Direct Action Against All Bloodsports

Winter
2008/9

HOWL 91

The Magazine of The Hunt Saboteurs Association

NATIONAL & LEGAL NEWS | POWA | HSA POSITION ON THE ACT | BAD HARE DAYS | OTIS THE LUCKY FOX | LOCAL GROUP NEWS



OTIS THE FOX, SAVED BY HUNT SABOTEURS



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HOWL 91

Cover image Ledbury fox

Magazine of the Hunt Saboteurs Association
BM HSA, London WC1N 3 XX Tel. 0845 450 0727
Howl e-mail: howleditor@huntsabs.org.uk
HSA e-mail: info@huntsabs.org.uk
website: www.huntsabs.org.uk

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: Mel
Contributors: POWA, Nath, South Wales sabs, All groups who sent in group news
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The views express in Howl do not necessarily reflect those of the editor(s) or the Hunt Saboteurs Association Committee. Nothing printed should be construed as HSA policy unless so stated. Nothing in Howl should be taken as encouragement to commit illegal acts. Printed on recycled material, using vegetable inks.

EDITORIAL

The first half of this foxhunting season has seen some great success for hunt saboteurs (check out the story of Otis the fox). Boxing Day saw a lot of hype from foxhunts about how numbers are growing. Even with efforts being made to drag all of their supporters out of bed and into the cold to boost their numbers, figures weren't as high as they tried to make out. Boxing Day is more of a social/media event rather than a gathering of keen hunters and does not reflect the amount of regular supporters that they have.

There is a lot of talk in this issue about strengthening of the act which obviously could have huge advantages for sabs and monitors. Groups such as POWA are doing a fab job towards making this happen. Sadly this doesn't help foxes/hares that are being hunted now, that is down to us as hunt sabs. Otis the fox knows nothing about laws and different opinions on how to use the Act. All he knows is that he was literally in the jaws of death and someone saved him. A local group of sabs with few resources and no support from police or MPs saved his life and now he is back in the wild doing his thing.

Strengthening the act is unlikely to make the police enforce it. It will still be down to us to put pressure on these barbaric arrogant fools with knuckle dragging thuggish supporters and uniformed puppets trotting at their heels. Assault and criminal damage as I understand it have been against the law for some time, yet already this season there have been several incidents of cops refusing to take action following vicious attacks on sabs by hunt thugs. Police, like the hunts, have blatant disregard for the law to the point where not upsetting their buddies in the hunt is more important than preventing unprovoked, violent attacks on people. The police know that we are not violent, that we don't start trouble and that we are there because we are opposed to violence, yet still we are treated with suspicion, prejudice and hostility (there is of course the odd exceptional officer). Shame on you coppers, especially those in Wiltshire.....

Mel

PS: HOWL magazine tries to represent all hunt saboteurs, so feedback on what you think of it is always greatly appreciated. Any thoughts on which bits you like or don't like, and anything you would like to see included, just email to the howl editor address.

PPS: if you move please don't forget to tell us, we can keep sending you your magazine and save postage on returned envelopes too. Ta

NEWS ROUND UP

GREY SQUIRRELS UNDER ATTACK



photo courtesy of Ragtags@dreamstime

Part-funded by a DEFRA grant, the Red Squirrel Protection Partnership (http://www.rspp.org.uk/) is an organisation recently formed to effect the annihilation of grey squirrels in Northumbria, and, the chairman Lord Redesdale hopes, eventually throughout the UK, even south as far as London. "Hampstead Heath, the parks. Hit them in their own backyard." Rupert Mitford, 6th Baron Redesdale, is not a nice man ("I lie awake working out how to kill squirrels") but is the Liberal Democrat spokesman for the environment in the House of Lords. He and Paul Parker, a pest controller ("I shoot them in the back of the head"), together with an army of equally disgusting volunteers, devote their time to the wholesale slaughter of greys (they estimate 19,500 grey squirrels in the past 18 months) in a misguided attempt to help the reds. "We are like the fourth emergency service," he says. Do make sure you help them out and phone 07890 600243 to report a sighting of a grey squirrel.

RSPCA SAYS LITTER LOUTS ARE KILLING WILDLIFE

West Midlands RSPCA has asked people to stop dropping litter and discarding fishing line and hooks as wild birds and animals are suffering and dying as a consequence. Recent casualties have included a dead coot caught in fishing line, a duck which had fishing line wrapped around its body and leg and a baby hedgehog stuck in the wire from a champagne cork. In the 10 months to October 2008, the regional RSPCA received 970 calls about water birds affected by litter, 737 of which had been injured by angling litter. Another 185 calls were received about wild birds which were in danger due to litter and 67 calls about injured wild mammals. Many of the animals rescued end up at Stapeley Grange Wildlife Centre in Nantwich where they are treated and returned to the wild. Manager at Stapeley, Dr. Andrew Kelly, said: "Over a three-year period we admitted almost 1,500 swans of which 300 had been hurt by fishing tackle. Many of these required surgical intervention to remove hooks from their mouths or throats." Without treatment, they would have likely starved to death. In addition, 75% of swans had excess lead in their blood as a result of ingesting lost and discarded lead fishing. "Lead makes the birds very ill and can result in sickness, lethargy and death." Animal collection officer Boris Lasserre said: "People are clearly ignoring 'no fishing' signs and fishing in prohibited areas". Anyone who spots an injured wild animal or bird in the region should call the RSPCA on 0300 1234 999.

'STINK' ATTACK ON JAPANESE WHALERS

Sea Shepherd say that crew on one of its ships, the Steve Irvin, have thrown "stink" bombs - 10 bottles of rotten butter and 15 bottles of a methyl cellulose - at Japanese whaling ship the Kaiko Maru in the Antarctic. "That is one stinky slippery ship," Sea Shepherd's official Peter Hammarstedt said. Japanese officials say that no-one was hurt during the incident north of Mawson Peninsular, Australian Antarctic Territory, and that the ship was on a research expedition.

Opponents say this could be a cover for banned commercial whaling. Sea Shepherd said its objective was to keep them moving eastward out of Australian Territorial waters. It said that the fleet had not been able to kill any whales during the chase. Japan says its research expeditions do not violate a moratorium on commercial whaling adopted by the International Whaling Commission in 1986.



photo courtesy of sea shepherd

TEENAGER DIES FROM GUNSHOT WOUND AT NORTHANTS HUNT KENNELS

Jack Burgess was working at the Grafton Hunt kennels, near Towcester, when the incident happened. Police called to the scene said they were not treating the death as suspicious, and that a report was being prepared for the coroner who will open an inquest. A pony club meet was cancelled.

SUPERMARKETS PUSH GAME SALES

The big supermarket chains are looking to expand their sales of game over the next few years. M&S recently launched a new range of five prepared game dishes, and Waitrose and Sainsbury's already sell such delights as game casserole and venison burgers. Apparently, one of the main factors holding back the expansion is customers' perceived ignorance about how to handle or cook the meat, so in the new M&S range "we've done all the hard work" says M&S Meat Expert Win Merrells. "The pheasant is part de-boned then hand-stuffed."

Market research company Mintel says that game is eaten most by affluent middle-aged consumers between 45 and 64, but also appeals to a "wilder young generation", and could appeal to people in their 20s and 30s if marketing focused on its healthiness. They also suggest that a large tray of mixed game birds would provide a "sophisticated and interesting variation" for dinner parties or Sunday lunch.

LABOUR MP SHOOTS PHEASANTS

Labour backbench spokesman on shooting and fishing, Martin Salter MP (Reading West), recently proudly shot his first brace of pheasants "in the beautiful Berkshire countryside". Salter was accompanied by BASC crony TV chef Mike Robinson. Salter also offered his support to the recent National Taste of Game week and highlighted the importance of the link between game shooting and game as food: apparently "shooting live quarry is totally justified as the products end up on the table or in the shops as food." It seems so clear now.



OXFORD TORTURE LAB OFFICIALLY OPENS

Oxford University officially stated on 11th November 2008, that its new animal torture lab is complete and that animals are in the process of being moved in. According to the University it will be fully operational by the middle of 2009, although of course it should always be remembered that Oxford has been proved to have lied consistently about this building and its use.

The opening of the lab has made SPEAK more determined than ever to continue campaigning against the horrific animal abuse carried out by this institution.

Oxford University is responsible for the suffering and death of thousands of animals; animals like Felix the macaque monkey, who after the University's researchers had trained him to perform tasks, by depriving him of food and water, had the top of his head sliced off and electrodes forced into his brain; animals like the nine macaque monkeys used in one experiment where they were brain damaged and then had rubber snakes waved in their faces, after which the researchers made a tacit admission about the lack of relevance of their own research. SPEAK succeeded in delaying the opening of the lab for over three years and, indeed, it was only completed because the Government stepped in and would not let it fail. The costs have spiralled out of control by millions of pounds, with no end in sight of this overspending. It has placed the subject of vivisection into the forefront of peoples' minds and has made it very clear to anyone else considering building any other such labs in the UK just how difficult that would be.

The animals now entering this hellhole have no-one to speak for them, or fight for them, but SPEAK and campaigners will continue the battle against the horrific suffering inflicted upon them in barbaric experiments until vivisection is consigned to the dustbin of history, where it belongs. SPEAK is not fighting for welfare improvements or more 'humane' treatment but legal rights for and an elevation of the moral status of animals. Most animal abusers would profess to care for the welfare of animals who suffer at their hands in order to attempt to make their abuse more palatable to the public and no matter how large the cages in a lab, the animals inside still suffer psychologically and physically and have no control over their own lives. Their exploitation must be abolished, not merely regulated; this is the only way we will achieve real change for the animals.

GAMEKEEPER MURDERED OUTSIDE HOME

Police have carried out an extensive forensic search after a 50-year-old gamekeeper was murdered in north Nottinghamshire. Nigel Bacon, also known as Neil, died after being stabbed. He was found outside his cottage, Normanton Larches near Clumber Park, and later died at Bassetlaw District General Hospital.
A post-mortem examination showed that he died of stab wounds to his upper body. An incident room was set up following his death.

BOXING DAY BRUTALITY



The usual media hype followed 'traditional' hunt meets around the country on Boxing Day.
The countryside alliance claimed that more than 300 hunts, including 194 fox hunts with packs of hounds, took place across England, Wales and Scotland.
Pro-hunt campaigners claim that the Act which came into force on February 18, 2005 is "confusing" and should be scrapped but stupidity surely should not be a defence in the eyes of the law.
As HSA Spokesperson Lee Moon told press: "If the public and Parliament knew what was really going on in the countryside they would be shocked. It's hunting as usual, with hundreds of foxes and hares being tortured and killed in the name of sport every week. Nothing has changed.
We've given the Hunting Act a fair crack of the whip, but it's not stopping the killing. Hunt saboteurs are needed up and down the country to save lives, and to stop the hunters torturing our wildlife.
We are calling for the ban to be strengthened: with the loopholes removed, and a recklessness clause to be added – currently hunts can put their hounds into areas where they know wild animals are likely to be, and when chased and killed, hunts claim it was an "accident".
The Hunt Saboteurs Association is a non-violent direct action organisation which has been dedicated to getting between the hunters and their quarry for over 40 years, and we know better than anyone what illegal hunting looks like – it just seems that no-one else seems to care.
Michael Howard's Criminal Justice Act attempted to retire us by making our activities illegal, and the Hunting Act was supposed to remove the need for our existence – it seems however that the politicians are incapable of putting us out to pasture..."

CONSERVATIONIST HITS OUT AT DUCK CULL



photo courtesy of David632@dreamstime

Darren Matthews, a member of Netherfield Wildlife Group who is studying countryside management at Brackenhurst College, spoke out recently against the DEFRA-controlled cull of North American ruddy ducks. DEFRA says the cull is required because the ruddy duck has been proven to breed with the globally-threatened white-headed duck in Spain, but Mr Matthews, who also records bird for Notts Bird Watchers, claimed the slaughter was being carried out on a "scientifically-flawed" premise (badger cull, anyone?).
"The evidence that the ruddy duck from the UK is migrating to Spain and causing the decline of the white-headed duck is not fully proven. As a conservationist I have to ask why this very costly cull is still going on when the scientific evidence does not match the argument for the cull?" A DEFRA spokesperson said that the white-headed duck in Spain "is under the threat of extinction because of the presence of the ruddy duck, which can hybridise with it. There is a European programme to eradicate the ruddy duck. On behalf of DEFRA, the Central Science Laboratory has been carrying out control measures across the UK since late 2005 at more than 80 sites."

