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Direct Action Against All Bloodsports

Summer 2009

HOWL 92

The Magazine of The Hunt Saboteurs Association



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HOWL 92

Cover image - sabbing

Magazine of the Hunt Saboteurs Association
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The Hunt Saboteurs Association has been in existence for over 40 years, and is dedicated to saving the lives of hunted animals directly. Prior to the Hunting Act of 2004, hunt saboteurs used non-violent direct action to prevent the horrific deaths of thousands of hunted animals every year. Post hunt ban the primary tool of hunt sabotage has switched from the hunting horn to the video camera, as saboteurs monitor hunts with the aim of capturing their illegal activities on film. This in turn can immediately save lives on the day, and can lead to police action against the hunt concerned. Our range of pre-ban nvda tactics remain in active service, and saboteurs will continue to use them should they be deemed the best way forward on the day for the hunted animal at risk.

The HSA committee is made up of a maximum of 12 voting members, supported by as many non-voting members as is deemed necessary. All posts are voluntary and unpaid – **no-one on the HSA committee is paid** – as we believe that all money raised by membership and donations should go towards the running of the organisation, and to directly help saboteurs in the field. As a member of the HSA your contribution is vital – thank you.

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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

I think most of you who were out last season would agree it was a good one, and I feel confident the next one will be even better. There were a few disappointments with some prosecutions getting dropped, such as the one against Heythrop huntsman Julian Barnfield. It was never going to be easy to get prosecutions against these people. The Heythrop are a prestigious hunt with prestigious friends but that doesn't mean we should feel despondent. These people are murdering thugs with no concept of compassion and respect for other living things – this will always be their downfall and their lives will always be meaningless. They are not as above the law as they sometimes seem, or why would they fly into a panic or fury at the sight of a video camera? All the hunts know that whenever there are sabs around, there is potential for a prosecution and worse for them, they won't get to kill anything. They keep bleating on about a repeal of the hunting act, but how long is that going to take? The free vote which Cameron keeps promising will not in any way lead to an instant repeal. And he has to justify repealing an act that the vast majority of the population wants to stay. While we don't have much of a democracy in this country, we do at least have to maintain the impression of a democracy.

If at some point there were a repeal, it would of course be a tragedy, and an insult to the people and wildlife of this country, but what would this ultimately mean? Would more animals be hunted and killed than at the moment? Probably not. And more importantly, infuriated people who have been largely apathetic during the years of the ban will join us. With more sabs out and more funds coming in, hunts are not going to know what's hit them. There will be no prosecutions but many more lives saved and that's really the only thing that counts.

PS There may well be a letters page returning to the next issue of HOWL so if you've got any comments about sabbing, hunting, the HSA, HOWL, other wildlife issues etc. then send them in to the HOWL editor email and as many as will fit will go in the next issue.

Also, there is going to be a cash prize for the sab group that takes and sends in the best sabbing or related photo. Other runner up photos will still be used in HOWL.

NEWS ROUND UP

WALLABIES CULLED ON LOCH LOMOND ISLAND

In June, animal lovers reacted to news in the local Daily Record of the planned cull of Scotland's only "mob" of wild wallabies on the tiny island of Inchconnachan in Loch Lomond, by erecting a "Save the Wallabies" banner on its shores. Taxi driver John Chapman, of Cardonald, Glasgow, and his friends went to the island to protest against the cull of the 60 marsupials.

Later, shocked walkers found dead wallabies with gunshot wounds, and also discovered a "mass grave" containing charred carcasses. Agnes Munro, 52, of Barrhead, Renfrewshire, who made the discovery, said: "We found one baby wallaby that had been shot through the head. When we wandered about, we saw an upturned tree, and there were charred remains from other wallabies. It looks like someone has been shooting the animals then burning their bodies. It was disgusting."

The Trossachs National Park Authority and the island's owner Luss Estates say the cull of the native Australian creatures, which were introduced to Inchconnachan in the 1940s, is necessary to save rare local wildlife, as the wallabies eat their way through tons of vegetation. However, the National Park and Luss Estates both maintain that the deaths happened before a cull was due to begin, and the matter was passed to the local wildlife crime police officer.

DISPUTE OVER CULLING OF MAGPIES

Wildlife charities are in dispute over the role of magpies in the disappearance of songbirds from gardens across the country. On the one hand supporters of Songbird Survival and the Countryside Alliance regard the birds as vicious marauders of nests, claiming that they snatch chicks and eggs. But the RSPB and the RSPCA are rushing to defend the species to prevent thousands being killed, maintaining that the decline of songbirds has more to do with intensive farming practices than with these corvids. They also claim that, despite a huge increase in the magpie population from 1970 to the mid-1990s, it has remained stable in the past decade. The campaign to save magpies coincides with the bird breeding season, when many people believe – wrongly – it is their right to trap and kill these scavengers. The RSPCA and RSPB warn that anyone harming magpies will face a fine of up to £5,000 or six months in prison. David Hoccom, a spokesman for the RSPB, said: "We do not think that trapping and killing of magpies is justified in most situations. In certain circumstances on reserves to protect ground-nesting birds such as lapwings it may be necessary to reduce magpie numbers. But we do not think there is any case for people to do it in their own gardens and it will make absolutely no difference to arrest the decline of songbirds throughout the country."



Vashakie @dreamstime

A spokesman for the RSPCA said it was also prepared to bring prosecutions against anyone being cruel to magpies. "Magpies are not responsible for the decline of songbirds. We urge everyone to leave them alone not least because there is a risk if the public attempt to catch and kill magpies they will cause suffering to the birds."

