootings or other destructions of birds of prey, plus dozens of incidents of egg collecting or nest disturbance, and 39 reports of illegally taking or possessing a bird of prey.

The RSPB said it feared 2007 will be even worse. Three golden eagles alone have been deliberately killed in the last 16 months, and other victims this year already include scores of buzzards, peregrines, goshawks, red kites, and hen harriers.
In Scotland, persecution of birds of prey is now worse than at any since the early 1980s, with hen harriers and red kites suffering particularly badly. The Peak District - in part of which a once-thriving population of 20 goshawks seven years ago has been reduced to nothing - is another blackspot, as is North Yorkshire and Northumberland.

The RSPC said that all told, since 1997, there have been 917 confirmed attacks on birds of prey. Duncan McNiven, RSPB investigations officer says that this is the tip of an iceberg: 'If these are the number of reported incidents that have been witnessed in the wild and remote country that birds of prey inhabit, you can only wonder at the amount of birds that are actually being killed.'

The RSPB is adamant that the blame for most of these crimes lies with those with ties to shooting estates, especially grouse moors. Their analysis of birds of prey persecution court cases from 1985 to 2006 shows that 81 per cent of those convicted had direct or indirect ties to game hunting. The RSPB's Grahame Madge said: 'Birds of prey suffer most where we have landscape dominated by grouse shooting. We fear that raptors are being routinely persecuted in the uplands.'
For some species, the persecution threatens their very survival as a British bird. There are twice as many hen harriers on the Isle of Man (where there is no grouse shooting) than there are in England. 'England should support a hen harrier population of 250 pairs,' stated Madge, 'but we have less than a tenth of that.' The only known place on the mainland where hen harriers thrive is the Forest of Bowland in Lancashire, which is under conservation management.

The RSPB also cite the case of the red kite. In 1989, 100 of these birds were introduced into the Chilterns and 100 in north Scotland. By 2004 the Chilterns population had grown to 215 pairs, while the Scottish numbers, had struggled to reach 35 pairs in face of severe persecution. Eagles, too, suffer. An academic paper published this year by Bird Study concluded that, because of persecution, 'in the central and eastern Highlands, where grouse moor management predominates, the eagle population continued to decline to levels where increasingly large areas of suitable habitat are unoccupied by breeding pairs.'

Britain's game shooting industry is now worth £1.6bn, almost triple what it was a decade ago. About 50,000 people a year shoot grouse, courtesy of 1,600 providers of shoots around the country, most of which are on the uplands of northern England and Scotland. Renting a grouse moor can cost as much as £12,000 a day, and shooters dispatched 400,000 grouse in 2004, with a further 18 million game birds and wildfowl shot. Lowland game shooting – for pigeon, pheasant and partridge, is growing especially fast.

Followers of the far smaller sport of pigeon racing, have also been blamed for persecuting raptors, especially peregrines, who prey on pigeons. There have been cases in South Wales and Merseyside, especially, where pigeon fanciers have been suspected – or convicted – of killing peregrines. Many of these, like the raptors on the uplands, have been poisoned, an especially nasty form of killing, since it is so indiscriminate. The method is invariably to lace a bird carcass, or even a live bird, with poison, the most common of which is carbofuran, a banned agricultural pesticide so lethal that a single grain would kill a human. Carrion feeders, like red kites, are especially vulnerable, and this year's total of incidents of persecution of this species is already within two cases of matching 2006's record.

Catching whoever is persecuting birds of prey is exceptionally difficult. The landscape where these crimes are committed is remote, traps and bait are put down at night, removed before morning, and the victim burnt; and even if a dead raptor is found, proving who did it means catching someone in the act. Last year there were just four convictions for persecuting raptors, all of which were gamekeepers. The RSPB's McNiven stated that in 16 years with the RSPB he has not known a single case of a gamekeeper losing his job as a result of a conviction – a tolerance of employee law-breaking by the estates that the RSPB says sends its own message.

ATTACK ON MINK

A project unsurprisingly coordinated by the British Association for Shooting and Conservation aims at killing large numbers of mink. Some 150 rafts to catch American mink have already been deployed on Anglesey and next year a further 250 rafts will be deployed through the rest of North Wales, initially on the rivers Dee, Elwy, Weaver, Clwyd and Conwy. The unproven claim is that killing mink (initially released into the countryside by farmers) will help protect endangered water voles and preserve fish stocks for angling.



Charles Bennett @ Dreamstime.com

BADGER CULL - GROUNDHOG DAY STRIKES AGAIN



The Government's chief scientist Sir David King has called for a new badger cull in order to 'curb bovine Tuberculosis (bTB) in cattle'. The announcement was met with ridicule from the Badger Trust, with it's public affairs advisor Trevor Lawson stating 'Prof King's list of recommendations repeat virtually word for word the opinions of farming unions and the cull mad vets in Defra. This is a highly-politicised rush to judgment, which, ludicrously, contains no cost benefit analysis.'

Lawson continued 'Prof King says his aim is to control bTB in cattle but he ignores the fact that this can be achieved by improving the cattle testing regime. The science shows that cattle are the primary source of infection for both each other and for badgers but this is of no interest to Prof King. His shallow report amounts to a shamelessly one sided examination of the problem.'

The Badger Trust stated that the Prof King's advice contradicts:

- the advice of Prof Sir John Krebs who recently told Lord Rooker, Animal Health Minister, that there was 'no wriggle room on bovine TB policy and that badger culling was not viable;
- The advice of Defra Science Advisory Council who for two years have accepted the scientific research first published in 2005 and concluded that badger culling should not be considered until all possible cattle measures had been implemented successfully and in full.
- The Independent Scientific Group advises that TB can be rapidly reversed and brought under control by improving the cattle testing regime which currently misses around 1in 3 infected cattle leaving them to infect other cattle in the herd.

Animal Aid was also quick to jump on the ridiculous basis of the recommendations, commenting that this was ...'an attempt to appease a powerful and irresponsible farming lobby, which refuses to accept responsibility for the disease outbreaks that are a direct consequence of modern industrial farming methods.' It stated that Bovine TB is caused and spread by the often filthy, crowded and poorly ventilated conditions in which cows are kept, and by the increasingly intensive regimes to which the animals are subjected.

A recently published Animal Aid report and supporting undercover footage revealed that many dairy cows are now virtually permanently confined in crowded sheds under a system known as 'zero grazing'. The evidence demonstrates that these 'battery cows' are prone to increasing levels of a range of infectious diseases. Full details of the report can be found at http://www.animalaid.org.uk/h/n/NEWS/news_factory/ALL/1660//



Mark Bond @ Dreamstime.com

KILLER KATE CONTINUES ROYAL 'RELATIONSHIP' WITH WILDLIFE

Prince William's girlfriend Kate Middleton enraged animal rights campaigners in October by taking part in a stag hunt at Balmoral, the Queen's Aberdeenshire estate. After practising on a cut out of a stag, Middleton then joined William who was already on the hills having led a shooting party earlier that day. It was thought to be the first time Middleton had actively taken part in a shoot and was unclear whether she had shot anything. Lib Dem MP Norman Baker said: 'It's a great pity people we'd expect to set a good example are aiming to kill animals for no good reason.'

KARMA POLICE

Ex-master charged with race cheating
A FORMER hunt master is among a group of five to have been charged by horse racing officials with cheating. Charles Gundry, the former master of Middleton Hunt, has been accused of entering a ringer in a point-to-point race last year. Horse owner Robert Tierney and his son, Richard, from Malton, North Yorkshire, have also been charged, as have Roger Marley and his wife, Ruth, from Langtoft, between Malton and Driffield.

The charges were issued by the Horseracing Regulatory Authority (HRA) following a six-month investigation by its officers. A statement issued by the HRA said: 'The matter came to the attention of the stewards at Staintondale Point-to-Point after they were alerted that Quintin, a hunter owned by Robert Tierney and due to be ridden by Charles Gundry at the meeting, may not, in fact, be that horse. Following further investigation, the horse was later identified as Max 'N Limbo.

Teenager dies in shooting accident
A teenager has died after he was blasted in the head by a friend while out shooting. Alex Bailey died from his injuries after he was hit while out hunting pigeons with two friends at Itford Farm in Southease, near Lewes. They had been shooting at birds from a hide when the 18-year-old was accidentally shot. Bailey had previously enjoyed shooting, fishing and breeding poultry and peacocks.

Police questioned the two friends who were with Bailey when he was shot but are treating the incident as an accident.

CLUB DRAW ☆ WINNERS ☆

As part of our fundraising activities, the HSA operates a 'Club Draw' - Just like the National Lottery (except unlike them we wouldn't donate to 'worthy causes' like the Museum of hunting: Past, present and future) If you'd like to take part fill in the leaflet which should be included in your issue of Howl. If the slip is missing, just write to the HSA office and request an entry form.