STAG ESCAPES FROM COUNTY MEATH HUNT BY SWIMMING RIVER BOYNE

Christy Reynolds of the Ward Union Hunt said that its heavily-licensed stag hunt in Co Meath was successful, with the stag eventually escaping by swimming across the river Boyne. A pack of hounds plus some 50 riders and Ward Union staff participated in the chase. Two members from the National Parks and Wildlife Service and a veterinary surgeon were also in attendance to monitor the hunt. The only remaining stag hunt in Ireland, the Ward Union has been the subject of much controversy in recent years and has clashed with Minister for the Environment John Gormley over its licence, mounting a High Court challenge last February to what it claimed were over-restrictive terms. The licence under which the hunt currently operates was granted by Mr Gormley in September. In all there are 34 conditions attached, included to protect the stag from undue stress. One stipulation requires the deer to travel for a distance of at least two kilometres, or for a time span of 30 minutes, before hounds are released. In addition, the deer must not be confronted with the hounds at close quarters, and the hunt is required to withdraw to a distance of at least 150m in those instances. In 2006, the Ward Union Hunt caused controversy, when a stag chased by hounds jumped into a primary school in Kildalkey and scared children.

HARBOUR SEAL NUMBERS IN DECLINE

Harbour seals, or common seals, recently familiar faces along many coastlines in the northern hemisphere, are now vanishing in the UK at an alarming rate, warn scientists from St Andrews University. In the hardest hit area, the Orkney Islands, numbers have halved since 2001, and if the decline continues there will soon be "no harbour seals left" in some areas, said Professor Ian Boyd of the Sea Mammal Research Unit. Marine biologists are baffled by the disappearances and are starting to investigate possible causes, including disease and illegal hunting.

ABATTOIR GOES INTO ADMINISTRATION

Cig Cibyn, an abattoir in Caernarfon, Gwynedd, has gone into administration, shortly after laying off 50 workers. Farmers' unions claim some of their members are owed thousands of pounds.
The assembly government was criticised for not offering financial help, but it said rules did not permit it to intervene in every circumstance. The company had wanted the assembly government to provide a short term loan to help with cash flow problems. Since opening in January 2007, Cig Cibn has had many problems including a month's closure in August 2007 because of a foot-and-mouth outbreak in Surrey, and a further month's closure when all exports to Europe were banned. In addition to these problems the abattoir now had to face the current financial situation.



EQUANIMAL SABOTAGE SHOOTS

Spanish animal rights group, Equanimal have sabotaged a number of shoots in the region of Rodeiro (Pontevedra). As well as saving lives they aim to raise awareness to the public that hunting is legalised murder. Despite being a small group against a large number of hunters, many lives were saved and Equanimal have vowed to coordinate sabotaging these shoots in every area that they have volunteers.

ELEPHANTS IN CAPTIVITY DIE YOUNG



photo courtesy of carolyne@dreamstime

Zoos claims to be "arks" for endangered species have been dealt a blow by research that shows their elephants die younger than those in the wild. And elephants born in captivity – as opposed to being caught in the wild for zoos – have the shortest life-spans of all, according to the study, one of the first into the health and wellbeing of captive elephants. The findings will contradict those institutions that have rebranded themselves in recent years as vital reserves for saving some of the most endangered animals from extinction through captive-breeding programmes.
A comparison of thousands of elephants kept in zoos and living wild in national parks has produced the first, unequivocal scientific evidence that keeping elephants in captivity not only damages their individual health but harms their reproductive potential. The scientists behind the research have concluded that the existing population of captive elephants in the world is not self-sustaining, as some zoos claim, but is reliant on the continued capture of wild elephants to replenish numbers in captivity. In a hard-hitting analysis, the researchers have called for an end to the capture and import of wild elephants from their native countries, a ban on non-essential transfer of elephants from one zoo to another and restrictions on the breeding of elephants in captivity to include only those zoos that can demonstrate good husbandry and welfare.
The findings from the study, published in the journal Science, will make difficult reading for zoos in Britain and the rest of Europe and the United States because they could indicate a wider problem with other captive animals, such as rhinos and large carnivores. Georgia Mason of the University of Guelph, who led the study, said there has been little research into the welfare of zoo elephants. That is despite long-standing concerns that they suffer behavioural problems in captivity, such as pacing up and down and infanticide, as well as obvious physical signs of stress, such as lameness. "There have been suggestions that zoo elephants have quite short life spans compared to elephants in the wild and, furthermore, the zoo populations, particularly in the US, consume rather than produce elephants, so that the populations are not self-sustaining," Dr Mason said. The study compared mortality information on more than 4,500 African and Asian female elephants kept in zoos and living in the wild, either – in the case of the African species – in Amboseli national park in Kenya, or – in the case of the Asian elephant – in the Myanmar Timber Enterprise of Burma. "In African elephants, zoo animals die earlier in adulthood than they do in Amboseli. In zoos, they are much less likely to make it into their thirties or forties and it seems that none has made it into their fifties so far," Dr Mason said.

FAWC GAME BIRD REPORT



Animal welfare rules are to be tightened after an official investigation found evidence of mass cruelty in the raising of game birds shot by blood-sports enthusiasts in Britain.
In the first official inquiry into the secret world of pheasant and partridge farms, the Farm Animal Welfare Council (FAWC) found the birds were confined to small mesh cages with plastic "bits" stuck in their mouths to stop them cannibalising each other. The FAWC expressed concern about the routine use of restraint and anti-aggression devices, calling for a ban on "spectacles" that limit the birds' vision and research into "bumpa-bits" – mask-like contraptions that cover much of their faces. The body, which makes recommendations on farm standards, also called for a ban on beak-trimming.

The FAWC said that, unless conditions for the birds improved, the Government should introduce legislation to clean up the industry. Hunting associations acknowledged the industry needed reform. The Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs said it would await a £340,000 research project into bits and spectacles before a working party drew up a code of conduct for game farming. It commissioned FAWC to research the £1bn-a-year game industry after undercover investigations by animal welfare campaigners raised concerns.

The research could dent the public image of game, which is being promoted as a healthy and sustainable source of meat. A minority of shot birds are sold to shops, although demand is rising and Marks & Spencer launched a range of partridge and pheasant meals earlier this month.
At the moment, game birds are not classed as farm animals and so are not inspected by the Government's Animal Welfare unit. Unlike grouse, pheasants and partridges are intensively reared before being released weeks before the hunting season opens. Hunters shoot the birds when they are encouraged to fly overhead by beaters in the winter; from 1 September for partridges and from 1 October for pheasants, until 1 February. They pay between £1,000 and £2,000 a day. The birds can be kept in cages for up to three years, but others are released within months of their birth and either eaten by predators such as foxes, run over or shot. After taking evidence from the animal groups, vets, gamekeepers and hunting associations, the FAWC said all commercial systems used for raising partridges and pheasants had the potential to be cruel to the animals.
"In terms of systems, FAWC is particularly concerned about the development of raised cages for breeding pheasants and the long-term use of small raised cages for partridges in pairs," the report said. "Birds were kept in a barren environment on wire floors, with minimal opportunity for seclusion. Design appeared to be influenced more by cost and manufacturing requirements than the bird's welfare."
The Game Farmers' Association said the report was the "first proper independent look" at game rearing practice, adding: "We accept all 16 recommendations made in this opinion."

Andrew Tyler, director of Animal Aid, said: "Most people in this country are revolted by the idea that ... millions of birds are factory farmed every year so that they can serve as feathered targets for wealthy shooters. They would be even more disgusted to learn that hundreds of thousands of breeding pheasants and partridges are confined ... in oppressive metal battery cages."

PRINCE CHARLES FILMED SHOOTING PHEASANTS AT SANDRINGHAM



Although royal watchers say he tries to preserve his "green" image by avoiding being seen with a gun, Charles was recently caught on film shooting pheasants on the Sandringham estate accompanied by buddies Nicholas ('Fatty') Soames and King Constantine of Greece. An onlooker said that "as soon as Charles realised there was a photographer around, he walked behind a hedge." Animal Aid director Andrew Tyler said: "The heir to the throne needs to demonstrate he cares genuinely about nature and should lay down his guns for good."

MEMBER OF THE BEAUFORT HUNT KILLED

Farmer David Hall, 73, came off his horse in what has been described as a "freak accident" at Westonbirt, near Tetbury, Gloucestershire around 1pm on December 27. Immediately after the tragedy the hunt was called off and the hounds were returned to the kennels as a mark of respect for Mr Hall, who was enjoying his 65th season with the Duke of Beaufort Hunt. Hunt secretary Nigel Maidment said: "As I understand it David took his horse into a fence and it stopped, he was catapulted out of the saddle and broke his neck. He died instantly".

Country Life Magazine Calls For Cull of Deer



The magazine's deputy editor, Rupert Uloth, said that in order to protect woodland deer should be culled by 30%. "They are wonderful animals and very much part of the British wildlife scene but like a lot of things in England they need to be managed."
Showing an enviable grasp of biology, he went on to say that "we really need to be culling the females because that's where the increase is coming from," and added that people should do their bit to help by eating more venison. Urban deer are also causing havoc. David Hooton, East of England liaison officer for The Deer Initiative, said that "A number of allotment holders call to say deer are eating their crops". His response? "I tell them to put a fence around it."

National Trust Slaughter Goats

A row has broken out between an animal charity and the National Trust over the cull of wild goats in Snowdonia. It is believed more than 100 goats have been killed at various sites in Snowdonia in the most recent culling.
The park authorities claim numbers have spiralled out of control and accuse the goats of marauding through gardens, eating tree saplings, knocking down walls and even causing road accidents. But animal charities claim the creatures are convenient scapegoats, blamed for damage caused by sheep, horses, rabbits and humans. They argue the National Trust could use fences to contain them, but have rejected the measure because of the cost.

Wild goats with long coats and curved horns are thought to have roamed the hills of North Wales since the last ice age nearly 10,000 years ago. Their numbers are thought to have increased since winters in the remote landscape became milder, meaning more kids survive. A spokesperson for the National Trust said the goat population has risen from 166 to 450 in a decade.
Culling started two years ago when about 50 goats were killed at sites near Beddgelert, Harlech and Llanberis. A further cull was carried out last year, and more than 200 goats are believed to have been culled in total.

The Countryside Council for Wales, Snowdonia National Park Authority and the local council have all agreed that culling the goats using qualified and experienced marksmen was "appropriate and humane", said the National Trust spokesperson. But the charity Animal Aid accused the trust of rejecting the more humane method of fencing off areas of land as being too costly.
Spokesperson Kate Fowler-Reeves said: "Goats are accused of damage to the land and to shrubs which may actually be caused by other animals – including humans. The culling of animals is not only cruel but also ineffective.
"It amounts to nothing more than a short-term stop-gap, and species' populations invariably soon return to their previous numbers. This is not the first time the National Trust has been criticised for killing wild goats. It will find itself increasingly in the spotlight over this issue, especially if it is not seen to be making enough of an effort to deal with the situation humanely."

New Forest Hounds Cock-up



This appeared on the New Forest Hounds website after a Southampton sab's tyres were slashed. "On Saturday 29th November 2008 three tyres on a car belonging to some anti hunting people were slashed while the car was parked in Yew Tree Heath car park. It is not known who was responsible for the damage, but the Chairman, Masters and Executive Committee of the New Forest Hounds totally condemn such actions and would like to make it clear that we will never condone such behaviour towards our opponents.
We now have to prepare for the consequences of this mindless act of vandalism which can only distract from the difficult job of providing good day's sport whilst operating within the law. We would like to make it clear that the perpetrators of the crime would not be welcome at any New Forest Hounds meets or social functions. Mike Squibb - Chairman"

Making the Act more POWA-ful

It was apparent to all experienced campaigners, right from the word go, that the wording of the Hunting Act was almost certainly inadequate. Hunt monitors and saboteurs are the people best placed to judge these things, having been exposed to the behaviour of the hunters at first hand. We understand the ruthless attitude of these people, and the obsessive nature of their determination to continue to treat our wildlife as nothing more than essential adjuncts to their recreational sport. It is understandable that Members of Parliament would see things in a less stark light, and the Act was worded in good faith. I can remember saying in an interview immediately after the Act came into force that one of two things would now happen. Either the Act would prove to be enforceable, and the police and CPS would enforce it in the way Parliament intended, or if this proved not to be possible, the law would have to be tightened.