July 2007

1st	**D Westwood**
2nd	**R Banham**
3rd	**S Prescott**

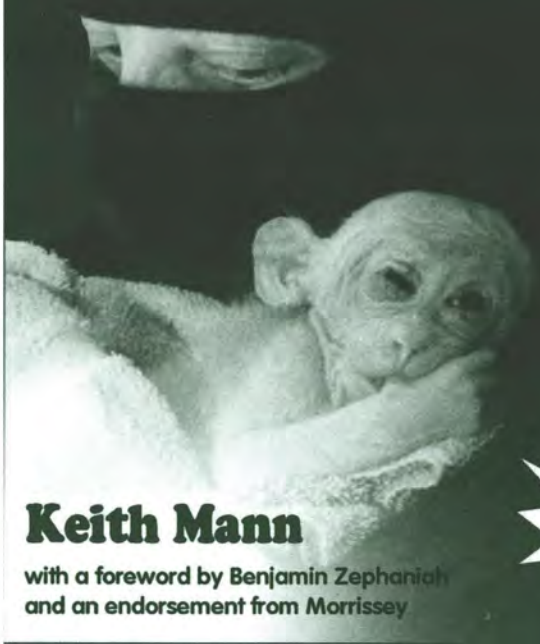
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1st	**B Dickinson**
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1st	**R Smith**
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For those of you still unfamiliar with MySpace, it is a kind of internet within the internet. Basically, MySpace provides you with a framework for your own web page, allows you to upload whatever you choose onto it, and its free! Anyone who has tried to set up their own website, or maintain their own, will know it's a costly and painstaking experience. With MySpace, you are up and running in half an hour. Now, I'm assuming the original idea behind MySpace was to create an online network of your friends, and meet people of similar interests worldwide (ie for somewhat pasty faced friendless saddoes, or those of a less savoury nature) - well, that's what I thought, until I checked it out properly.

A MySpace page can contain photos, videos, music, anything you like (there is some censorship afoot though, just like on YouTube), but out of the millions of people who have created pages, a large majority of pages are devoted to music, film, organisations etc. Many campaigning groups now have pages, from SHAC to the ALF SG, right through to dodgy fascists groups.

To us sabs, the really useful aspects of MySpace is the 'Friends' page, and the 'Bulletins' feature (a slightly underused other feature is 'Groups' – but more about that later). The slightly dodgy 'Friends' moniker refers to what would ordinarily be 'links' on a website homepage. For instance, if you look at the American Hunt sabs MySpace page, in the friends section, you will find a links to other pages, all (assumedly) will be anti hunt organisations/sympathisers. Click on any of these, and you will see their page, videos, contact info etc, and of course, their Friends page...and so on. This can theoretically run into thousands of people - MySpace now has many million users. To link your page to another, you click on their 'add to friends', they get an email, and answer yes or no...same, with you - no one can connect to your page without your permission. So you now have instant access to people linked to your page (as does anyone else who looks at yours remember).

Now, on to Bulletins. Another great MySpace feature is that every day, you receive messages (or 'Bulletins' as they are called) from anyone in your friends section that sends them. Basically you can send out scanned flyers, messages, pictures, videos – anything. And it's instantly sent out to all your contacts nationally/worldwide. Now, obviously, if your friends section is composed of AR/Anti Hunt groups, this is the info you will receive, instantly and for free - beats plain old email! As a way of disseminating /receiving info, its very handy (you can of course also send personal messages to each 'friend' separately.)

Another feature is Groups. Already, there are thousands in MySpace, hundreds of which are AR groups and other campaigning organisations. Thus far, anti hunt groups haven't really got off the ground, being abused/infiltrated by a handful of prolific pro hunters, but with a bit of effort, a decent HSA group could be set up, to swap tips/opinions/info etc. This would be comprised of official sab group members only. So far, MySpace features pages from the following sab groups – East Kent, Southampton, Northern Ireland, North and East London, Suffolk and Essex, Leeds, Reading and our friends over the pond, the American Hunt Sabs. This wealth of talent, plus the national HSA page, surely means that sometime soon some joined up thinking will occur and everyone will join in the fun...?

To give you a bit of encouragement, some pro hunt hoorahs are trying to get organised on MySpace, but with nowhere near the effort put in by AR groups. Pages exist for the 'Real CA' (a barely maintained page, with a picture of known Portman thugs!), and other public school bedwetters such as 'Dan' (from Poole) - his profile states 'Vegetarians/Vegans, homosexuals and animal rights activists make me sick...I like to collect things such as deer heads and antlers, squirrels tails and birds wings, and animal skins'. His friend James has sent me and others pictures of dead foxes, 'is out lamping all of the time in the week, and likes to 'shoot for food, and keep on top of vermin...' Apart from that, he's not a 'total Hill Billy'. Their good buddy Tangelelo likes to piss off his class mates 'telling them what he's killed ha ha'. Mike from Plymouth even has a 'nigger alarm' on his page - pretty funny guys we are dealing with here!! According to the Daily Mail, pro hunters are grouping on Facebook (another MySpace variant), to form 'anti anti groups', and 'sort us out'...

Let's enter cyberspace, and show them that it's not just out in the fields we can spoil their fun! So, by the next HOWL, lets have a MySpace page for every sab group in the country/world, and lets show them they can run...
but we can still run faster!!!

www.myspace.com www.youtube.com www.facebook.com

Sabbing has been around for so long now that it has become part of the fabric of the countryside. Nobody thinks about hunting without thinking about 'the great unwashed' or 'the nose-ring brigade' as the Telegraph et al used to call us. Obviously the world has changed a great deal in recent years, and so has the way we operate.

Here, two old hands reflect on how the world has changed.

That was then... this is now

Communications

What's that then? Off-field, I can remember there being communication between our group and other groups by letter on occasion! And also between our group and the HSA. Telephones became a bit more common as we progressed into the 90s, although most people only had incoming calls so it tended to involve a pile of 10 pence pieces and the local phone box. Now, of course, it's all email and txt.

I remember that we used to have regular group meetings in Brighton (even to the extent of training weekends!) and sometimes there would be a missive from the HSA committee regarding new tactics or perhaps a national hit – this used to come in the form of a Group Mailout, invariably badly printed or copied but always eagerly read and handed around the group. It sometimes used to be nearly as thick as Horse and Hound.

Out in the field, we tended to shout a lot, or send runners between different bits of the group, for instance if we found a dig out and needed more bodies from the van. Communicating with the van was a haphazard occurrence. Should we find a phone box – and bear in mind this is the middle of the country, not the high street – then we could phone our 'central contact' for the day. That was a job that wasn't envied – you had to stay indoors all day next to a phone in case someone rang. The van driver was supposed to call the contact number if they hadn't seen us for a while in case a message had been left. By which time, of course, we'd moved on. The last resort – usually towards the end of the day when people were too exhausted to carry on, developing hypothermia or the hunt had packed up – was to find a suitable road junction and wait in case the van came past!!! This of course holds hazards if roaming hunt thugs wanted some skull to crack so you could end up hiding in a hedge and hoping you'd be able to make yourself visible when the van passed! After a few freezing late afternoons waiting for the van to turn up, you certainly got to know the difference between a beat up old transit/Sherpa van (sabs) and a land rover ('hunt heavies' as they used to be known). This was, of course, in the days before foreign 4x4s were widespread.



'Some aspects of communication remain unchanged...'

Phone boxes were still Red in the 1980s and many's the time our group used to go haring across muddy fields towards a redcoat when we'd lost the hunt only to find it was a BT phonebox! Sabbing the grouse shoots before mobile phones used to rely on getting to public phone boxes in little villages or lay-bys in the middle of nowhere. Gamekeepers soon cottoned on to this though and there were many instances of the local community or passing traveller being left isolated because some grouse moor lackey has gone around vandalising all the phone boxes in the area the night before the glorious twelfth.

Eventually we started to use C.B. radios. Wow! This was high tech stuff. Unfortunately the hand held units were the size of a house brick and the aerial was about 4 foot long. As technology progressed we heard rumours that some groups from London had a mobile phone. Bear in mind this was back when it would have been a huge battery with a normal telephone handset stuck on top!

I remember getting a mobile phone out on the Surrey Union in the early 1990s before the hunts really used them and the deranged hunt secretary, Pru Goodchild, bawling in my face 'Buy, buy, Sell, Sell!' as she had only previously seen them in the hands of wideboy city traders I guess. These days everyone has a mobile phone – no central contact needed – and or course if your hunt packs up early you can phone a neighbouring group and find out where they are...When we do still use C.B's they tend to be a lot smaller too.

Meets

The hunts in my area used to publish their meets in the local paper. Whether they stopped due to our interventions or because the paper refused to run them is open to debate. They are still published in Horse & Hound. Looking back at old issues, the advertised meets used to take up 2-3 pages of tiny typeface giving the week's meets for beagles, bassets, harriers & any number of packs I'd never heard of. The tradition of camo clad sabs studiously leafing through it in WHSmiths on a Thursday still goes on today – I can't bring myself to buy it still (especially at £2.30 an issue). Back in 1977 it was 30p and packed full of hunting reports – again, beagles and bassets with the precise times & dates of the meets, names of the landowners & followers, the route the hare took etc. All invaluable now that hare hunting is the 'sport' that dare not speak its true name any more. And notice how they tried to change public perception by renaming themselves 'hare conservation societies' the year before the hunting ban became law. Up to the mid 90s, the H&H Hunting directories were split over two issues – Beagles, Bassets, Harriers, Otterhounds and Bloodhounds in the first, and Foxhounds and Staghounds in the second. Nowadays it's all shoehorned into one poxy mag with useless info – as if they want to be open, but know they really can't be!

These days we rely more and more on 'insider info' passed to us from people who are given the meets, especially since the hunt ban. But then those hunts that do publish will even put them on the web!



When Dog & Donkey used to be useful

Transport

I remember my first day out sabbing was 5 of us crammed into the back of a mini. Not ideally designed for quick exit and into the field. After a year or so of hiring panel vans (and when the cops got funny, minibuses) we found ourselves a shite old short wheel base transit courtesy of another sab group...what a death trap that was! No locks on the doors, dodgy starter motor etc. When we went to fix the starter motor we realised the chassis cross bars weren't even properly bolted on. Next step up was a long wheel base transit. Of course, these days we wouldn't dream of going anywhere without a grilled-up solid land rover that can withstand an attack from terrier boys.

When I first went out, it was like a scene from 'Life on Mars' with various groups arriving in lime green Vauxhall Vivas and shitty brown Ford Cortinas and Escorts. People mainly used to use their own vehicles which was not much fun when you got back after a long day in the mud to find some joker had slashed all your tyres and you needed the car for work on Monday morning! I went to my first sab in the mid-80s on a 125cc motorbike with L plates – the crash helmet came in hand later in the day when hunt supporters put the windows in on the transit van!

I have also been out sabbing from London by catching the 180 bus from Lewisham High Street to Orpington, and then joining up with other sabs to take over the top deck of the 320 service to Westerham where the Old Surrey & Burstow's (not then with West Kent) meet at Chartwell was a brisk but scenic 2 mile walk. This was rather limiting if there was trouble and you wanted to leave the area quickly (you couldn't) but did mean you could get plastered in a country pub, dry your socks by their fire and not have to worry about one of you having to drive home. Up to the mid-90s there also used to be things called student unions that hired out minibuses to student groups and if you were near a university or polytechnic (remember them?) with an Animal Rights group, you could usually use their van every other week if you came to an arrangement with the rugby club or Real Ale society to block book it for the whole term!

Our group also used to hire minibuses from a firm in Peckham every other week when Millwall were at home. It was one of the few hire companies who thought we were actually acceptable customers – probably because we usually caused less damage to their vehicles than their regular Bushwhacker clientele.



Cammo and HSA logos – a classis combination



Bleached hair, beards - and coppers.

Clothing

I was lucky enough not to witness the Aran jumpers, scarves and flares of the 70s. However, it did tend to be people just turning up in whatever they fell out of bed into. A wide assortment of tastes and styles, not all appropriate for straddling barbed wire fences or jumping riverbanks...

In the early/mid-80s there was fairly even mix of student fashion, off-the-wall punk and a more down to earth practical 'style'. It's mostly been practical gear since then, which you don't mind getting ripped and filthy, but there have been many group 'looks' over the years. Some were (and still are) almost all in full DPM camo while others prefer all black. I do remember a period where there were quite a few Goths around who didn't like getting their black gear too muddy, and we did once have a guy out who preferred to carry an aerosol hairspray rather than antimate in case his back-combed locks wilted during the day. Thinking about it, that might have been where all those hunt accusations of spraying hairspray into hounds' eyes came from. He didn't obviously – that torture was reserved for us in the van on the way back home as he dolled himself up for a night at the Torture Garden!

I tended to take great pride in not washing my sabbing (outer) gear from the start of the season until the end, and could regularly stand my combat trousers up on their own with their caking of dried mud after a long day's sabbing. I even had a little ritual of burning my jackets when they were no longer any use such were the things we had been through together.

I started sabbing in DM's then moved onto hunter wellies which you could actually run in fairly well, but have mostly been wearing the Dryboot for the last 15 years or so and short of falling into a bog or swimming a river they pretty much live up to their name. It stops the arthritis getting too painful! Other favourites in groups I've seen are football boots and hockey boots, which are light and have brilliant grip in the mud, but you can't stand up let alone run in footy boots on a tarmac road.

Modern sabs tend to all shop at the army surplus store to get themselves comfortable practical clothing in camo or black.

Equipment

And what about the kit that we use in the field? It used to mainly be spray bottles filled with garlic or citronella, and about one in 10 of us carrying a hunting horn. If we wanted to take photos of kills, hunt scum, violence or its aftermath there was probably one tiny 110 camera which we couldn't get developed until the Monday – and then it took 3 days. Other than that it was just maps, although I have been on sabs where people have been out with air horns, cymbals, mouth harps, didgeridoos and other stuff I didn't even want to know about.

Video cameras were an unheard of luxury, and didn't come in a manageable size. I can remember a TV film crew keeping up with us all day on a sab on the New Forest and everyone being mightily impressed with the strength of the cameraman lugging the huge camera around on his shoulder.

Now we have digital video cameras, which can fit inside a pocket, and digital stills cameras with the ability to get an image out to the media instantly (although for some reason it still takes weeks sometimes). Sprays, whips and horns still have their uses on hunts that flout the Act and require intervention rather than monitoring. We have the gizmo – with even that undergoing changes with the advent of MP3 players as opposed to the humble walkman. And of course, for those with the money, you don't even have to look up map co-ordinates because there are plenty of small GPS location devices available! Unfortunately this doesn't automatically link where sabs in the field think they are with where the driver thinks/knows they are, so the usual trawl around country roads with people shouting at each other on mobile phones looks like continuing for a while.



These days the zoom features are much more advanced...

some things never change

Appeal for Mike Hill cattery at Freshfields Animal Rescue Centre



As many of you will know, Mike Hill was a hunt saboteur killed as he simply tried to save the lives of hunted animals whilst out sabbing in Cheshire in 1991. Mike lived and worked at the Freshfields Animal Rescue Centre in Merseryside, and here Dave Callender, another name familiar to those with a few sabbing years under the belt, explains the excellent work that has been continued in Mike's name – and how you can help to ensure that work continues...

On the 9th February 1991 Mike Hill was killed whilst peacefully protesting against a local hare hunt – The Cheshire Beagles.Mike had been both working and living at Freshfields Animal Rescue Centre, and the loss of a much loved friend was marked by the Centre launching an appeal in his honour. This resulted in the building of a block that became the hub of the rescue's cattery and isolation facilities. Since its opening over 15 years ago in 1992 the building has seen the admittance, treatment, recovery and ultimately rehoming of over 12,000 animals. It is a testament to the life of Mike and his story is still an integral part of this charity and its ethos.



Now, after seeing 15 years of hard service, the block needs to be re-roofed so that the good work can continue unabated. Quotes of between £7-9000 have been confirmed to cover the cost of the repairs required. It maybe an unusual request but those at the Centre still feel an intense bond with the HSA. For those of you a little older and wiser who lived through the these times, you will know it changed many people. For the first time one of us had been killed. Chaos ensued. Many future key individuals were radicalised, and a nationwide furore resulted that has never been properly recorded. The personnel at Freshfields had always been key figures in the direct action movement against hunting, and were crucial in carrying on the fight in Cheshire.

In many respects the Mike Hill building has stood like a beacon of calm, compassion and care against the madness that his death represented. It is a building that has witnessed remarkable recoveries, intensive nursing regimes, incredible happy endings to animals coming to the Rescue with no hope of leading 'normal' lives. It is a building that tens of thousands of ordinary people have visited over the last 15 years. It is a building that has performed miracles.

We want to perform miracles in Mike's name for another 15 years, but to do so need your help. If you would like to contribute please send cheques/Postal Orders payable to 'Freshfields Animal Rescue Centre', clearly marked 'Mike Hill Cattery Appeal' to the address below. Should you have any queries on the work of the Rescue, or need to have any questions answered please do not hesitate to contact us via telephone, email, post or indeed in person.

Thank you

Freshfields Animal Rescue Centre
East Lodge Farm
East Lane
Ince Blundell
L29 3EA

T: 0151 9311604
W: www.freshfieldsrescue.org.uk
E: admin@freshfieldsrescue.org.uk



FAILED

QUANTOCK STAGHUNTERS APPEAL

Otherwise known as 'How the hunters lost in court. Again.'

The second prosecution of hunt staff, taken privately by the League Against Cruel Sports (LACS), was heard in Taunton magistrates in late May. This resulted in the two defendants, huntsman Richard Down and Whipper-in Adrian Pillivant, being convicted of hunting a wild mammal and fined £500 with £1000 costs each. The case was built on evidence taken by two LACS monitors in February 2006, which showed Down casting two hounds into a combe (a short valley or hollow on a hillside) on the Quantock Hills. The hounds flushed out two small herds of deer and chased one herd across the moor and over the horizon. This visible section of the chase covered approximately one kilometre. Pillivant is shown to stand by and watch the chase. There were no hunt 'marksmen' present and no realistic attempts were made to stop the hounds.

This evidence was initially presented to the police and the lady master was interviewed. However, the police did not proceed with the case. Having taken legal advice, the League believed that the evidence was strong enough to warrant a private prosecution and papers were served at court shortly before the six-month deadline. Two expert witnesses were employed: Prof Bateson, an expert on deer and deer hunting (his independent report on deer hunting saw the stag hunts banned from National Trust land); and a sound expert to confirm that the footage taken had not been tampered with.

The hunt's defence claimed that deer had been flushed to guns twice before the monitors arrived, with two hinds being shot on each occasion. They claimed to have three men armed with short-barrelled shotguns who were positioned covertly for each flush. Their interpretation of the legal requirement to shoot a flushed animal as soon as possible was that it would be shot when the deer had been flushed close enough to a waiting gun, which in the case of these shotguns is



Stills supplied by League Against Cruel Sports

20-25 feet. They accepted that the guns were out of sight; that the hounds were allowed to chase the deer for 1 km; and that the hounds were at some distance from hunt staff during the course of the day. They also claimed that a further 2 hinds were shot one hour after the chase caught on film and that these deer were shot by the same man who had shot the previous four. He had apparently managed to shoot a deer dead at approximately 10 yards, reload and shoot a second deer without scaring the herd away three times in one day.