Protect Our Wild Animals has worked constantly with the police and the Crown Prosecution Service to encourage enforcement of the Act, explaining to them the extent of lawbreaking which is taking place, and supporting our claims with graphic film. It has become obvious that even when the authorities are willing to take action, they see the issue of "intent" as a constant problem in taking forward prosecutions. Every time hunts are caught chasing a fox or a hare, they claim this was an "accident" which took place in the course of a trail hunt. As they continue to get away with this palpable nonsense, this one-size-fits-all excuse, so their arrogance and defiance is fed, and the danger to the monitors valiantly trying to film their activities is increased.

POWA is convinced that the Act must now be strengthened, in the ways outlined below, and we have been pleased to find that MPs are open to our message, and seem willing to take this matter forward. We are very grateful to John McDonnell MP, whose Early Day Motion calling on the Government to strengthen the Act, has been signed by over 70 MPs at the time of writing. This is significant progress, and the momentum is now building for the Act to be amended at the earliest possible opportunity. This is the logical and common sense next step in the agonisingly slow process of achieving protection for wild animals from those who do them such terrible and devastating harm.

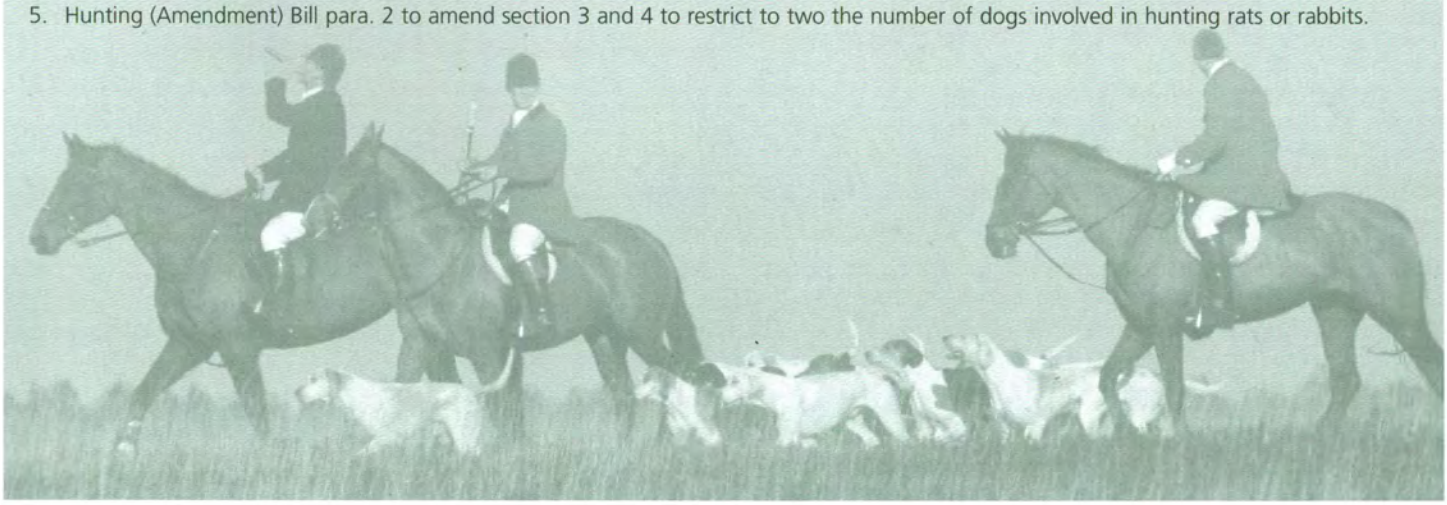


Hunting (Amendment) Bill – at a glance guide

Priority	Current omission	Current effect	Necessary solution
1	No 'reckless' clause	Hunts can send their dogs into areas where they know or ought to know wild mammals will be found but avoid attempts at prosecution by claiming any resulting offences were 'accidents'	Add a 'reckless' clause i.e. make it an offence to 'cause or permit a dog(s) to chase, attack, injure or kill a wild mammal' during the course of a simulated hunt using dogs
2	No limit on the number of dogs that can be used to flush wild animals to a bird of prey	Fox hunters can enter a whole pack of hounds into a wood or covert, an essential part of cub hunting, but avoid attempts at prosecution by claiming to be flushing to a bird of prey	Restrict the number of dogs to two
3	No limit on the number of dogs which can be used to retrieve an injured hare	Hare hunters can allow an entire pack of beagles/hounds to chase/hunt a hare but avoid attempts at prosecution by claiming they were retrieving an injured hare	Restrict the number of dogs to two
4	No 'Code of Conduct' to restrict activities of terrier men who accompany hunts	Terrier men hide behind the 'gamekeeper's exemption' when found digging to foxes which have gone to earth during hunts where full packs of hounds are in use	The Secretary of State to issue a 'Code of Conduct' to clarify that terrier-work cannot be used in conjunction with any sport involving the use of more than two dogs
5	No limit on the number of dogs which can be used to hunt rats and rabbits	Mink/Hare hunters can allow an entire pack of beagles/hounds to chase/hunt a mink/hare but avoid attempts at prosecution by claiming they were hunting rats and rabbits	Restrict the number of dogs to two

Summary of Amendments in order of priority

1. Hunting (Amendment) Bill para. 1 to create an offence of reckless use of dogs.
2. Hunting (Amendment) Bill para. 2 to amend section 6 of the Act to restrict to two the number of dogs involved in flushing wild mammals for the purpose of falconry.
3. Hunting (Amendment) Bill para. 2 to amend section 5 of the Act to restrict to two the number of dogs involved in retrieving a shot hare.
4. The Secretary of State to issue a 'code of practice' under the Hunting Act 2004, Schedule 1, section 2 (5) (e) to the effect that the exemption that permits the 'Use of a dog below ground to protect birds for shooting' may be used either in isolation, or in conjunction with Schedule 1 para. 1 (Stalking & flushing out), but cannot be used in conjunction with any sport involving the use of more than two dogs.
5. Hunting (Amendment) Bill para. 2 to amend section 3 and 4 to restrict to two the number of dogs involved in hunting rats or rabbits.



Legal News

COPS' ANIMAL CRUELTY

North Wales PCs sentenced for kicking pet dogs

Two police officers have been given community sentence orders after being filmed kicking and throwing their pet dogs around their back yard. Anja Mason, 29, and Craig Macleod, 24, were filmed by a neighbour at a house in Prestatyn. They admitted causing suffering to the dogs and were also banned from keeping animals for five years. Mason and Macleod received sentences of 120 and 180 hours respectively, and both were ordered to pay £1,267 in costs.

Magistrates found no mitigating factors for the actions of Macleod and Mason. North Wales Police have removed both officers from frontline duties, and warned they will lose their jobs. The court hearing was told a neighbour had been concerned about the ill-treatment of dogs at the property and called the RSPCA on several occasions. However, when an RSPCA inspector found no evidence of cruelty, the enterprising neighbour bought camera equipment and positioned it overlooking the couple's yard. A DVD of some of the footage, about 15-20 minutes in length, was played to the court. In one scene Mason was filmed hitting the pup's head and kicking her. In another, the rottweiler can be heard yelping as it is apparently abused by Macleod off camera. The court heard the DVD had been viewed by a vet who concluded "the actions were not those of a reasonably competent and humane carer".

Both dogs were signed over to the RSPCA by their owners and are now doing well.

Valuable beagles stolen from Ireland's oldest beagle club



Seven valuable beagles have been stolen from Ireland's oldest foot beagle club, Riverstown, in County Cork. Gardai have been called in to investigate the theft and the club has appealed to other sports bodies and to the public for help in tracing the hounds. Club spokesperson Noel Lambe believes the beagles, valued at around 400 each, were stolen to order. "The thieves seemed to know exactly which hounds to take and which ones to leave behind. The bitches were probably stolen for breeding, while the dogs could be sold on for hunting." Mr. Lambe hopes that "the distinctive look" of some of the beagles will help them to be recovered. "One of the bitches is pure black, which is very unusual for the breed. Another bitch also has distinctive colouring and has a piece missing from one of her ears." Riverstown is having the remainder of its pack specially marked as a security precaution, and they are also being moved to a more secure location.

Otis Ferry freed

After four months in prison and four unsuccessful bail applications, Otis has finally been released from HMP Gloucester where he was on remand awaiting trial for assault, robbery and two counts of perverting the course of justice. It's claimed he robbed and assaulted a hunt monitor whilst riding with the Heythrop Hunt last year, and then also "nobbled" a witness. Judge Martin Picton agreed to free him after being told his trial cannot proceed on its scheduled date of March 9 and may be delayed until autumn. Ferry's mother, former model Lucy Birley, provided the £25,000 surety, and his conditional bail restrictions require him to stay at her London home. Ferry must also not make contact with prosecution witnesses, must stay in the country, and must also report to Kensington police station twice a week. He returns to court on March 9th for a pre-trial hearing.



In related news, another person has also recently been arrested by police investigating allegations against Ferry. The 29-year-old man from Caynham, near Ludlow, was arrested on suspicion of perverting the course of justice. He has been bailed to report to Gloucestershire police later this month. The latest arrest brings the tally to four: Ferry's girlfriend Francessca Nimmo and Countryside Alliance official Adrian Simpson have previously been arrested on suspicion of perverting the course of justice.

'Illegal threat' to hen harriers, warns Natural England

Conservation watchdog Natural England says that hen harriers are nearing extinction in England owing to illegal persecution in areas managed for rearing game birds. They reported that hen harriers were particularly at risk in areas managed for rearing red grouse or game-birds, and just 26% of breeding pairs on red grouse moors managed to produce fledged chicks. In the last year, six birds fitted with satellite transmitters have disappeared from the parts of the north Pennines managed as driven grouse moors. Natural England chairman Sir Martin Doughty said: "The hen harrier has unfortunately become the emblem of man's callous disregard for the spectacular and majestic wildlife that we have in England. Following seven years of intensive monitoring and detailed research, the picture is unequivocal - hen harriers are being persecuted while they attempt to nest and birds are simply not returning to their breeding areas the following spring."

Since the 2002 start of a hen harrier recovery project in England, only a small area in Bowland, Lancashire, where Natural England and the RSPB work with private landowners and gamekeepers, has seen an increase in numbers. "The hen harrier should have a much wider range than it does, which begs the question why its breeding success is now restricted to one regular site," said Mr. Doughty. "The simple answer is that this magnificent bird is being persecuted to the brink of extinction as a breeding species in England."

RSPB director of conservation Mark Avery made a useful contribution: "The majority of those involved in shooting are decent, law-abiding people. This report puts the onus on them to root out those bad apples prepared to break the law and drag the good name of shooting through the mud."

The hen harrier became extinct in the UK in Victorian times, but was in Scotland between the wars. There are now 630 breeding pairs in Scotland, but despite a return to England in the 1970s, numbers there remain low.



photo courtesy of Achilles@dreamstime

HSA position on strengthening the Act



As the law stands this is still legal if it is an "accident".

Despite speculation in the press, fuelled by the Countryside Alliance (CA) and its members, there is not a "rift" within anti-hunting circles over the Hunting Act. That would be "over-egging the pudding" (or perhaps that should be "over egg-replacering"?).

We wholeheartedly agree with the League Against Cruel Sports (LACS) and International Fund for Animal Welfare (IFAW) that the Hunting Act is not yet being fully enforced. What there is disagreement on is whether or not the existing legislation is sufficient.
POWA have adequately outlined why, and how, the Act needs to be tightened. The HSA agrees that the Act needs to be tightened.
There is a tactical reason for the position taken by LACS and IFAW that the legislation is sufficient. But, as in the pre-"ban" days we at the HSA have a different set of tactics. Their position is based on a fear that if we suggest that the legislation has failed we are concurring with the Countryside Alliance's myth that the Act is "unenforcable". Effectively the argument is that you validate the CA argument if you say anything other than "Life under the Hunting Act is great"!