The two defendants gave evidence, as did the three alleged gunmen. During cross-examination one of the gunmen was placed in three different places during the final flush by different witnesses. It also came out that some of the deer in the first flush might have been amongst the herd in the final flush. In effect these deer were pursued for nearly 3 hours.

The real question was not whether there was hunting taking place but whether it was exempt. The hunt claimed that they were exempt hunting under Schedule 1, stalking or flushing out to guns, in this instance to prevent serious damage to crops. The fifth condition of this exemption requires that reasonable steps are taken for ensuring that the animal is shot dead as soon as possible and that each dog used is kept under sufficiently close control to ensure that it does not prevent or obstruct the shooting. The judge found the hunt to have failed both

Gavel image - Orla@dreamstime.com

of these requirements. There were only three guns out, sometimes positioned hundreds of metres from the flush, placed where they thought the deer might run and the hounds were allowed to continue a chase for at least 1 km without intervention.

The Act does, however, allow a defence where a person reasonably believes that his hunting is exempt. The judge found that the main purpose of this hunt was for sport and recreation and that this overrode any other purpose that they might have had. He found the two men guilty stating that 'the defendants were hunting for sport and recreation to continue their way of life and are disingenuous in attempting to deceive me into believing that they were exempt from hunting.'

The pair appealed the decision and a retrial was heard at Taunton Crown Court on October 2 - 4 before the honourable Mr Justice Wyn Williams and two magistrates. Their defence remained unchanged at the appeal; in effect the double defence that they were exempt hunting, and if they weren't then they reasonably believed that they were. Again they were found guilty.

The judgement pointed out that 'on the whole of the evidence we are driven to the conclusion that the primary purpose was the enjoyment of the activities being carried on' given that the meet was scheduled before the landowner requested the hunt's assistance and that during the filmed events the defendants did nothing to stop the hounds chasing the deer. The judgement further stated that 'flushing from cover cannot extend to a situation where dogs are permitted to chase deer over open land over substantial distances'. Finally the judgement stated that the defendants could not have reasonably believed that they exempt hunting as the guns were placed too far away, one was not in position during the filmed chase and the hounds were pursuing the deer, not directing them towards the guns. It remains to be seen whether there will be a further appeal.



Are there any lessons from all of this? Firstly, the defence will be able to prepare a story around the footage obtained for any case. Monitors will never be able to be everywhere and record everything that happens. In this case, monitors arrived late and were only present for around one and a half hours but that was enough to record sufficient evidence for a prosecution. Secondly the League remains prepared to put its resources behind evidence from any source. This can go from assistance in presenting the evidence to the police to a private prosecution.

This article was written (and titled!) before the disappointing appeal verdict from the Tony Wright case. We hope to include an update on what's happening with the state of the Hunting Act and future prosecutions – whether private or public – in Howl 89.

On Boxing Day 2006 the League Against Cruel Sports established a new Prosecutions Unit. The Unit aims to use both civil and criminal law to control the behaviour of those hunters who believe they are a law unto themselves.

The Prosecution Unit will examine evidence gathered through our Hunt Crimewatch campaign or received from members of the public. It will work closely with the police and Crown Prosecution Service to prepare cases against hunters accused of hunting illegally. It will seek prosecutions where hunters are believed to be still engaging in illegal cruelty.

The Unit will also advise on the use of the law against hunt members who routinely trespass on private land; who frequently lose control of their hounds resulting in savage attacks on domestic pets and other animals; who block quiet country lanes with 4 x 4s and behave in an aggressive and intimidating manner towards anyone brave enough to complain. It will assist countryside residents obtain ASBOs (Anti Social Behaviour Orders) against such hunts.

You make a donation towards the League's prosecution work at www.league.org.uk

LEAGUE AGAINST CRUEL SPORTS



Legal News

Huntsman of Percy Hunt guilty on badger charge

Robert McCarthy, 32, of Cannongate, was arrested alongside Stephen Robert McCarthy, 60, of Mill Road, Wyvestone, Stowmarket, Suffolk after a joint operation between Northumbria Police, the RSPCA Special Operation's Unit and the Northumberland Wildlife Trust Badger Unit. He later appeared at South East Northumberland Magistrates Court and was given a conditional discharge for nine months.

Falconry Exemption to be tested in court

Four men from the Isle of Wight have pleaded not guilty to illegally hunting with dogs, in a private prosecution which represents the third case to be brought by the League Against Cruel Sports.

The Huntsman of the Isle Of Wight Fox Hounds, Stuart Trousdale, of Gatcombe, Jamie Butcher, of Ryde, and Liam Thom, of Rookley, were charged with hunting a fox with dogs. Malcolm Purcell, of Blackwater, was charged with hunting with dogs. They are expected to argue they were using an eagle owl and as such their activities were exempt under the Hunting Act 2004. It is the first time the falconry exemption will be tested in the courts since the Hunting Act came into force in February 2005.

The League Against Cruel Sports brought the prosecution at Isle of Wight Magistrates' Court after the Crown Prosecution Service decided not to proceed with the case against the men. The charges against Mr Butcher, of Ashey Road, Mr Thom, of Highwood Lane, Mr Trousdale, of The Kennels, and Mr Purcell, of Blackwater Mill Farm, relate to an incident on 29 November, 2006. The case was adjourned for pre-trial review.

Vermin Patrol records show that two of the above have previous known pro-hunt protest convictions. Both Trousale and Butcher dumped animal carcasses in the street during the Labour Party conference in 2004, pleaded guilty at Brighton magistrates to breaching the Public Order Act. The men horrified local residents by unloading two dead calves and a cow from a pick up truck near the conference venue in Brighton. They pleaded guilty to breaching the Public Order Act through threatening and disorderly behaviour.

Bloodsports supporter guilty of assault

A pub landlord and bloodsports supporter has been fined after being convicted of threatening a cameraman at one of the UK leading partridge shoots. Richard Clarke (48) who is the landlord of The Green Man, London Road, Six Mile Bottom fired a volley of abuse at Michael Huskisson who was filming the event. On 5/10/06 Ely magistrates heard that he then pushed Mr Huskisson into a car. Magistrates found Clarke guilty of assault and threatening behaviour fined him £250 and £364 in costs.

Clarke, chairman of the National Gamekeepers' Organisation, denied any offence. Mr Huskisson told magistrates that he filmed the shoot from a public road. Clarke walked over to him, called him a 'pervert' and then unleashed a volley of foul language. Clarke then hit his camera with a stick and punched him, causing him to fall back on to the side of his car.

Hampshire landowner investigated over badger killing

Police are investigating after six carcasses of the protected species were discovered in woodland between Winchester and Stockbridge. The League Against Cruel Sports said its investigators found 50 snares and traps in woodland owned by Heath House Estate and other dead animals including tawny owls, foxes, crows and squirrels.

Landowner Donald Hutchison told the Daily Echo that the dead animals had nothing to do with him or his staff. Foxes, crows and squirrels - all regarded as pests - were killed but legally, he said. He denied anyone had harmed badgers or tawny owls.

LACS chief executive Douglas Batchelor described the killings as 'the worst case of badger slaughter I have experienced.'

Mr Hutchison said that soon after the arrival of LACS activists, the car of a hurdle-maker parked on the estate was vandalised. The hurdle-maker, who asked not to be named, said the Ford Mondeo was written off, with every window smashed and had since been scrapped.

Man fined in Hunting Act 'first'

A 69-year-old has been fined £200 after what is believed to be the first case in Wales under the Hunting Act 2004. William Francis Armstrong from near St Asaph, Denbighshire, admitted hunting a wild animal with a dog after he was seen putting a terrier into a hole. The terrier man, who was not at the hearing at Prestatyn Magistrates' Court, was ordered to pay £60 costs. Another case against a man for permitting land to be used for hunting was dropped by the prosecution.

The charge was brought against Armstrong after he was spotted by an off-duty police officer on the Clwydian Hills above Llangwyfan, Denbighshire on 2 January.

Armstrong was seen sending a terrier down the hole then using a spade to dig down towards the fox, when the fox came out he shot it with a pistol.

The 2004 act allows a fox to be humanely destroyed under specific circumstances but Armstrong had not carried out certain checks it required. He had not ensured there was another hole from which the fox could be flushed out, a provision aimed at preventing the dog cornering the fox underground. Armstrong also failed to give the fox a chance to escape before he shot it and should have used a shotgun instead of the .22 pistol.

Anti-fur campaigner faces prison over seal cull film

A British animal rights campaigner has vowed to go to prison in Canada rather than pay a fine if he is convicted of breaking rules governing filming of the country's annual seal cull. Mark Glover, campaigns director of the Nottingham-based Respect for Animals group, appeared before a judge in the remote Magdalen Islands in October with four other activists to face a charge that they breached a 10-metre exclusion zone while filming hunters shooting and clubbing seals on ice floes in the Gulf of St Lawrence.

The annual cull of up to 350,000 seals by around 2,000 hunters has been the subject of a long-running battle by animal rights groups seeking a ban. The Canadian government insists the hunt is 'tightly regulated and humane' but opponents claim the use of sharpened clubs called 'hakapiks' to kill seals is cruel, with many hunters failing to ensure the animals are dead before skinning them. Images of seals including white-coated pups being killed with a blow to the head on blood-stained snow and ice have provided powerful ammunition in a worldwide campaign against the practice. The EU is currently considering whether to impose a ban on the import and sale of seal products.

Mr Glover, who was part of an international team filming the main cull in the Gulf of St Lawrence in March 2006 from inflatable boats, faces a fine of up to C$100,000 (£50,000) if he is found guilty of infringing the terms of a license granted to follow the hunt. Under a proposed new law, anyone convicted of such an offence would also be banned from observing the hunt for five years. Speaking before he boarded a flight to Canada for the court hearing, Mr Glover, claimed the arrest of his group was a deliberate attempt to stop them filming. He said: 'We were getting a lot of film that would have been embarrassing to the Canadians given the level of cruelty that we were witnessing ... It was a politically motivated attempt to stop us.'

The case got under way in mid-October but was adjourned to allow further evidence to be gathered after the prosecution managed only to present one of the two witnesses expected. It is expected to resume in May 2008.

Minehead Harriers members face Hunting Act trial

Three huntsmen accused by the League against Cruel Sports of hunting illegally will be the fourth private prosecution the organisation takes under the Hunting Act.

Two of the three accused members of the Minehead Harriers appeared at Taunton Magistrates Court in October. William Goffe of Wootton Courteney, Somerset and Gary Bradley, of Timberscombe, Somerset, both denied the charge. Bradley denied a further public order offence and was given bail. A plea of not guilty was also entered for Sidney Westcott of Bossington, Somerset, who was not present at court.

The case has been adjourned until mid-November when a trial date will be set.

Fine for gamekeeper who kept stock of banned pesticides

A gamekeeper who kept a quantity of deadly, banned pesticides has been fined by a court. Richard McMorn was arrested following a joint investigation involving Northumbria Police, the RSPB and Natural England, amid fears that the toxins were being used to kill wildlife.

McMorn, 48, was found to be in possession of a quantity of Yeltox, which had been banned under EC regulations in 2001. James Long, prosecuting, said that if taken in sufficient quantities Yeltox could prove lethal. He also had a quantity of Cymag which had been banned in 2004 and officers who searched his home at Ancroft Town Farm near Berwick also found quantities of Phostoxin and Anul Nitrate (Cyanide), two controlled substances that should have been kept under lock and key.

The Crown Prosecution Service said it was obvious both substances posed a considerable danger to the public. McMorn, who has been a gamekeeper for 15 years, first came to the attention of the authorities when he was involved in a road traffic accident at Scremerston. The court was told that after his Landrover was involved in a two-vehicle smash he tried to conceal a glass jar containing a small amount of Yeltox by throwing it into a nearby hedgerow, but he was spotted by the other driver who reported him to the police and the jar was recovered.

McMorn pleaded guilty to four charges of possession/storage of illegal and hazardous pesticides under the Wildlife and Countryside Act of 1981 and was fined a total of £600 with £70 costs. The RSPB is concerned that the poison Carbofuran was involved in this incident. Official figures show that Carbofuran is the most regularly abused pesticide for the illegal poisoning of wildlife in the UK and has featured in around 30% of all cases in the last 10 years. Though the legal use of Carbofuran in agriculture was withdrawn in 2001, it continues to pose a significant threat to UK wildlife. The presence of this and other dangerous chemical in the north east countryside poses a real risk to protected birds, such as the north east's much-loved red kites.

UK ANIMAL RIGHTS GATHERING



The UK Animal Rights Gathering 2007 took place at a sanctuary in Kent at the end of September. Over 200 people attended for workshops and discussions on various issues relating to animal rights, and to scoff Veggie's food. The entire event was peaceful and good natured, and made a mockery of a police who raided the site on Sunday.

Before the event the police had written to the owners of the sanctuary asking for it to be cancelled as they said they were concerned that activists would touch the animals and potentially spread foot & mouth. The owners of course refused and had already introduced the necessary bio-security measures.

From the start there was a police presence, though they were not popular with the locals as they were blocking the entrance to the local church. Animal rights gathering have taken place at this sanctuary several times in the past, and there has never been any trouble - bar the usual police overreactions.



This time, desperate to justify their presence, they told the camp on Sunday that if they were not let in voluntarily they would get a warrant to search. Naturally they were told they were not welcome, so off they went to get a warrant on completely spurious grounds – that they were looking for drugs. The Police misleading magistrates....never.

What this unexpected intervention caused was a spontaneous coming together of those at the gathering, to discuss the situation and make a decision about what to do. The impromptu workshop was attended by everyone on site, and the best strategies for dealing with police raids and our legal rights as protestors were debated. It is fair to say that this inspiring and very useful workshop would not have been thought of, or so well attended, if the Kent police hadn't kindly given us two hours notice of their intent to raid the sanctuary After that it was decided that the best thing to do was carry on with the intended business - so the camp got on with workshops, waiting for the announcement of the police's arrival.

When they eventually arrived came, activists took chairs out of the marquee and a good section of the camp sat in a semi-circle in the main part and watched the police tramp through all the mud. Up went a good-natured cheer and clapping, laughing at them. The stern faces of the 40 cops, who came from Thames Valley, Hampshire and Kent, broke into their own laughter with embarrassment, as this was not the reaction they were expecting.

It was noticeable that they refused point blank to pay attention to the bio-security measures relating to foot-and-mouth. When challenged about it they said their advice was that the risk was minimal. Odd, that's not what their original letter said...

They searched a long abandoned caravan and a live-in vehicle and after vast amounts of videoing, found nothing. In fact, as the operation grew more farcical and muddy, various police officers were clearly realising that the joke was on them and tried to distance themselves from it (some officers noticeably creeping off to hide and clean their boots).

After an hour they all marched off again, to more cheering and clapping, and the gathering got on with business, all highly amused by the police's failure to intimidate and disrupt. The main benefit of this, beside the amusement factor, is that there are now two hundred plus people with first hand experience of how to manage the police out there... all courtesy of Kent coppers. Those present extend their thanks to the cops for this most inspiring workshop...



All in all, a good and positive gathering. See's ya next year.

(from www.indymedia.org.uk and www.arcnews.org.uk)

International Animal Rights Gathering

This year, the international animal rights gathering took place in Appelscha, Netherlands. After a rousing and lively march through the streets of Amsterdam, naming and shaming fur salons and Huntingdon Life Science targets, motor coaches transported the international assemblage to an anarchist campsite in the lovely town of Appelscha.

There were many workshops including: the hunt sabs one at which international tactics were discussed and the new ' International Week of Action against hunting' was launched. Engaging Business; Police and Corporate Repression; Engaging Communities; Effective Anti-Vivisection Campaigning; The Story of HLS and the NYSE. Other workshops included: Investigations and undercover work; How to shoot effective photos; Campaign Strategy; Tripods; lock-ons and office occupations; Effective Demos and Coping with prison.



full report in Howl 89

Some of the bright spots of the Gathering were the evening sessions during which the history of the animal liberation movement were presented. Keith Mann presented the History of the ALF in England. While Dr. Jerry Vlasak and Camille Hankins, representing the North American Animal Liberation Press Office, spoke about animal liberation activities in the USA. The third evening featured ALF footage from countries with active cells and a screening of Behind the Mask. Also screened was the film Loose Change, a documentary film that chronicled the truth behind 9/11 and exposed the levels to which the governments of the world will go to further their agenda of greed and corruption.



One of the best parts of the international gathering are the late nights around the bonfire. Unwinding after a full day of workshops, activists have the opportunity to get to know each other better and to foster international cooperation on campaigns.

Although every aspect of the Gathering was fun and educational, the highlight was undoubtedly the march through the street of Amsterdam on Thursday. The speeches were inspirational and the energy and passion of the marchers was contagious.



Support Animal Rights Prisoners

Those imprisoned for 'Animal Rights' offences need your support. Show then you care by sending letter of support – these are greatly appreciated by most prisoners. Please remember that letters are opened before they reach prisoners – so don't write anything you wouldn't want anyone else to read...

For more information on how to support those who take action to help animals (besides the HSA of course!) contact the ALF Supporters Group or the Vegan Prisoner Support Group – full details can be found in the 'Useful Addresses' section within this magazine.

Sentenced Prisoners

DONALD CURRIE (A3660AA)
Birthday: 13 April
HMP Parkhurst, Newport, Isle of Wight, PO30 5NX.
Serving 12 years in relation to arson attacks.
Cheques or postal orders made out to "HM PRISON SERVICE", with prisoner's name and number on the back.
No stamps, envelopes or writing paper are accepted.

KERRY WHITBURN (TB4886)
Birthday: 18 April
HMP Lowdham Grange, Lowdham, Nottingham. NG14 7DA.
Serving 12 years for conspiracy to blackmail the Hall family who ran Newchurch guineapig farm, which has now closed down.
stamps; postal orders/cheques payable to HMP LOWDHAM GRANGE - include inmate's name and number on back and name/address of sender.
No paper or envelopes

JOHN SMITH (TB4887)
Birthday: 6 March
HMP Lowdham Grange, Lowdham, Nottingham. NG14 7DA.
Serving 12 years for conspiracy to blackmail the Hall family who run Newchurch guineapig farm, which has now closed down.
Stamps, Postal orders/cheques payable to 'HMP LOWDHAM GRANGE' with inmate's name/number, name & address of the sender on the back.
No paper or envelopes

SARAH GISBORNE (LT5393)
Birthday: 5 July
HMP Downview, Sutton Lane, Sutton, Surrey, SM2 5PD.
Serving 5 years for conspiracy to cause criminal damage in relation to Huntingdon Life Sciences.
Self-addressed-envelopes (SAEs), writing paper, envelopes, cheques/postal orders payable to THE GOVERNOR - please write inmate number and sender name/address on back.