Let us be clear. We are not saying that the Act is unenforcable. We agree with LACS and IFAW that it has not yet been properly enforced, but it can be and should be. This would result in an increase in prosecutions and a reduction in animals hunted. However, strengthening of the law would result in a far greater increase in prosecutions, greater drop in numbers hunted and significantly increase the impact of the Act.

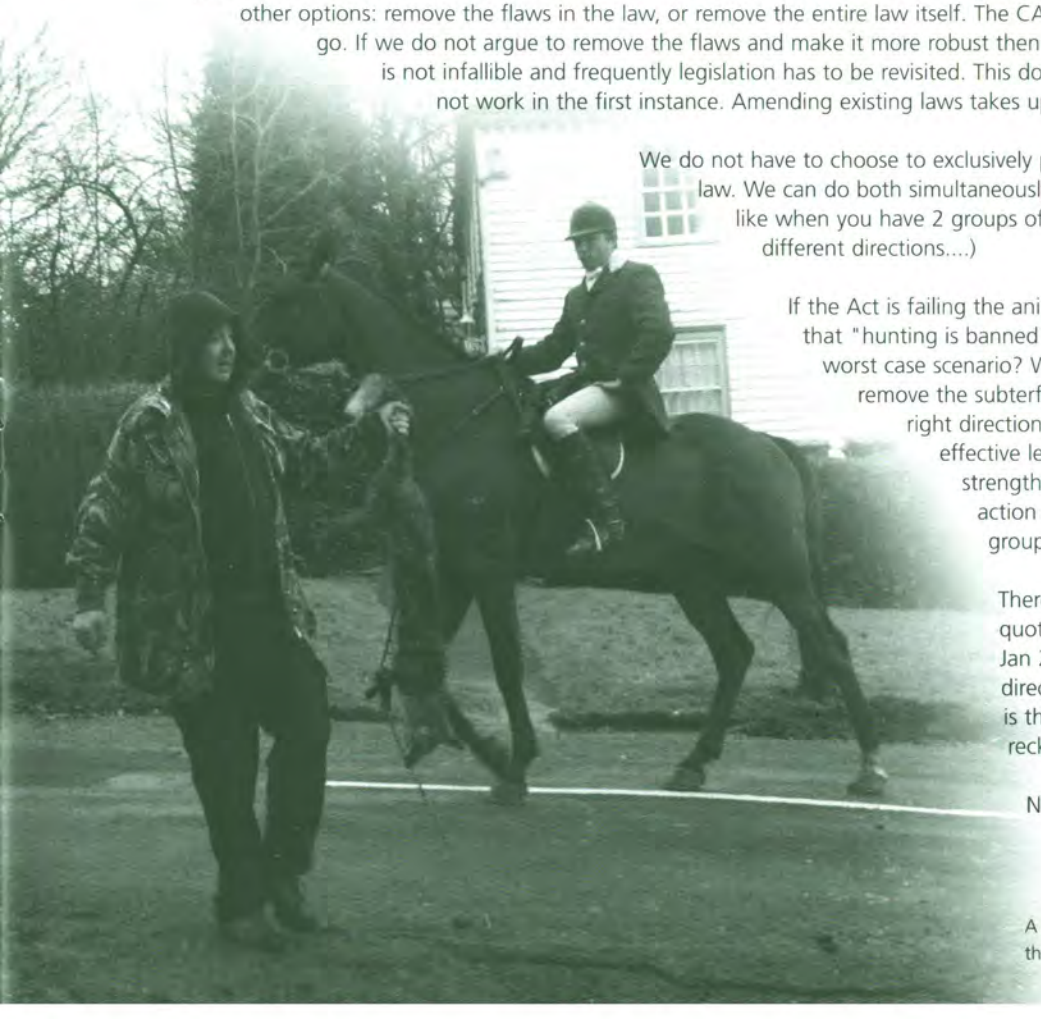
The main CA argument for repeal is that the law is totally flawed. Leaving the Act in its current form is a strategy that still enables the CA to argue that it is not working because hunts are still killing animals. There are 3 responses to the claims that the law is flawed. One is do nothing to the law, prove it is working and tell the CA to "shut up!" or Foxtrot Oscar. The Countryside Alliance clearly will not go away quietly. This leaves 2 other options: remove the flaws in the law, or remove the entire law itself. The CA are of course arguing that the entire law should go. If we do not argue to remove the flaws and make it more robust then we really are playing into their hands. Parliament is not infallible and frequently legislation has to be revisited. This does not mean there is a case for repeal if it does not work in the first instance. Amending existing laws takes up a huge amount of parliamentary time.

We do not have to choose to exclusively pursue effective enforcement OR tightening of the law. We can do both simultaneously. What you might call a pincer movement (a bit like when you have 2 groups of sabs dropping in on a hunt covert from 2 different directions....)

If the Act is failing the animals in the field, and fooling much of the public that "hunting is banned" is it legislation whose loss we would lament in a worst case scenario? Would its loss be a step backward or would it remove the subterfuge? Surely its real value is that it is a step in the right direction and can form the building block for more effective legislation - which is why supporting a strengthening of the Act is surely the only appropriate action and one which the HSA is working with other groups to achieve.

There seems no better way to end this piece than by quoting our very own Lee Moon in the York Press 7 Jan 2009: "We see foxes being chased and dug out in direct violation of the law. What we really need to see is the Hunting Act strengthened and for a recklessness clause to be included."

Nuff sed!



A recklessness clause would have made the killing of this fox and offence.

GROUP NEWS



South

READING sabs have had a good season so far. We've met up with other groups to help out with hunts all over the region as well as visiting the Vale of Aylesbury, Garth & South Berks a number of times, the Heythrop and the Sandhurst beagles. At a VAGSB meet in their Aylesbury country, we had the usual problems with their less than bright rider who at the sight of sabs tends to fly into a childish rage and repeatedly rode his horse into a sab. A couple of weeks later we returned to the VAGSB at one of their more southern meets. The new whip who is obviously having a few problems with hound control, somehow rode his horse into a river. The horse looked quite shocked but luckily got out okay leaving the soggy red coat splashing around in the river looking for his whip. Luckily sabs were there to greet and film him as he clambered out of the cold muddy water.

On Boxing Day we paid a visit to the Sandhurst beagles who rather hurtfully didn't seem very pleased to see us. After a rather pathetic attempt to steal a camera from a sab, they settled down, walked the beagles around the block and packed up. For a Boxing Day meet, numbers weren't great and were certainly down on previous years before the ban.

We've seen a mix of tactics from hunts, mainly they seem to put hounds through coverts where they have traditionally picked up foxes and if no sabs are with them when they pick up a scent they will let them chase it until we get there. Some hunts e.g. South Hereford, seem to have not even heard of the hunting ban and are happy to chase a fox whether there are sabs there or not. Probably more on that from more local sabs that were out.

New people are always welcome; if you want to join us call 07984977603



PEWSEYVALE sabs spent very little time locally for cubbing this season. The Tedworth are now very secretive and sneaky, Saturdays seem to be off the autumn hunting "calendar" – wonder why? We did think about visiting the Avonvale but decided we wanted to keep our body parts, cameras & vehicles in working order for a bit longer, so cubbing was spent joining up with SOUTH WALES most weeks (see howl 90)

November 1st we joined forces with READING for the Garth opening meet. On arrival we were greeted by 2 police officers who informed us they would be monitoring the monitors (that's us). When we asked if they would leave the road or even the vehicle to observe the hunt, they both looked down at their beautifully cleaned shoes and laughed – that was a no then!! We kept on the hunt all day and they kept moving with no kills.

During November we also visited the Leadon Vale Bassets with SOUTH WALES. The hunt hid at the meet for well over an hour before deciding to call it a day. But not before the ultimate blocking in of the Welsh land rover by a traction engine (steam lorry actually).

We joined forces again with SOUTH WALES and SOUTHAMPTON for a Ledbury meet when the excellent fox rescue was made, who said we don't need sabs and direct action any more. And at the end of November we dropped in on our local psychos – the Avonvale, we were joined again by SOUTH WALES sabs (they must be mad). The day started off immediately with hunt throwing their weight and sabs around, footpaths and rights of way don't exist for this lot but we persevered and stuck with them. Our presence and pointing cameras were keeping them on the move. Sabs intervened at one point with whips and voice calls turning hounds of off a fox. Fatso had no kills, we had a good day except for this bunch of thugs and they packed up while it was still light - unheard of!

In early December, along with SOUTHAMPTON, READING and SOUTH WALES we visited David Cameron's mates the Heythrop on Cameron's home turf, with friends like that who needs enemies. A trip to the South Herefordshire with SOUTH WALES and READING saw sabs yet again stop hounds clearly onto a fox. For Boxing Day our festive bunch included sabs from SOUTH WALES, BATH, SOUTHAMPTON and GLOUCESTERSHIRE. We had an easy day with the Tedworth who had a pathetic turn out. We kept them on the run for 2.5 hours then they packed up. We ended 2008 with another visit to Avonvale we joined by sabs from SOUTHAMPTON, GLOUCESTERSHIRE and CIRENCESTER. Within 15 minutes of leaving the meet we were attacked by about

20 masked hunt supporters and brought in heavies. Sabs were injured and cameras smashed, the driver's side window of the sabs vehicle was pushed in with such force it hit our driver in the head. Three 999 calls were made, our situation was not taken seriously and we were advised to go home, not too easy when you're surrounded by hunt thugs, one lone WPC finally turned up after all of our attackers had disappeared her main concern was that our caller was being aggressive and she did not like our attitude – poor thing!!. Apparently the police car had been out just after our attack but had got stuck behind some vehicles so went back to the station. – reassuring policing at its best. Despite our trouble we caught up with the hunt again and stayed with them until they packed up.

The New Year started off better, we filled two vehicles with sabs coming down from the north to join SOUTH WALES, READING, SOUTHAMPTON and ourselves we descended on the Cotswold Vale who sat at the meet for over an hour looking at us looking at them. They thought better of it, boxed up their hounds and went home – result!

The very heavy frost of early January for many hunts meant not going out, not to be out done, the Monmouth went out on foot. We joined up once again with SOUTH WALES and SOUTHAMPTON and sabs were soon closer to the hounds than any of the totally unfit hunt support, there was no sign of a trail and hounds were going where they pleased. This hunt are generally very placid but one sab was pulled off a gate backwards by two hunt support and ended up in hospital after the ambulance and police had to be called. The police as usual were worse than useless; their main interest was where did we all come from. While the injured sab was skiving in a nice warm hospital, the rest of the group stole the huntsman's entire pack, when he finally got them back he called it a day and packed up. That nearly made the trip in the ambulance worthwhile.

It seems we did start as we meant to go on **South Devon Animal Rights** are having a great season. The Dart Vale & South Pool Harriers are now packing up by 2.30 pm every time we go out. We get the feeling they don't like us being there. The South Devon Hunt have again been changing their hunting days to evade us – but, again, this is not working – most of the time to Monday, Wednesday and Friday, enabling us to sab them on a Monday and the Dart Vale on a Saturday. If, by chance, we are unable to find the Dart Vale we try to find the Britannia Beagles who also go to great lengths to evade us. Being the clever little sabs that we are, we usually find one of them. We also managed to squeeze into our hectic schedule an excursion to visit the East Cornwall Hunt. Sadly, one of the field fell off her horse and was air lifted to hospital in the air ambulance. Altogether now – aaahhh .... May be this is why hunts in the South West like to fundraise for such a worthy charity. On Boxing Day the South Devon Hunt held their traditional meet at Haytor on Dartmoor, again having a bad day with no kills. At one point during the day, as a sign of their desperation, hunt followers threw a smoke bomb into our Land-Rover and tried to let down our tyres. The police were called and, surprise, surprise, ordered them to leave the moor and not return.