JONNY ABLEWHITE (TB4885)
Birthday: 27 January
HMP Lowdham Grange, Lowdham, Nottingham. NG14 7DA.
Serving 12 years for conspiracy to blackmail the Hall family who run Newchurch guineapig farm, which has now closed down.
Stamps, Postal orders/cheques payable to 'HMP LOWDHAM GRANGE' with inmate's name/number, name & address of the sender on the back.
No paper or envelopes

Remand Prisoners

HEATHER NICHOLSON (VM4859)
Birthday: 30 January
HMP Bronzefield, Woodthorpe Road, Ashford, Middx TW15 3JZ.
Heather Nicholson was remanded 7 May 2007 at Portsmouth Magistrates Court on charges in connection with Huntingdon Life Sciences.
Cheques/postal orders made out to 'The Governor'. Books, stationery, stamps; saes. Write prisoner name and number on the back.

GREGG AVERY (TA7450)
Birthday: 5 December
HMP Winchester, Romsey Road, Winchester, SO22 5DF
Remanded 4 May 2007 at Portsmouth Magistrates Court on charges in connection with Huntingdon Life Sciences.
Writing pad (non ring binder type); envs; £5.00 worth of stamps; 20 (5x7 or 6x4) photos (check with inmate). Cheques/postal orders made out to 'HM Prison Service' the inmate's name/number written on back, together with a return address.

NATASHA AVERY (VM4846
Birthday: 28 December
HMP Bronzefield, Woodthorpe Road, Ashford, Middx TW15 3JZ.
Natasha Avery was remanded 4 May 2007 at Portsmouth Magistrates Court on charges in connection with Huntingdon Life Sciences.
Cheques/postal orders made out to 'The Governor'. Books, stationery, stamps; saes. Write prisoner name and number on the back.

MEL BROUGHTON (TN9138)
Birthday: 5 July
HMP Woodhill, Tattenhoe Street, Milton Keynes, Bucks MK4 4DA.
Mel Broughton was remanded on 14 Dec 2007 at Banbury Magistrates' Court in connection with alleged offences relating to the SPEAK campaign.
Cheques/postal orders made out to "HMPS". For information on other items which can be sent in please apply in writing to the prison.

Mhairi Noble - Obituary



On 6th June 2007 the Dorset Sab group sadly lost a committed and dedicated member.

Mhairi Noble first became involved with saving animals when she volunteered at the Lovebirds Bird Rescue Centre. With a kind heart it was not long before she started taking animal's home with her, from blind squirrels to angry crows. This led her to become more involved in direct action. Mhairi started out driving for the group. With a great sense of timing, a fearless approach, she was a natural at navigating the winding and precarious Dorset country roads. Always there to offer a lift if the mood turned heavy, she was well known for driving directly into meets to see what was happening.
If sab numbers were down she would take to the fields, where her striking appearance often attracted the interest of members of the hunt. Even notorious thugs where seen to offer smiles and pleasantries through their remaining few teeth!
She was never fazed by this attention and always stood her ground, both vocally and physically. You might recognise her from the cover of Howl 82 after a brief disagreement with a senile geriatric. This no compromise attitude lead to the whipper in on the Blackmoore Vale describing her as 'a very aggressive young lady'.

It was sad her life was cut so short. Mhairi was a comrade, an incredible source of strength and a great friend to us all. She will be greatly missed. Any donations in memory of Mhairi please send to Wiltshire Wildlife Hospital www.wildthingsres-q.org.uk - 01980 629470



Neil Lea – Obituary

Neil Lea, the founder of Arcnews and editor of www.arcnews.org.uk, died after a long and painful illness on the 10th July 2007. His mother, wife and one of his closest friends were with him, and he went peacefully after all his long struggles. He was 49.

Neil was someone whose entire life was shaped by the fact that he was almost always in pain. Spending so much of his life struggling against disability could have resulted in his focussing on his own pain and problems. Instead he understood very poignantly how precious and fragile life is. He knew that suffering is real, whoever the victim, and he spent his life trying to prevent suffering. Even on his death bed he was talking to nurses, doctors, catering staff, about veganism, animal rights, and simply 'respect'.
Neil was an extraordinary man. Each day was a battle to overcome his, sometimes very painful, illness to get on with his tireless campaigning for animal rights. The loss to our movement is immeasurable. But Neil's strength and determination should inspire us all to continue the fight - no matter how tough it gets.

Please send cards and messages of condolence to:
Mary Lea, Neil's wife, and son, Seamus, and (separately) to Doreen Lea, his mother. Both Care Of: Manchester Animal Protection Society, PO Box 155, Manchester, M60 1FT
More info at http://londonanimalrights.org.uk/neilbook1.html

Peter Jack - Obituary

**Mr Peter Jack who recently passed away was one of the first members of the "Granny Group "in Surrey. He was out every time sabs were out with the Surrey Union, driving around picking sabs up in his old Escort car. Never worried about hunt supporters or terrier men.
He was in his mid/late 80s. He also belonged to other AR groups.**



VERMIN PATROL

CRUELTY CASES IN THE COURTS

To keep up to date on all Vermin Patrol cases visit www.nwhsa.org.uk

Badgers



Mark Paddock (37) of Aintree Close, Leegomery, Telford was sentenced to 90 days in prison, suspended for two years, he will also have to observe a night-time curfew and do 200 hours of unpaid community work. He was found guilty on 4/10/07 of illegally hunting and killing a badger at night - with his two lurchers. He claimed he had been out 'rabbiting' when his dogs went for the badger and he had killed it for humane reasons. After his arrest Paddock's former home in Donnington was searched and two lock knives were found. One of the knives had badger blood on it. Mobile phone footage of the attack was also used in court. He was also ordered to pay £2,600 in court costs after the judge decided he could not afford the full cost of £26,000. The remainder will be paid by the RSPCA.

Craig Morrison (22) admitted allowing his dog to maul two young badger cubs to death in a sett during a hunting trip. On 9/10/07 Yesterday, Kilmarnock Sheriff Court heard Morrison went out equipped for a hunting trip near his home in Dalry, Ayrshire. Morrison admitted a total of three charges including one of cruelly ill- treating badgers by sending dogs into a sett. The court deferred sentencing and requested further witness statements. Prosecutors requested Morrison's dogs be taken from him permanently and an order made to ban Morrison from keeping animals. They also asked the court for Morrison to be liable for the £3,000 costs of housing the dogs since they were seized from him in March. After the case Morrison ran from the court covering his face.

Two brothers **Dean Jones** (27) of Cedar Road, Sturry and **Dale Jones** (25) of Mill Road, Sturry, near Canterbury both denied a string of offences after being caught with three terriers near a badger's sett. But they were convicted on 15/10/07 of attempting to injure a badger, making the dogs enter the sett, causing unnecessary suffering to the dogs and abandoning them.each received a five-month suspended prison sentence, 250 hours community service and were ordered to both pay costs totalling £4,000. The court also ordered the forfeiture of the dogs and asked the RSPCA to re-home them. The brothers were also banned from keeping dogs for two years.

Bloodsports

Gamekeeper **Richard McMorn** (48) of Ancroft Town Farm near Berwick was arrested following a joint investigation involving Northumbria Police, the RSPB and Natural England, amid fears that the toxins were being used to kill wildlife. At Berwick magistrates on 4/10/07 they heard how McMorn was found to be in possession of a quantity of Yeltox, which had been banned under EC regulations in 2001. He also had a quantity of Cymag which had been banned in 2004 also found was quantities of Phostoxin and Anul Nitrate (Cyanide), two controlled substances which should have been kept under lock and key. McMorn pleaded guilty to four charges of possession/storage of illegal and hazardous pesticides and was fined a total of £600 with £70 costs.

Three huntsmen, accused by the League against Cruel Sports of hunting illegally, will be tried under the Hunting Act. Two of the three accused members of the Minehead Harriers appeared at Taunton magistrates on 9/10/07. **William Goffe** of Wootton Courteney, Somerset and **Gary Bradley**, of Timberscombe, Somerset, both denied the charge. Bradley denied a further public order offence and was given bail. A plea of not guilty was also entered for **Sidney Westcott** of Bossington, Somerset, who was not present at court. The case has been adjourned until 12/11/07, when a trial date will be set.



A hunt supporter was found guilty of GBH after he broke a protester's arm with his walking stick. **John Hawkins** (69) of Singers Farm, Henfield Road, Cowfold, denied causing grievous bodily harm to the protester but at Brighton Crown Court on 11/10/07 the jury returned a majority guilty verdict. During the trail the court heard violence had flared at the end of a meeting of the Crawley and Horsham Hunt. Hawkins hit the protester once on the head and again on the arm with his walking stick as groups of pro and anti-hunt supporters gathered. Hawkins was bailed to appear before the court again on 8/11/07 when he will be sentenced.

Police trapped a Liverpool gang who dug up rats and then watched them being ripped apart by a pack of dogs. Seven men were caught taking part in the hunt on private farm land in St Helens. The men went to the

Mossborough Estate armed with spades and they pinpointed rat runs and pulled up sods of earth to expose the rats. A police helicopter monitored the gang from above as the spaniels and terriers ripped the rats to pieces. When the police arrived they found around 30 animal carcasses strewn across the ground. The men were arrested and charged after police took their registration numbers. They were convicted of hunting a wild mammal with dogs and each fined £400 and ordered to pay £65 court costs at St Helens magistrates on 15/10/07. **Daniel Dooley** (22) from Stockbridge Lane, **Darren Fairclough** (26) from Marled Hey, **Michael Smith** (30) from Round Hey, **John Weeder** (19) from Boode Croft and **Paul Hoffman** (25) from Boode Croft, all Stockbridge Village, and **Adam McIlvenna** (21) of Firethorne Road, Halewood, and **Kevin Walton** (31) from Frederick Lunt Avenue, Knowsley, were all issued with Section 59 orders which prevents them driving on to private land. They also received a harassment notice. A gamekeeper claimed he saw them armed with 'lamping' equipment and could identify those involved as they had been on the private land before and he had been intimidated and threats made against him.

On 16/10/07 the police arrested a man following an incident in which a Jack Russell was attacked by hounds from the Blackmore and Sparkford Vale Hunt in Somerset. The man was walking along a footpath when two men brought hounds into the field and 20 to 30 of the pack raced towards him and nine-month-old terrier. He said: 'I was concerned and picked Spike up. The hounds came over and were jumping up as I tried to hold him out of their reach. They skinned his stomach and leg and I got a nip on the nose. 'It was very upsetting - if I hadn't had Spike on a lead I am sure he would not be here today. There was no provocation for this and it is worrying.' He reported the incident to police and a police spokesman said yesterday that a man in his 30s had been arrested and interviewed. Joint master of the hunt Mike Felton said: 'It is a very regrettable incident, and I perfectly understand that they don't want their dog molested. It is not something that we would want to happen in any circumstances.



Two huntsman convicted of breaking the law prohibiting hunting have had their appeal against conviction rejected. Huntsman **Richard Down** (44) of Bagborough, Somerset and whipper-in **Adrian Pillivant** (36) of Willand, Devon both of the Quantock Staghounds, were convicted after being filmed by the League Against Cruel Sports. The league filmed the pair chasing a deer for more than an hour, and the hunters were convicted. A judge at Taunton Crown Court on 19/10/07 rejected their appeal, saying the pair were hunting for sport. Both were originally convicted at Bristol magistrates on 7/6/07. (See elsewhere in this mag for full report on the appeal)

Dogfighting and Pit Bulls







Six men were given jail sentences over their involvement in one of the largest illegally organised dog-fights ever discovered in the UK. However, five of the men have been released on conditional bail pending an appeal to Birmingham Crown Court. The fight, in a kitchen showroom in Birmingham, ended with one dog dying of its injuries and the other having to be destroyed later. The District Judge ruled that five of the men could be released on bail as their trial had lasted for 15 days and involved complex legal arguments. Had they served their sentences immediately, it is possible they would have completed them by the time their appeals were heard. On 18/10/07 at Birmingham magistrates Barkat Hussain (43) of Unett Street, Smethwick, West Midlands was given six months for causing animals to fight, possessing a pit bull and causing unnecessary suffering. **Intikab Hussain** (31) of Sladefield Road, Ward End, Birmingham was given six months for causing animals to fight, possessing a pit bull and causing unnecessary suffering. Sohail Hussain (28) of Parkfield Road, Saltley, Birmingham was given four months for possessing a pit bull. Zahir Ahmed (31), of Bevington Road, Aston, Birmingham was given four months for possessing a pit bull. Ummar Ahmed (26) of Phipson Road, Birmingham was given six months for keeping premises for dog fighting. (40) of Foley Road, Ward End, Birmingham was given four months for causing dogs to fight, possessing a pit bull and causing unnecessary suffering. Waqqas Mughal (18) of Unett Street, Birmingham, a youth at the time of the fight, was given a four-month detention and training order for causing dogs to fight, possessing a pit bull and causing unnecessary suffering. Barkat Hussain, Intikab Hussain, Sohail Hussain, Zahir Ahmed and Ummar Ahmed have been bailed. All the men were also convicted of attending the fight. They were all banned from owning a dog for five years and destruction orders were placed on the pit bull terriers in some of the defendants' possession. Nineteen other men were earlier fined between £500 and £1,400 for attending the fight.

Equine



Karen Woods (49) of The Paddocks, Ashby St Mary, near Loddon who has a history of animal neglect escaped a jail sentence on 27/4/07 after five horses were found close to starvation at her Norfolk home. Woods was already banned from keeping dogs when RSPCA inspectors visited her home in September 2006 and discovered the horses without food and adequate water, as temperatures soared to 26C. Woods pleaded guilty to five charges of causing unnecessary suffering. Two other charges were dropped. She was sentenced her to 12 weeks in prison for each charge to run concurrently, suspended for two years, ordered her to complete 150 hours unpaid work and to comply with a supervision order for two years. Woods was also told to pay compensation of £3,445 and costs of £250 and was banned from keeping any animals for 10 years. Woods was banned from keeping dogs in October 2005 after two animals were found caged and emaciated at her home.

Christopher Hartnell (23) and **Rachel Francis** (20) from Hudson Way, Taunton have been banned from keeping horses for ten years and ordered to do community service after pleading guilty to charges of cruelty to animals. Appearing before the Taunton Deane magistrates on 18/5/07 both were sentenced for causing suffering to three horses. Hartnell had pleaded guilty to three counts of failing to provide adequate food and care for two adult Shetland ponies and a foal, and one count of causing unnecessary suffering to the foal. Francis pleaded guilty to one count of causing unnecessary suffering to all three animals by failing to give reasonable care and protection to them. Both were given a community order for 12 months - Christopher Hartnell for 150 hours of unpaid work and Rachel Francis 75 hours. Each was ordered to pay £1,250 towards costs estimated around £7,000 and they have also been disqualified of possessing, having in their custody or caring for horses for ten years. They were given one month to "dispose" of the animals.

Grouse Shoot Sabbing!

The 'Glorious 12th' saw the start of the Grouse shooting season, which runs through to 10th December. Located mainly in the north of the country, grouse shoots are sabbed on a regular basis during the season, and here's one report from North West Hunt Sabs (www.nwhsa.org.uk) on a recent day out...









On Saturday 15th September supporters of the NWHSA attended a grouse shoot in the Peak District to save the lives of many grouse that were due to be shot in the name of 'sport'.
A shoot was located on infamous Saddleworth Moor on the A635 just east of Holmfirth. However, whilst sabs were still on route to the moor the shoot decided to take a break for dinner. Following their dinner the shoot then relocated on another moor next to Chew Reservoir, just outside Greenfield.

Before the shoot could start their second drive of the day, sabs arrived and the shoot packed their guns away and came down off the moor. There then followed a discussion on the rights and wrongs of game bird shooting!!! The shoot then decided to call it a day.
It was also noted by the sabs that none of the moors had warning signs up to let walkers know that shooting was taking place, this is a clear breach of shooting guidelines.

WANTED

Fundraising Officer

The Hunt Saboteurs Association
has a vacancy on the committee for a Fundraising Officer,
unpaid....as are all committee positions!

If you have the skills and creativity to raise much needed funds for our activities, we need you!

We rely on a mixture of membership fees, legacies, donations and merchandise sales to keep the HSA running. We have no paid staff or offices and the committee all give their time and skills for free, most are also out in the field every week...phew!

We attend many events and fesitvals where we can have stalls to raise funds and awareness. We need someone who can manage those activities and other campaigns, ensure we are seen in all the right places to make the most of any fundraising opportunities and come up with new ones, perhaps develop a few corporate sponsors too.

If you have any experience in fundraising, think you have the necessary skills or would like more information please email - info@huntsabs.org.uk



South

Reading have been sabbing all over the place. Teaming up on occasion with **Pewsey**, **West London, South Wales** and even **Southampton**, sabs have done the Vine and Craven, the Avon Vale, the Tedworth, the Sandhurst Beagles and the Curre amongst others... Recent trips to the Vale of Aylesbury, Garth and South Berks saw blatant hunting take place in front of Thames Valley's finest. Guess who got hassled for 'interfering with a legal drag hunt?'. Nonetheless, Reading sabs will continue a mix of videoing and direct, old fashioned sabotage - if it works, use it.

North and **East London** group have been working with **Essex** and **Suffolk** group to keep tabs on the Essex and Suffolk and the Essex Farmers so far this season. We've had 2 arrests so far for aggravated trespass, but better news is the terrier boy from the Essex and Suffolk was arrested in December for assault on a sab (in front of the police) and has bail conditions preventing him from attending any hunts in Essex or Suffolk! The same week the police questioned the huntsman regarding potential illegal hunting. Seen a fair few foxes chased, but saved most of them. Regular violence from the hunts, including one occasion of the huntsman riding down a female sab and riding over her again and again. He was questioned about this, and we await police action...

Southampton sabs have been busy with the New Forest Beagles, and write this after attending a meet which would have seen the hunt blatantly hunt a hare had we not been there! They switched to a drag and packed up at 3. We have done them a few times this season. Other occasions saw them using beaters ahead of hounds but again they packed up early. We did the Sandhurst & Aldershot Beagles with **West London/Reading** who started to hunt but upon realising cameras were present packed up. A couple of visits to the New Forest Foxhounds shows them to be a shadow of their former selves although large men with threats returned, they were not a patch on the old Boys. The cops in Hampshire are actually being useful!! We've also had some midweek fun with the Cattistock. Dorset cops.... Who?