To get involved in hunt sabbing in South Devon call 07760284599

North

The newly reformed **YORK** sab group has been active at least twice per week since the beginning of the current season, with many hunts across the region taking the focus of the group. Fox and Hare hunting packs visited include the Bedale, Derwent, Farndale, Holderness, Saldersgate Farmers & the Sinnington. We have taken necessary action where needed to save the lives of many hunted animals week in, week out. We are particularly 'privileged' to have the oldest hunt in the country - the Bilsdale - founded in 1668 in our area. We are sure that the founder members are still in the saddle since this far off age, and gravity has certainly taken its toll on these decrepit coffin dodgers. We have witnessed and filmed blatant law-breaking by this hunt, which has subsequently been reported to the Police, of course resulting in no action. Without jeopardy, all the lives of these hunted animals have been saved - it would seem we are able to have more control over hounds than their own Huntsman!

The Rockwood Harriers got more than they bargained for when we turned up to their meet in early January. The hunt met at noon, and due to their 'safety concerns' asked us to leave. To their complete surprise we politely refused, and subsequently the Huntsman refused to move off from the meet until the Police arrived, two hours later. An advantage to this particular hunting area is the large number of footpaths. The hunt packed up some 45 minutes later.

The meet at the York & South Ainsty Hunt on Boxing Day resulted in hounds very close on the tail of a fox, as well as a hound killed on the busy A19, causing vehicles to collide. Despite yet another report of illegal hunting activity to the Police, as well as committing offences with regards to uncontrolled hounds, it was once again left to us to save lives, and no action from the law. Our handy citronella sprays were on hand and with the help of our home made whips, the fox passed without any further harm. Following contact with the Police after the hunt folded, we were told no action would be taken despite our video evidence, as the Huntsman told the Police he made every effort to prevent hounds from chasing a fox that day. The threats and violence continue of course. We've had it all this season - vehicle damage, road blocking, knocked down by riders, whipped and intimidation. That was in just one day. A visit to the Middleton Hunt was made, where every effort was made by support to obstruct our view of the hounds. Determined not to be beaten, sabs minus a driver left the vehicle for the fields, where the hunt were hunting along a bridle way. Hounds were treated to bags of vegan dog biscuits which they thoroughly enjoyed. Sabs kept up alongside the hounds for over two hours, and every time they even picked up a faint scent, they were put off. The hunt packed up an hour early on this occasion. Our job done.

In **CUMBRIA** it's been like the twilight zone this season, paranoia being the key word for the Blencathra, every time they go out they don't know who will pop up from behind a stone wall i.e. the police or hunt sabs etc. Hunts we have done this season include the Blencathra and the Melbreak. So far we have been out on 10 or so occasions. The best time to go out seems to be mid week, this gets them because they think they will have it all their own way i.e. no fell walkers about. October saw sabs from the Midlands and Liverpool come up and take care of the Melbreak, who just let hounds run wild on the fells, knowing fine well that they are putting foxes up, well we helped bring their hounds under control, they don't want any accidents do they? November saw us have a great day against the Bleni. We had them packed up by half eleven as they could not trust themselves not to hunt, so we escorted them back to the kennels. I take this opportunity to say a big thanks to the Merseyside sabs and Midlands posse for their help so far this season with more good days to come in the next few weeks. And who knows where we might pop up next.

If yer fancy a visit to the lakes get in touch phcumbria/myspace.

So far this season **NOTTINGHAM** have been out almost every week and hunts we've had a look at include: Meynell and South Staffs, the Blankney, Badsworth and Bramham moor, the Burton (didn't go out cos it was a bit chilly), York and Ainsty South, High Peak harriers and the Rockwood harriers.

No one will be surprised to hear that all these hunts are openly flouting the law. The most popular exemption being used is that they are following a "trail". Off course no

one has actually seen the mythical trail layer or knows where the trail goes as this would ruin the day's "sport" so the huntsman can let his hounds kill anything they want and claim afterwards that he thought they were on a trail! The Blankney are "using" a bird of prey to stay within the law. Quite what they'll be able to use it for when it's stuck in the back of a vehicle miles from where there's any hunting taking place is beyond us. Answers on the back of a postcard please.

The High Peak harriers have been the only hunt to make a pretense at following a trail (although they still go straight through herds of sheep) but as there's hares all over the place the hounds keep putting them up and several times we've had to intervene to help them to safety. The only way this lot (and all the others) will be able to stay within the law is if they disband completely and stop pretending that you can take a pack of hounds, trained to kill, out in the countryside for an innocent day's pleasure.

The police have been their normal biased selves. Ignoring our claims of illegal hunting and then harassing us as soon as the hunts call them to complain about our presence. Presumably there is no crime in the East Midlands as the police are able to send their helicopters out to keep an eye on us as well as up to six vehicles just to search us and seize all our completely legal equipment. The Meynell in particular must have members in the same lodge as Derby police and we wonder how the tax payers of Derbyshire would feel if they knew about this waste of their money.
Oh well they won't stop us.

If you want to get involved please contact us at:
nottinghamhuntsabs@yahoo.co.uk

South East

East Kent sabs are still keeping an eye on our old favourites the East Kent and Ashford Valley. We have been with them to their surprise, waiting for them in woodland when they thought we were elsewhere. We always pop up when they are least expecting us. Just in case they do happen to stumble on a fox while "exercising the hounds".
But, ...this season we have mostly been concentrating on the beagles...! (as in, used to be, WYE COLLEGE, still sore from their pack being snatched back along, and the fact that it's just not bloody fair when they get sabbed-WE THOUGHT IT WAS ONLY FOXES THEY CARED ABOUT!.....!)
We have put a dampener on their Saturday meets 3 weeks in a row. Week one, we turned up just in time. The Beagles were in cry and we could see the hare in front of us. After a few shouts and cracks of the whip we stopped the pack in their tracks. One of the beagles even rolled over in her delight at seeing us. They packed up straight after.....Bless.
The week later we found them again. As soon as they clocked us they started playing silly beggars by pretending to pack up. Then they'd go out again. This lasted a good couple of hours in the pouring rain. Even the distraction from the old bill didn't help them. They packed up after finally walking the beagles around the field twice. Another successful week.
Boxing Day saw us out with a different beagle pack, the Blean beagles.
Unfortunately we were too far away to prevent a kill, first thing in the morning. We kept close to them and covertly filmed everything, only stepping in if we had to. We were on top of them all afternoon. When the question was eventually asked,-who are you? , it was obvious that they were under "Anti" scrutiny...They packed up instantly.

Another New Year and the watchful eye of the Sabs is fixed firmly on the bumpkins.
Take care, EKHSA x

NORTH and **EAST LONDON** group have been sabbing hard and proper, working closely with **SUFFOLK** and **ESSEX** sabs to harass the Essex, and Essex Farmers and the Essex and Suffolk, and not surprisingly, we've seen them all misbehaving. The naughtiest lot by far are the Essex and Suffolk, with significant police protection whenever we are there. We've stopped countless dig outs and saved plenty of foxes above ground. One sab almost got nicked for preventing the hounds killing right in front of the police! 5 Suffolk and Essex sabs did get collared for agg trespass after sitting on an earth for three hours, while the plod waited for enough bodies to nick them all. They then let the dig out go ahead after dark, lit by the police floodlights...

A Boxing Day visit to the Essex saw another dig out prevented, and a couple of running foxes were given the chance to survive. Two excellent benefit gigs have kept us ticking over, but our trusty black landy is in need of a new engine, so more gigs soon!

Wales

Hunts that **SOUTH WALES** SABS have targeted so far this season include: The Ledbury, Avon Vale, Heythrop, South Hereford, Cotswold Vale and the Monmouth.

We had a great day on the Ledbury in early November, saving "Otis" the fox from a pack of rampaging hounds (more about that elsewhere). A brilliant day followed on the South Herefordshire. Accompanied by two reporters, who were very impressed by sabs commitment and professionalism, we took the whole pack of hounds as they were close on the trail of a fox.

In January we turned up in force at our old "friends" the Cotswold Vale. Seeing the impressive gathering of sabs, the huntsman Alan 'fight or flight' Morgan, hung around the meet for an hour and a half waiting for his tame psychopaths to turn up. When he couldn't get sufficient numbers (presumably they were still recovering from an orgy of animal abuse over the festive period) he boxed up his hounds and headed straight back to the kennels. Let's hope this sets the tone for his 2009.

The following week a small group of sabs turned up at the Monmouth. Such is their bloodlust they still went out despite most other hunts in the country cancelling due to the frost. They're such caring types however that they left their horses at home and went under their own steam for a change. This charming bunch decided it would be nice to pull a sab backwards off a gate. Smashing his head on the frozen ground and knocking him unconscious (also breaking his video camera in the process). The remaining sabs packed him into an ambulance, ignored the ineffectual police and proceeded to take the whole pack of hounds of the huntsman. Nice!





THE DAY OTIS WAS HELPED TO FREEDOM!

On Saturday 22nd November hunt saboteurs were present at the Ledbury foxhunt. A hunt we know are, like most, openly flouting the ban and illegally killing wildlife on a weekly basis.

We stayed with them for most of the day, watching them and ready to intervene if they picked up the scent of a fox. We lost them for a short while and when they reappeared the hounds had blood on their faces leading us to suspect they had killed a fox.

At about 2 o'clock we heard the hounds go into cry. We followed the noise down a lane and arrived just in time to see a fox poking his nose through a hedge. Sabs immediately stepped aside to allow the fox (whom we christened Otis) a chance to escape but before it could do so 2 hounds appeared and one of them locked its jaws onto the fox's face. We raced in and managed to free Otis but more hounds came pouring through the hedge and attacked him once more. Some of the sabs used their whips* to keep the majority of the hounds at bay whilst other sabs again freed Otis from the hounds jaws. Otis, in a panic, bit one of his rescuers but we have been assured by veterinary experts that he didn't pick up anything nasty from the sab despite our well known reputation as 'soap dodgers'. Once Otis was free he found shelter in the middle of a huge thorn bush which the sabs surrounded to keep the hounds at bay.

Whilst all this was happening the Huntsman, John Holliday, sat just up the road watching and doing absolutely nothing to try and save the fox. Holliday, a local idiot who received almost no fame at all for storming into the House of Commons a few years ago (apart from possibly a fleeting popularity with certain types of dim witted country girl) then rode up and asked why we'd done nothing to stop his hounds!

After a few choice words on both sides Holliday gathered up his hounds and retreated from the scene.

Sabs, fearing injuries to Otis, contacted The Vale Wildlife Rescue based in Evesham who immediately dispatched someone to help. Whilst sabs awaited their arrival they were subjected to various acts of drive-by intimidation from hunt heavies but they refused to leave their post and stayed put until, as darkness fell, Otis was rescued.

He was immediately taken back to the Vale for treatment and was found to be suffering from severe shock as well as several deep puncture wounds. Due to the serious nature of his injuries and the infection they caused it was a month before Otis could be released back into his territory and we hope he is still going strong and managing to evade the illegal hunters.

There is nothing remarkable in this account, it's what sabs do week in week out. It just provides further proof, if any is needed, that hunts are breaking the law. Otis is one of the lucky ones because people who care were there to save him, but everyday somewhere in the country hunts are illegally chasing and killing wildlife. This was not an accident, the hounds didn't stumble upon a fox whilst chasing a trail and the huntsman didn't intervene as soon as he saw what was happening. He just sat and watched his hounds try and tear a living creature to death. Until there is the political will to enforce the ban to stop incidents like this occurring, Otis and thousands like him are relying on us.

* Sabs do not whip the hounds but crack their whips on the floor as hounds are trained to stop when they hear this noise.

A big thankyou to everyone who donated money towards the care of Otis the fox.
All are welcome to the Vale Wildlife Rescue 25th Anniversary Open Day on Sunday 7th June.

VERMIN PATROL

CRUELTY CASES IN THE COURTS

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

badger

VERMIN

A Chorley man is to appear in court accused of illegally digging up a badger sett. The man, who appeared before Market Drayton magistrates on November 17, was allegedly caught digging a sett with four terrier dogs near Whitchurch, Shropshire. He fled the scene but was later arrested in a joint operation by Lancashire Police and the RSPCA.

Two men caught allowing dogs to attack badgers had filmed previous exploits and bragged in text messages and to police, Alnwick magistrates heard on 6/11/08. Christopher Hindmarsh (28) of Alwinton Square, and Justin Lang (24) of Norham Road, both Ashington, Northumberland, admitted a series of offences against badgers. The case had been listed for a five-day trial, but the men changed their pleas on offences of damaging a badger sett, obstructing access to a sett and causing a dog to enter one. Hindmarsh admitted a further charge of attempting to kill, injure or take a badger. There was also evidence on the defendants' mobile phones of other offences, including footage of a badger being attacked by a dog. Lang had also sent text messages telling how he had captured and killed the creatures. On 20/11/08 they were disqualified from keeping dogs for three years and will have to pay £260 each for costs. They will also have to serve a 12 month community order and a 12 month supervision order and have to carry out 120 hours unpaid work. A three month curfew order from 10pm to 6am has also been given to them. Their phones and dogs plus a spade, hammer and a battery used in the badger baiting, were confiscated.





A Carlisle man is to stand trial accused of illegally hunting badgers. Lee Smith (22) of Dalton Avenue, Raffles, appeared before city magistrates on 18/11/08 on a number of charges. He pleaded not guilty to killing, injuring or taking - or attempting to take - a badger, digging or illegally treating a badger, three counts of interfering with a badger sett and knowingly allowing a dog to be used for hunting a wild mammal.

bloodsports

VERMIN

Three men and a youth found in a muddy 4x4 vehicle with a number of lurcher dogs admitted illegal hare coursing. The four hare courses appeared before Ely magistrates on 6/11/08. Danny King (22) of Dartford, Kent; George King (25) of Bexleyheath, Kent; and Charles Lee (25) of Caterham, Surrey; were all fined £150 and ordered to pay £25 costs and a £15 surcharge. Danny King and Lee were also banned from driving for 28 days. The 14-year-old youth was fined £30 with £5 costs and a £15 surcharge.



A Norfolk landowner and her colleague were convicted of hare coursing on 9/12/08 after a judge ruled their "sincere" attempt to legally beat the hunting ban had failed. Mary Birkbeck (77) from Little Massingham and Les Anderson (80) of Lodge Road, Feltwell were found guilty of attending and facilitating two illegal coursing events in November 2007 and January 2008. Birkbeck was also convicted of permitting land on her Little Massingham estate to be used for the meetings, where hares were pursued across fields by muzzled greyhounds. The pair were ordered to pay £1,000 each in costs. Anderson is the chairman of Kimberly and Wymondham Greyhound Club. King's Lynn magistrates heard Anderson, had been involved with coursing for 62 years. The judge gave both Birkbeck and Anderson conditional discharges on the provision that no further offences were committed within two years. Charges of attending and participating in hare coursing were dismissed against a third defendant, Robert Fryer (41) of Tring, Hertfordshire.

Three men were arrested on 15/12/08 in the ongoing police crackdown on rural crime in Swyncombe. The men, two aged 28 and one 19, were held on suspicion of hare coursing. Officers also seized a car and three lurchers were taken away to be examined by the RSPCA. The 28-year-olds were given cautions for poaching while the 19-year-old received an additional caution for possession of cannabis.

A trial date has been fixed for Clarissa Dickson Wright and racehorse trainer Sir Mark Prescott, who face charges relating to alleged involvement in a hare coursing event. Dickson Wright, of Midlothian in Scotland, and Sir Mark, of Newmarket, did not attend the hearing at Scarborough magistrates on 23/12/08. The pair are accused of hunting hares with dogs and attending a hare coursing event in the area of Nunnington, near Helmsley along with two similar alleged offences near Amotherby. The private prosecution was brought by the International Fund for Animal Welfare. Five other people are also being prosecuted for similar offences by the Crown Prosecution Service. They are Miles Henry Easterby (79) of Great Habton in Malton, Andrew Lund-Watkinson (58) of Newton-on-Rawcliffe near Pickering, John Shaw (55) of Welburn in Kirkbymoorside, Jacqueline Ann Teal (43) of Scarborough Road in Norton and Elizabeth Margaret Gibson (45) of Appleton-le-Street in Malton. Their case will be heard on 27/7/09.

Former head gamekeeper Roger Venton (34) of Wheldrake Lane, Elvington, near York, was handed a sentence of three months' imprisonment, suspended for 12 months, at Telford magistrates after admitting using an illegal trap and allowing another keeper to illegally catch birds of prey. Venton, who was the former head gamekeeper on the Kempton Estate in Shropshire, pleaded guilty to using a spring trap and permitting assistant keeper Kyle Burden to use a cage trap to illegally catch birds of prey. Kempton Estate is 6,000-acres and is home to a pheasant and partridge shoot, with about 40,000 pheasants and 20,000 partridges. The court heard how the RSPB was contacted by two separate seasonal gamekeepers employed at Kempton who reported the illegal killing of protected wildlife, including buzzards and badgers. Further RSPB investigations found a pole trap - a

spring trap placed on top of a tall pole. The court heard these were made illegal in 1904 as they can attract birds of prey. Burden had kept a diary which suggested that in 2008 102 buzzards, 40 badgers, and 37 ravens were killed on the estate, where guns can pay nearly £10,000 a day to shoot. Venton was sentenced to two concurrent three month jail terms, both suspended for 12 months, 250 hours of unpaid work and £2,000 costs at Telford Magistrates' Court. He admitted using a spring trap and permitting Burden to use a cage trap baited with a raven to illegally catch birds of prey.



On 9/1/09 Prince Edward aka The Earl of Wessex was cleared by the RSPCA of animal cruelty over photographs that appeared to show him lashing out at two gundogs with a stick during a pheasant shoot. The RSPCA launched an investigation into the claims that the Earl may have struck a gun dog at Sandringham over the Christmas break. Buckingham Palace insisted that the Earl, who was accompanied on the shoot by Peter Phillips, the son of the Princess Royal, was trying to break up a fight between the two labradors. They show the Earl approaching the two dogs waving a long crook as they grapple over a dead pheasant. One picture shows one of the animals cowering to one side as he swings the stick over his shoulder. In another, the stick hovers above the spine of one of the dogs but is not shown making contact.



dog fighting

VERMIN

Liaquat Ali (40) of Steiner Street, Accrington, Lancashire, was jailed on 12/11/08 for six months for arranging dog fights. He was convicted of keeping premises for the purposes of dog fighting and causing two animals to fight. Ali also admitted causing unnecessary suffering to a pit bull-type dog. Officers from the RSPCA and Lancashire Constabulary searched two properties owned or rented by Ali in June 2007. At one of them, on Richmond Road, Blackburn, an emaciated dog called Enzo was found locked in a wooden box with no food or water. At the other, a flat on Blackburn Road, Accrington, officers found blood on the walls which forensic tests showed came from more than one dog. Two video clips of dog fights were also found on his mobile phone. Ali also pleaded guilty at Hyndburn magistrates to possession of two pit bulls, contrary to the Dangerous Dogs Act, recovered from those addresses.



On 28/11/08 Akim Adelaja (22) of Elms Lane, Wembley was convicted of animal cruelty for keeping 11 illegal fighting dogs in a cramped basement flat. On 17/12/08 Adelaja appeared at Brent magistrates and was ordered to serve 280 hours of unpaid work. He was also banned from keeping dogs for four years, given a deprivation order relating to all dogs in his possession and told one of his pets would be put down. He trained the dogs at his home forcing them to run up and down his back garden tied to heavy tyres and chains. He also let the dogs roam freely around the streets, intimidating and attacking petrified residents. An American Bulldog bitch and six puppies were found in a cage in the kitchen, an injured Mastiff-type dog was found in the bathroom and a further two American Bulldogs and a pregnant Pitbull-type bitch were discovered roaming in a bedroom. Books on dog training, writing pads containing notes on breeding plans and dog-strengthening equipment including chains and weight-pulling harnesses were also found inside the flat, along with tyres used in strengthening exercises. In November, Brent magistrates convicted Adelaja of nine offences, including possessing, breeding and selling fighting dogs, causing unnecessary suffering to a protected animal, and training dogs for animal fights.



Romy Khunti (19) of Knowle Road, Sparkhill has been banned from keeping animals for life after he admitted breeding and supplying dog fighters with pit bull-types. Khunti ran a website where he advertised illegal pit bull-type dogs for sale. He was given a four month custodial sentence, suspended for two years, when he appeared at Birmingham magistrates on 15/12/08. Khunti was also given a two-year supervision order, a 200-hour community punishment order and instructed to pay £5,000 costs after he admitted six charges relating to dog fighting. Khunti pleaded guilty to three charges of possessing illegal pit bulls. He also admitted two charges of training dogs to fight, and one of causing unnecessary suffering after he failed to provide veterinary treatment to facial and leg wounds sustained by one of the dogs.

On 17/12/08 Christopher Burgess (42) of Longstone Way, Ladybrook, Mansfield, faced five charges in connection with pit bull fighting. Kenneth King (35), of Main Street, Ragnall, faces 19 charges; while Joanne King faces one charge. They were among 10 people charged as part of a nationwide RSPCA operation. The seven others come from Cleveland, Middlesborough and Birmingham. The case was heard at Lincoln magistrates.

On 7/1/09 Raja Hussain (28) and Tasleem Akhtar (32) of Mansfield Road, Glodwick, Oldham were charged with neglecting their pit bull-type dogs, causing unnecessary suffering and organising animal fights. Their court case was adjourned at Oldham magistrates. RSPCA inspectors found the animals to have a mixture of chronic infections and bite wounds for which the pair had failed to seek veterinary treatment. The charges against Hussain allege he kept the animals for use in connection with an animal fight and inspectors found associated equipment, such as training schedules, weighted collars, chains and syringes at the couple's home. Both are charged with possessing an animal which falls under the Dangerous Dogs Act 1991 without the correct paperwork.

eggs/birds

VERMIN

An Essex man was given a 120-hour Community Punishment Order and must pay £8,679.09 costs after he admitted to being in possession of 40 wild British birds and exposing others for sale. On 18/11/08 John Stanley Brockis (65) from Maldon Road, Great Totham admitted four charges of illegal possession of wild birds and two charges of exposing wild birds for sale at Southend magistrates. A large number of birds were discovered, including 29 goldfinches, one redpoll, five greenfinches and five bullfinches, all of which had been illegally fitted with tampered leg rings. Brockis claimed he had purchased the birds in good faith from people who had arrived with them in his shop. He said he thought the leg rings fitted on the birds were legitimate.

Lawrence Scott Walters of Spring Close, Eastbourne has been forced to pay £3,000 after illegally dumping eggs and birds' nests on land. Walters (trading under the name Pest Call, an Eastbourne-based pest control business) pleaded guilty to removing the gulls' eggs and nesting material before later dumping them on waste land. At Lewes magistrates on 20/11/08 they fined Walters £2,000 plus the council's full costs of £1,000 along with a victim surcharge of £15.

On 28/11/08, 70 wild birds were recovered from two addresses in Greenwich and Lewisham by police investigating illegal trapping. Officers raided a property in Springfield Grove, Greenwich and a second address off Elmira Street in Lewisham. A 49-year-old man believed to be involved in the illegal trapping of the birds was arrested and taken to a south London police station. Police say the seventy birds seized at the property were kept in small cages stacked on top of each other in a small, enclosed space without any natural light. They included goldfinches, canaries and hybrids bred from more than one species, some of which police believe may have taken illegally from the wild.

equine VERMIN

Wendy Barron (42) from Barron, Walsall, was banned from keeping equines for life after neglecting her horse. At Walsall magistrates on 4/11/08 Barron was also given an 18-month community service order to include 200 hours of unpaid work, and ordered to pay costs of £250.

assorted VERMIN

Four directors of the company behind the £120 million Bay holiday village near Filey are set to stand trial in 2009 accused of killing great crested newts and damaging or destroying their habitats. Laurence Corrigan (55) and Richard Wiesener (67) of Cottingham, John Groves (65) of Kirk Ella and Wayne Low (35) of Leconfield, are each charged with three counts of intentionally killing a protected wild animal and three counts of recklessly endangering their shelter. The same charges are faced by Essential Vivendi Ltd, Essential Vivendi Construction Ltd and Essential Vivendi Management Ltd, of Southgate in Hessle. They relate to alleged incidents at three ponds on the site of the former Filey Butlins holiday camp. A trial, scheduled to last three days, was set for 14/4/09.