South Wales

South Wales sabs have been out every week since the Foot & Mouth restrictions were lifted in October, joining up most weeks with **Pewsey Vale** and also on occasion with **Bristol** and **Birmingham**. Hunts visited so far this season include The Berkeley, Curre and Llangibby, Tedworth, Monmouth, Avon Vale, Cotswold Vale Farmers, Ross Harriers, South Hereford and a trip to Reading to visit the Vale of Aylesbury, Garth and South Berks. Unfortunately no one seems to have informed most of our hunts that hunting has been banned so they continue on their merry way, flouting the law at every opportunity, with the occasional token drag that seems to spend most of its time behind the hounds! Consequently, although we try and use video cameras to collect evidence, most of our time has been spent on good, old fashioned sabbing.

Our opening meet, on the Curre and Llangibby, set the tone for our relationship with the police. After a complaint from the hunt, 3 sabs were arrested, for a variety of curious reasons, before being released 30 minutes later. They also confiscated all our equipment including some mobile phones and all our cameras. All equipment has now been returned, without an apology, which is presumably still in the post. Since then we've had police following us from our homes and telling us they don't like to get involved in hunting as it 'tends to inflame the situation'! Despite this unhelpful attitude from those whose job we're doing we've had an excellent season so far, directly intervening to prevent a kill on a number of occasions, particularly on the Garth where the hunt claimed they were laying a trail from the back of a quad which they had miraculously managed to squeeze under a garden shed. We've also stopped a dig out, spades and terriers flying over the hedge as we made our appearance and on one notable occasion we saw a hunt flushing a fox with seven hounds onto a penguin which we believe is legal under sub-section 96b of the ban! Got to love the law eh! Roll on 2008.

North

Cumbria and **North West** Hunt Sabs have been out on several occasions with help from **Liverpool** and sabs from the **midlands** . We have had days out against the Blencathra and Melbreak foxhounds and a day against the Cumbria beagles.The Melbreak are realising now that we won't be going away. Now they keep moving and head for the clouds in the hope that we wont go up the fells. Also the National Trust are keeping a close eye on them at the moment they are only being allowed day licences. We have had car tyres slashed at one of the Melbreak meets but we turned up a week later with a van full and kept their hounds entertained for most of the day. The Blencathra have twice been observed allowing their hounds to chase a fox to ground right in on one occasion full view of a group of fell walkers. The Blencathra are also being watched by the National Trust after a lot of complaints of illegal hunting. The day we turned up to do the Cumbria Beagles five police vans where called out by the hunt that many police has not been seen by the local hunts since the hunting act was introduced but mention that a van 'full of antis' are in the area and police budgets are forgotten. Things are on the move in Cumbria they now know we can turn up at anytime of the week which they are not happy about and we have just received for Xmas a video camera so we are ready to give them a rough time well into the spring.

Derby have been doing a lot of low key covert sabbing and monitoring this season thanks to some great information from local people, mainly at the Meynell and South Staffordshire FH and the High Peak Harriers. There was also a brief supporting visit to the Grove and Rufford FH with **Nottingham** and **Sheffield** groups. This proper sab resulted in the police actually coming out to a hunt for once - woo hoo - but probably only to monitor us - not the hunt! Due to the presence of so many sabs, the police and the Notts/Derbys police helicopter (overkill or what?) the hunt was forced to trot around the open fields quite pointlessly. This annoyed some of the drunken thuggish hunt support enough to attempt to throw a house brick at the windscreen of the moving Derby vehicle. Although rather dangerous there is a nice sort of karma end to this story as the sab driver was forced to swerve off the road and tear up the neatly manicured front lawn of the hunt meet.

During the last year **North West** HSA supporters have been keeping a close eye on Wigan council after they stated they were going allow DEFRA to cull all the Ruddy Ducks on council land. During October and November we kept up a daily vigil on a couple of lakes and stopped them shooting on one day. The sad news is that they have still managed to kill approx 50 ducks. The battle continues!!!

Since hunting resumed in October following the Foot & Mouth restrictions sabs from the North West have been attending meets of the High Peak Hunt and the Forest and District Beagles (F&D). We have also been up to **Cumbria** few times to help fellow sabs up there. One interesting day was on New Years days when 5 sabs were present at the kennel meet of the F&D. During the day the pack of beagles managed to chase a hare, a rabbit and even a deer, needless to say all escaped thanks to the intervention of the sabs who were on the spot to save them. Earlier on in the day whilst in the fields the huntsman claimed they were only hunting rabbits and pheasants!!!! Just how do you hunt pheasants...?

HOW YOU CAN HELP END BLOODSPORTS

The Hunt Saboteurs Association needs your help in defeating bloodsports.

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

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

There are several ways you can help the HSA.

- Get in touch with your local sab group (details from the office) and either go sabbing yourself or help in other ways such as fundraising or mechanics.
- If you are not already a member of the HSA, please join now by using the form below - it only takes a few minutes to fill in and return to us.
- If you are already a HSA member then please photocopy the form and pass it on to someone else you think may like to join us.
- Ask the office for back copies of HOWL to leave in places where they can be read by members of the public (ie. doctors waiting rooms). If you are still at school or college why not leave a copy in the library reference section?
- Support us by buying HSA T-shirts and other merchandise. Phone the office if you don't already have a salesgoods order form.
- Let the hunters know what you think! Write to your local newspaper's letters page and write to your MP to let them know your views on Government plans either regarding hunting or hunt saboteurs. Your MP's address will be House of Commons, London SW1A 0AA



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*)

❒ £7.50 unwaged ❒ £10 waged ❒ £100 life membership

❒ I enclose a donation of £..... to help fund the H.S.A.'s work

Name (Ms / Mrs / Miss / Mr) .....

Address .....

.....

..... Postcode .....

Telephone Number.....

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 phone Tel. 0845 450 0727

USEFUL ADDRESSES

A.L.F. Press Office
BM 4400, London, WC1N 3XX
01623 746470 alfpressoffice@yahoo.com

ALF Supporters Group
BM 1160, London, WC1N 3XX
www.alfsg.org.uk

Animal Rights Coalition
PO Box 339, Wolverhampton, WV10 7BZ
0845 458 0146 www.arcnews.redblackandgreen.net

Arkangel magazine
BM 9240, London, WC1N 3XX
arkangel@arkangelweb.org www.arkangelweb.org

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

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

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

The Fox Project
The Southborough Centre, Draper Street, Southborough,
Tunbridge Wells, TN4 0PG 01892 545468 (Head Office)
01892 514863 (Pre-recorded advice line)
fox@foxproject.org.uk www.foxproject.org.uk

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

League Against Cruel Sports (LACS)
Sparling House, 83-87 Union Street, London, SE1 1SG
0845 330 8486 info@league.org.uk www.league.org.uk

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

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

Pisces – The Anti-Angling Group
BM Fish, London, WC1N 3XX
01792 464176 pisces@pisces.demon.co.uk
www.pisces.demon.co.uk

SchNEWS
PO Box 2600, Brighton, BN2 0EF
01273 685913 schnews@brighton.co.uk www.schnews.org.uk

Sea Shepherd
BCM Bass, London, WC1N 3XX
uk@seashepherd.org www.seashepherd.org

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

Stop DEathFra Badger Killers
www.badger-killers.co.uk

Stop Huntingdon Animal Cruelty (SHAC)
C/o FRIEND, 89 Bush Road, East Peckham, Tonbridge, TN12 5LJ
info@shac.net www.shac.net

Vegan Prisoner Support Group (VPSG)
BM 2107, London, WC1N 3XX
020 8292 8325 info@vpsg.org www.vpsg.org

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

HSA PROMOTIONALS





Full colour A5 'It ain't over 'til it's over' leaflet. Explains what sabs do post-ban and why we're needed more than ever to protect wildlife from the hunters.

'It ain't over 'til it's over'
FREE (+p&p +DONATION)



'How to sab game shooting' leaflet giving a brief outline of how a shoot operates and how it can be sabbed with well researched arguments against it.

Per 1000 'And How to Stop It' leaflets
£10 plus p+p **NOW HALF PRICE!**

Striking 'Anti' stickers - Stick these on your own property and nowhere else. (clearly unsuitable for lamposts, hunt supporters cars, etc as this would be illegal! Also wholly unsuitable for plastering over the statistically absurd '59% say keep hunting' posters)
FREE! (+p&p+DONATION)



POSTAGE AND PACKING

To keep promotional material free we would ask you to make a donation to at least cover postage. To help you donate, 1 Howl costs 55p to send as do 5 posters. 250 leaflets cost approx. £3.75, 500 leaflets £4.25 and 1000 leaflets £6.25.

BACK ISSUES OF HOWL

Single back issues 50p each
Bulk orders: 10 + issues **FREE!** (+p&p)

You can order more copies of this Howl for £1.50 per copy (+p&p).

You can also affiliate to the HSA for £30 for 4 issues of Howl. Affiliated groups will receive 10 copies of each Howl in the course of their subscription. (The cost of affiliation includes postage)

NB: **All sab groups receive a discount of 20% when ordering (cost price)** Please quote the name of your group contact when ordering.



Caption Competition!



Thinking caps on people! What could these two delightful chaps be saying to each other...?
Best caption wins a t-shirt (please state type and size with entry).
Entries by email to the usual howleditor@huntsabs.org.uk address.

EW NEW NEW NEW NEW NEW NEW NEW NEW NEW NEW NEW NEW

still hunting the hunters

all **new** HSA T-shirts, Polo shirts & bags





back print





back print

see inside front for all merchandise and how to order

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