On 1/12/08 fisherman David Wilkins (50) of Muston Road, Filey, appeared before Scarborough magistrates facing charges of causing unnecessary suffering to a protected animal. The case against Wilkins was adjourned at the prosecution's request.

Leeroy Le Gallais (46) of St Peter Port, Guernsey broke into a stable on two separate occasions to perform sex acts on a terrified horse. During his first attack he used a bucket to stand behind the horse, but was caught after leaving his underwear at the scene. He was given a three-year probation order, but just months later returned to have sex with the same horse. Le Gallais was jailed for three years at Guernsey's Royal Court on 3/12/08 after being found guilty of two charges of attempting a sexual act with a horse. The court heard Le Gallais had a history of sexual offending including indecent exposure to girls and inciting an 11-year-old to commit an act of gross indecency. A five-year probation period was also imposed from the time of his release.

farm animal VERMIN

(Guardians Of The Land - My Arse!!!)

Farmer David Fryatt (65) of Pear Tree Farm, near Diss, Norfolk, was found guilty of a string of cruelty charges and obstructing officials at the end of a three-day trial at King's Lynn magistrates. On 4/11/08 Fryatt was jailed for 20 weeks. The court also banned him from keeping horses or cattle for five years. He was found guilty of causing unnecessary suffering, obstructing trading standards officers, failing to ensure appropriate animal care and breaking carcass disposal regulations.

A West Cumbrian farmer was banned from keeping animals for life after a sick calf was found in a barn with rotting carcasses. Trading Standards officials found up to 32 carcasses on the farm of Robert Jenkinson of Midtown Farm, High Sellafield, Calderbridge, Whitehaven magistrates heard on 19/12/08. He admitted failing to dispose of up to 32 cow carcasses, causing unnecessary suffering to a calf and failing to give it medical aid, failing to provide the sick calf with suitable accommodation, and failing to ensure the needs of a cow were met. Magistrates said Jenkinson must complete 200 hours unpaid work, and pay £1,451.39 in court and investigation costs.

domestic VERMIN



John Martell (40) of Mulberry Court, Pendleton kicked, punched and stamped on his dog because he was having 'a really bad day' and was jailed for 12 weeks. On 7/11/08 at Salford magistrates Martell was also banned from ever keeping or owning another animal as a result of the brutal attack, which was captured on CCTV.

On 12/11/08 Denise Giblin (34) of Roundthorn Road, Oldham and Lee Burke (26) of Manor Road, Roundthorn, Oldham, admitted leaving their two dogs outside with no food or shelter on a bitterly cold January day. They have been banned from keeping dogs for 18 months. Giblin and Burke were also fined £1,000 each following their appearance at Oldham magistrates. Giblin also admitted to underfeeding her dog. Burke pleaded guilty to allowing the mistreatment to take place.

A former TV executive confessed to shooting dead his neighbour's dog after becoming annoyed at its early-morning barking. Phil Bishop (71) from Brinton, Norfolk shot the Bedlington terrier, in the heart with a single shot from an air rifle. The parish council chairman claimed at court that he did not intend to hit the dog when he fired from the study of his home using a .22 calibre weapon. Instead, he said, he had intended to strike a metal bench in his neighbour's garden, which would have made a noise that scared the dog back into its owner's house. At King's Lynn magistrates on 29/11/08 Bishop was given a two-year conditional discharge after he admitted causing unnecessary suffering to the dog. He was also ordered to pay £60 costs, plus £1,750 compensation to his traumatised neighbours.

Two people have been banned from keeping animals after a dog in their care almost died because it had become so emaciated from lack of food. Martin Fairclough (54) of Moorfield Avenue, Bradford Moor, and Kathleen Angyal (43) of Blackshaw Drive, Butterfield, were convicted of causing unnecessary suffering to a lurcher dog who was described by RSPCA inspectors as the "thinnest they had ever seen". Fairclough and Angyal pleaded guilty to the offence on 6/11/08 and appeared at Bradford magistrates on 11/12/08 for sentencing. Both defendants were banned from keeping animals for ten years, with no chance of appealing the decision for at least five years. They were each given a four-week sentence suspended for 12 months and were ordered to undertake 100 hours of unpaid community work.

An unlicensed breeder who kept 26 Rottweiler and boxer dogs in appalling conditions at her home was banned from keeping dogs for three years. Deborah Sims (43) of London Road, Hailsham, was also given a 12-month supervision order with 160 hours of unpaid work on 12/12/08. She was convicted of seven counts of causing unnecessary suffering to the animals at Hastings magistrates.



Joy Battison (59) of Little Billing, Northants who let her pet dog lose almost half his body weight through starvation, was banned from keeping animals for 25 years on 5/1/09. Battison ordered her son and his girlfriend to tell vets that her dog - by then near death - was a stray, a court heard. Battison eventually admitted she was the owner. Battison admitted causing unnecessary suffering to an animal when she faced Northampton magistrates. She argued the dog had always been thin, that he was eating and drinking and she was treating him with shampoo. She was given a 12-month supervision order as well as the ban.

Martin John Lightfoot (36) from Whitchurch, who beat his heavily pregnant dog with crutches while he was drunk, was banned from keeping animals for 10 years. Lightfoot was also given a three-year conditional discharge, told to hand over his two dogs to the RSPCA and ordered to pay £1,000 compensation and costs after admitting the offences before Market Drayton magistrates on 9/1/09.

The Fox Project urgently request funding for the 2009 fox cub season.



Set up by Trevor Williams over 25 years ago, The Fox Project is the South East's only dedicated fox rescue and rehabilitation organisation.

Recently, the Fox Project have had to increase their boundaries, workload, casualties and costs - with the help of a dynamic band of volunteers covering rescues, cage trapping and transportation. The vixens give birth in February/March, therefore, the first casualties are expected soon! It is vital that sufficient funding comes in to support 2009's cubs. The Fox Project desperately needs your help now to continue the work that's essential to help those little casualties.

Please send cheques payable to 'The Fox Project'
The Lodge, Kings Toll Road, Pembury, Kent, TN2 4BE
Or call 01892 824111 to make a card payment

www.foxproject.org.uk

Let the government Increase your donation, if you are a tax payer, they will add 28p to every pound on your instruction.

Just one example of one of many success stories from the fox project



At the tail end of summer 2008, householders in Deptford, South London were being woken night after night by a jingling sound. It became a talking point but nobody could identify what it was until the evening Magda Loskot happened to glance from an upstairs window into the overgrown garden next door. Sitting on a garden bench was a cub with what looked like a dog chain attached to a rear leg. As the cub shifted its position, a familiar jingling confirmed to Magda what she and her neighbours had been hearing these past weeks, and she was horrified to see the chain was actually fixed right through the cub's leg

It was decided that the chain must have been fitted to keep the fox cub captive, but that he had managed to escape. Lisa, a local rescuer for the fox project managed against the odds to catch the cub. With the chain off, it appeared there was only minor damage to the ligament, the hole in her leg having been driven between the small bones in the hock, probably more by luck than judgement. The hole was stitched and jingle was introduced to her new family, a litter of hand reared cubs. Eventually, Jingle went through the usual wilding-up, rehab process and was eventually released into safe, beautiful private woodland in East Sussex.

"They say times are getting tough - and maybe we've brought it on ourselves. But times are always tough for wildlife. Supporting The Fox Project with whatever jingles in your pocket, rustles in your wallet or scratches the surface of your chequebook made the difference between life and death for over 600 casualties in 2008 – including 237 sick, injured or orphaned cubs. Please help us do it all again in 2009".

Trevor Williams - Director

The Fox Project is a registered charity no.1044928

Fox Project Appeal



ARE YOU MOVING?

If you move house, please don't forget to tell us.

The HSA has a disproportionate number of returned envelopes due to unknown addressees, which inevitably means wasted funds on postage.

We greatly appreciate your support and want to ensure you receive your precious copy of Howl as usual.

Make sure we know where you are!!

ta muchly

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.

NOV 08
1st. R.BANHAM
2nd. B.RICHARDSON
3rd. S.FENWICK

DEC 08
1st. A.KENNEDY
2nd. M.SEARCH
3rd. F.FORD

JAN 09
1st. P.FENN
2nd. M.FORSYTH
3rd. D.THURLEY



HELP SAVE A LIFE AFTER YOUR DEATH

REMEMBER THE HUNT SABOTEURS ASSOCIATION IN YOUR WILL

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Name.....

Address.....

.....Postcode.....

Signature.....

Date.....

Bad Hare Days recounts the story of the author's high profile involvement in the Irish anti-hare coursing campaign.

Freelance journalist John Fitzgerald, of Callan, County Kilkenny, is renowned for his anti-blood sports opinions and campaigning and in his book which has been published in the UK, (Olympia Publishers) he recalls how witnessing scenes of cruelty in a field where hares were being netted for coursing opened his eyes for the first time to the downside of Ireland's "field sport" tradition.

He was then determined to learn more about the peculiar form of "entertainment" that passed for sport in parts of the Irish countryside. Nauseated by the spectacle of hares being made to run for their lives from hyped up greyhounds, and by the heart-rending cries of the hares as the dogs tore them apart, he joined the campaign against blood sports.

He found that hare coursing was high on the list of activities that animal welfare people wanted banned by law. This they sought to achieve by picketing coursing events, letter writing on the subject, and lobbying politicians. But he found that taking a strong public stand on a deeply emotive and controversial issue almost always carries a price tag.

He, like many others who opposed the powerful vested interests and lobby groups that promote and support hare coursing in Ireland, suffered at their hands. He was assaulted at work, subjected to severe bullying and fired from his job with a farmers Co-op for his anti-coursing and anti-hunting views.

The book recounts not only his own first hand experience of the campaign, but also focuses on the progress of the campaign itself, the ups and downs...the heartbreak and the occasional successes that come with involvement in any campaigning on difficult or controversial animal protection or ecological issues.

He offers a fascinating insight into what happened in the context of Ireland's anti-hare coursing campaign when radical activists linked to the Animal Liberation Front resorted to sabotaging coursing venues and releasing hares from captivity.

The group or network that originated in Britain in the 1970s arrived in Ireland in the mid 1980s and its involvement in the campaign against blood sports provoked clashes on the picket lines and resulted in the homes of legitimate animal protection campaigners being raided by police, who found it difficult to tell apart peaceful anti-hare coursing activists from the shadowy nocturnal figures who were releasing hares from captivity and illegally sabotaging coursing events The section of the book dealing with the conflict resulting from the tactics and strategies of the militant activities and their impact on the efforts of peaceful campaigners makes compelling reading and gives the book at times the "feel" of a thriller.

The book is written in a gripping novelistic style and some identities and place names are changed for legal reasons.



Bad Hare Days costs £9.99 or 12.99 Euro. It has 397 pages. It is available from bookshops and from amazon.co.uk, or direct from www.Olympiapublishers.com This review was taken from the 'Kilkenny Voice' newspaper

SUPPORT ANIMAL RIGHTS PRISONERS

SENTENCED PRISONERS

SEAN KIRTLEY (WC6977)
Birthday: 11 December
HM Prison Stafford, 54 Gaol Road, ST16 3AW.
Serving four and a half years for organising demonstrations against animal testing company Sequani.

Cheques/postal orders made out to 'The Governor' (write prisoner/sender details on back) and self-addressed envelopes (SAEs)..

JONNY ABLEWHITE (TB4885)
Birthday: 27 January
HMP Ranby, Retford, Notts, DN22 8EU.
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 WHITEHEAD (VM7684)
Birthday: 12 February
HMP Bronzefield, Woodthorpe Road, Ashford, Middx TW15 3JZ
Sentenced to two years for removing a beagle from a garden where it was kept muzzled in a wooden cage and regularly beaten. Cheques/postal orders made out to 'The Governor'. Books, stationery, stamps; saes. Write prisoner name/number on the back.

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.

JOHN SMITH (TB4887)
Birthday: 6 March
HMP Lindholme, Bawtry Road, Hatfield Woodhouse, Doncaster, DN7 6EE.
Serving 12 years for conspiracy to blackmail the Hall family who run Newchurch guineapig farm, which has now closed down.
Postal orders or cheques made out to 'The Governor', with inmate's name/number and details of sender on reverse.

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; p/os/cheques payable to HMP LOWDHAM GRANGE inmate's name & no on back & name/address of sender. No paper or envelopes.

DAN AMOS (VN7818)
Birthday: 19 November
HMP Winchester, Romsey Road, Winchester SO22 5DF
Sentenced on 21 Jan 2009 to four years in connection to the campaign against HLS.
Writing pad (non ring binder), envs £5.00 of stamps; 20 normal size (5x7 or 6x4) photos (check with inmate). Cheques/POs made out to 'HM Prison Service' inmate's name/number on back, with a return address.

GREGG AVERY (TA7450)
Birthday: 5 December
HMP Coldingley, Shaftesbury Road, Bisley, Woking, Surrey GU24 9EX.
Sentenced on 21 Jan 2009 to nine years in connection with HLS.

stamps (12 in letter); Self-addressed envelopes, cheques/postal orders made out to 'HMP Headquarters' with inmate's name and number on front and sender's details on reverse..

NATASHA AVERY (NR8987)
Birthday: 28 December
HMP Bronzefield, Woodthorpe Road, Ashford, Middx TW15 3JZ.
Sentenced on 21 Jan 2009 to nine years in connection with HLS.

Cheques/postal orders made out to 'The Governor'. Books, stationery, stamps; saes. Write prisoner name and number on the back.

GAVIN MEDD-HALL (WV9475)
Birthday: 20 March
HMP Coldingley, Shaftesbury Road, Bisley, Woking, Surrey GU24 9EX
Sentenced on 21 Jan 2009 to eight years in connection with HLS.

Stamps; p/os/cheques payable to HMP LOWDHAM GRANGE inmate's name & no on back & name/address of sender. No paper or envelopes.

HEATHER NICHOLSON (VM4859)
Birthday: 30 January
HMP Bronzefield, Woodthorpe Road, Ashford, Middx TW15 3JZ
Sentenced on 21 Jan 2009 to eleven years in connection to the campaign against HLS.
Cheques/postal orders made out to 'The Governor'. Books, stationery, stamps; saes. Write prisoner name and number on the back.

DAN WADHAM (A5705AA)
Birthday: 3rd February
HMP Camp Hill, Newport, Isle of Wight, PO30 5PB.
Sentenced on 21 Jan 2009 to five years in connection with HLS.

Only cheques and postal orders can be sent in made out to 'HMPS' with inmate's name and number on front and the sender's details on reverse.

MEL BROUGHTON (TN9138)
Birthday: 5 July
HMP Woodhill, Tattenhoe Street, Milton Keynes, Bucks MK4 4DA.
Sentenced to 10 yeads in relation to the SPEAK campaign.

SAEs; a small, non ring-binded calendar; Postal Orders made out on front to "HMPS", with the inmate's name and number on back, and also the sender's name and address if there is room



REMAND PRISONERS

LUKE STEELE (WJ4308)
HMP Lincoln, Greetwell Road, LN2 4BD.

Can send in postal orders made out to HMPS, with prisoner name/number and sender details on back.

DEAN CAIN (WJ4309)
HMP Lincoln, Greetwell Road, LN2 4BD.

Can send in postal orders made out to HMPS, with prisoner name/number and sender details on back



HUNT HAVOC

Easton Harriers kill pet cat

Judy and Brian Dawson were left devastated when their nine-year-old cat Edwina, known as Dween, was killed by the hounds from the Easton Harriers which burst into their garden while on a hunt in Witnesham yesterday.

Mrs Dawson, of Main Road in the village, was at work when the attack happened and found out when her neighbours called to tell her about the incident.

She said: "I'm so very upset. I have lost many cats over the years but I think this is the worst way to lose a pet. I haven't seen the hunt round here before so it hasn't been a problem before. The hunt should have been more in control of the dogs."

The horrific attack was witnessed by the Dawsons' neighbour, David Thorn, who heard a screaming noise. He said: "I was so worried, the noise was horrid and the dogs sounded out of control. When I got next door the dogs were treating it as if it was a rag doll. My first thought was that it could have been a child they killed. Mercifully it didn't go on for too long but the dogs were completely out of control. The hounds ran off out of the Dawsons' back garden which backs onto a field, leaving Dween dead with her fur scattered on the ground".

Killinick harriers kill pet cat

Mr Haag, from the Easton Harriers hunt claimed that they did try to stop the hounds but "the person chasing them didn't get there in time because they run very fast"!

Breda Whelan of Rickardstown, Kilmore, watched in horror as hounds from the Killinick Harriers Hunt savaged a pet cat in her garden.

The family cat was torn to pieces by the hounds which crossed the main Wexford/Kilmore Road following the scent of a fox.

'They came up the driveway and pinned the cat against the garage door and massacred it', said Breda who went to investigate when she heard the dogs howling.

'They tore it apart. What I'm trying to get across is the absolute cruelty of it. It was a poor dumb animal not doing any harm to anyone', she said.

Afterwards, the end wall of her house was splattered with the cat's blood. Breda said she couldn't bear to look at the dead animal.

She said the dogs could have caused an accident as they crossed the Main Road to get to her house.





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. Contact us if you don't already have a salesgoods order form, page 2.
- 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*)

❒ £15 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 0845 450 0727 or email us - info@huntsabs.org.uk

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 Lodge, Kings Toll Road, Pembury, Kent, TN2 4BE
01892 842111 mon-fri 9am-3pm
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)
New Sparling House , Holloway Hill
Godalming, Surrey, GU7 1QZ
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

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

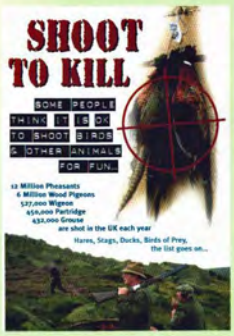
Stop DEathFra Badger Killers
www.badger-killers.co.uk

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





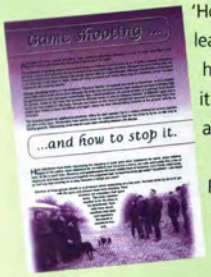
Full colour A5 'Shoot to Kill' leaflet. Explains what you can do to stop our wildlife being killed and persecuted by shooters.

'Shoot to Kill'
FREE (+p&p +DONATION)



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 o how a shoot operates and how it can be sabbed with well researched arguments against it.

Per 1000 'And How to Stop It' leaflets
FREE (+p&p +DONATION)

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)



BACK ISSUES OF HOWL

FREE (+p&p +DONATION)

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.



POSTAGE AND PACKING

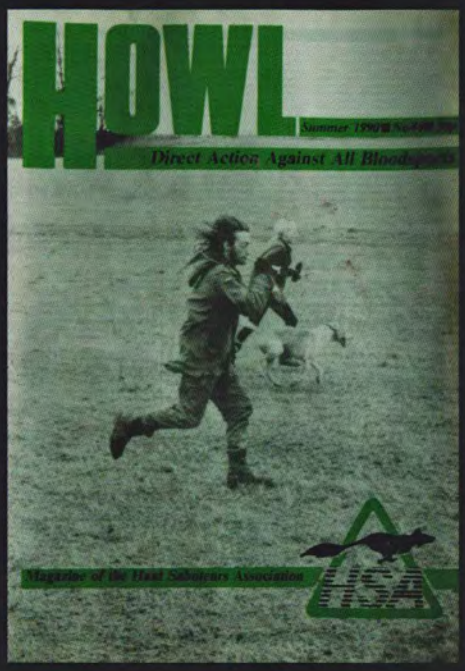
To keep promotional material free we would ask you to make a donation to cover postage.1 Howl costs 55p to send as do 5 posters. 250 leaflets cost approx. £3.75, 500 leaflets £4.25 and 1000 leaflets £6.25.

Obituary

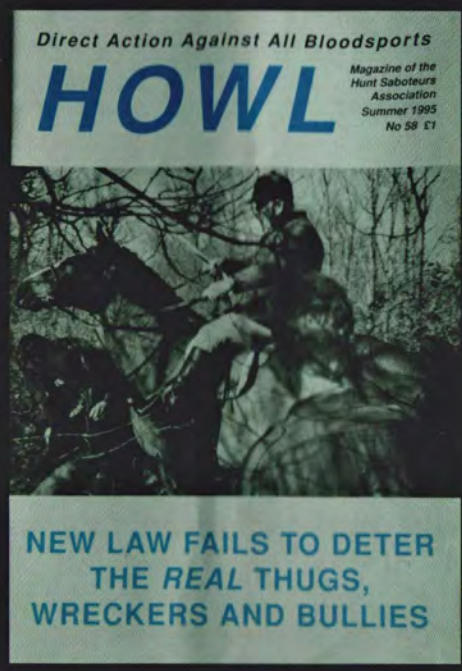
Mick Ross died at the age of 48 in December after a short illness. Mick was at the heart of a group of people from south Dorset who managed to turn banner waving protest into a concerted campaign of life-saving direct action against hunts in Dorset. He was one of the people who attended and helped organise Boxing Day protests against the Cattistock Hunt in Bridport that led, in just 3 years in the early 90s, to their abandonment of the town.

Other victories during Mick's days in the field saw the South Dorset hunt abandoning advertising and being reduced to a shambles. I often went on mid-week 2-person forays against the South Dorset and Cattistock with Mick and it was at these times that I best got to know his dry sense of humour, true passion for wildlife and genuine fearlessness which gave other people strength. He may not have been the tallest of people but standing shoulder to shoulder with Mick was like standing with a giant. As he had driven lorries for a living for a while, many's the time he managed to squeeze his Ford Cortina or our heap of a transit van through the smallest of gaps when heavies tried to block us in. Mick was also an ardent local anti-roads campaigner and keen "twitcher" - although bird watching made him the butt of merciless jokes in the back of a rusty transit coming home from a successful day's sabbing. He was also devoted to his family, and at his funeral we heard from his children how going to demonstrations and protest camps had enriched and informed their early years. There was standing room only; testament to how much Mick will be missed.

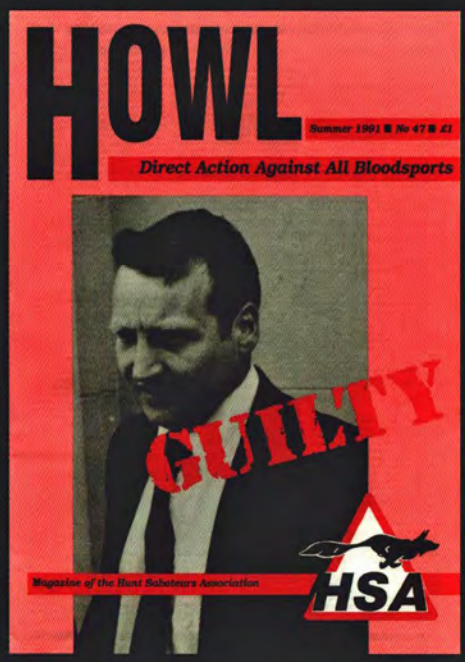




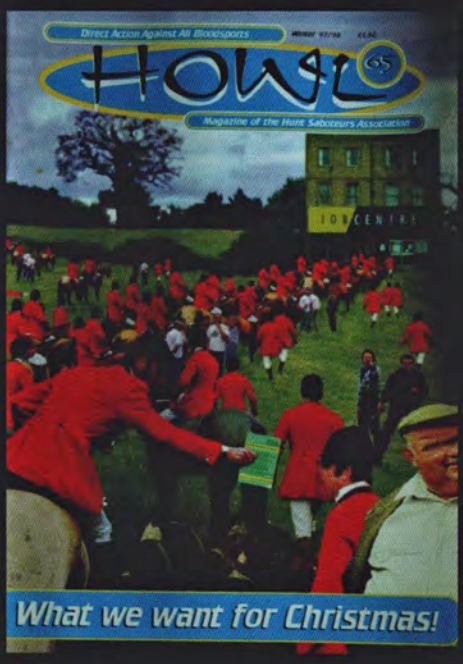
















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www.huntsabs.org.uk