However, many supporters of Songbird Survival, a charity set up to save the dawn chorus, believe that it is their lawful duty to keep magpie numbers down to save species such as song thrushes, starlings and house sparrows, and the law does indeed allow them to do this for purposes of bird conservation. One practitioner is Penelope Elliott, 56, a retired nurse from Devon, who has been culling magpies for the past five years, usually about twenty-five a year. She said: "It's definitely had a positive impact and we now have more wrens, finches and blackbirds."

Songbird Survival insists that it has not organised a campaign to kill magpies. But Nick Forde, a trustee of the charity, said: "There is a wealth of anecdotal evidence that a magpie can go down a whole hedgerow taking out every songbird nest. The Government is not going to do anything about it so there is a case for people following the evidence of their eyes and doing something about it. I don't like harming animals, but if they are destroying our biodiversity then we have to take action. But trapping and killing must be done humanely and properly."

The Countryside Alliance also supports the control of magpies to protect pheasant and partridge chicks (until, of course, they can be shot). Tim Bonner, a spokesman for the group, said: "We would encourage people to help manage the magpie population. Gamekeepers have long known that magpies have a detrimental effect on wild bird breeding success but it is important that people understand the legal framework and adhere to the terms of open licences."



CAMPAIGN TO CLOSE BELLE VUE STADIUM

Greyhound protection campaigners have renewed their calls for the closure of the dog track at Manchester's Belle Vue Stadium after three dogs were 'put down' following serious injuries. These included a greyhound called Happy Hawk who fell badly while racing, and two other dogs, Blue Fern and Liam Maldini who were both injured in collisions while racing.

All three dogs were later 'put down' by a veterinary surgeon, because of the extent of their injuries.

Tony Peters, UK Co-ordinator for international greyhound protection group Greyhound Action said: "We found out about the deaths of these dogs from an official at the track, who has become sympathetic to our campaign, because he is sickened by the number of injuries to greyhounds that occur there. The serious injuries to these three dogs, and the subsequent ending of their lives, are just the latest incidents in a catalogue of carnage associated with Belle Vue, which our local branch has dubbed the Stadium of Death".

"Details obtained by greyhound protection campaigners under the Freedom of Information Act indicate that over 40 dogs are being 'put down' annually at the stadium after suffering injuries there. In addition, hundreds of other greyhounds, bred because of the demand created by Belle Vue, are put to death as puppies or young dogs, before they even make it to the track, after being judged unsuitable for racing. According to our most recent research, as many as 15,000 greyhounds, bred for the British racing industry, are 'put down' every year, after failing to make the grade as racers or when their 'careers' on the tracks come to an end".

"An RSPCA report on greyhound racing has stated that 'at least 20 greyhounds a day - either puppies which do not make the track, or retired dogs aged three or four - simply disappear, presumed killed'. Members of the public can help put an end to this horrific situation by not attending dog tracks or betting on greyhound racing, so this appalling industry fades away through lack of financial support. In response to these latest deaths at Belle Vue, our local branch has renewed their call for the closure of the dog track there and will be continuing with their demonstrations outside the stadium."

CAMPAIGN LAUNCHED TO END GREYHOUND RACING IN NOTTINGHAM

Local animal protection workers in Nottingham have launched a campaign to close the city's greyhound track and are currently staging demos there on a two-weekly basis. The group are appealing for more support, so they can increase the frequency of these, as well as holding street stalls etc. in support of their campaign.

According to the pro-racing greyhoundscene internet forum, a young greyhound (21 months old), called Unleash Castro, collapsed and died after winning a race on April 11th at Nottingham. Sadly, deaths and serious injuries to dogs running on the tracks are relatively common, and the existence of a major track like Nottingham is responsible for the putting to death of about 500 greyhounds every year.



Rusakov@dreamstime

H+M BOSS OWNS HUGE SHOOTING AND FISHING ESTATE

Stefan Persson, owner of H&M and Sweden's second richest man, is snapping up the Linkenholt estate near Andover, Hampshire, following a bidding war in the depths of the recession. It is the second English country estate bought by Persson, 61, who already owns 8,500 acres in neighbouring Wiltshire, where he hosts partridge and pheasant shoots. His £9m country estate near Marlborough in Wiltshire is regarded as one of the country's best trout fishing areas, where anglers pay £1,700 for an annual permit. Earlier this year, the Environment Agency reportedly spent £53,000 of public money raising the river bed in a move that will improve the quality of the fishing for Persson's guests.

His latest purchase will give him a taste of the influence once enjoyed by Britain's aristocrats. On top of a sizable manor house, Linkenholt includes 1,500 acres of farmland, a 425-acre wood, a cricket ground and 21 dwellings leased to villagers, some of whom have lived there from birth. Since the 1970s, it has been run by a charitable trust after its last owner, Herbert Blagrave, an entrepreneur, died without leaving any children. As a viable business - with rents ranging from about £500 a month for a small cottage to £3,500 for the manor house, to say nothing of lucrative shooting rights - the trust put Linkenholt on the market in March. Persson, whose wealth is estimated at £11.4 billion, securing him joint 16th place in The Sunday Times World Rich List, is believed to have had an offer accepted at the top end of the £23m-£25m guide price.

H&M, or Hennes & Mauritz, was founded by Persson's father, Erling, in 1947, and has more than 1,800 stores across the world. Its competitive pricing and affordable collections by guest designers such as Matthew Williamson have allowed H&M to buck the downturn.

CONSERVATIVES COMMIT TO BADGER CULL

Ignoring extensive research on the subject during the Krebs trials, the Conservatives have announced their commitment to a cull of badgers in this country if they win the next general election. Following a 7 year trial of killing many badgers throughout parts of Gloucestershire, Wiltshire and the South West, it was concluded that killing badgers does not reduce levels of bovine TB in cattle. However this has not stopped the shadow Environment secretary Nick Herbert issuing a statement 'renewing the Conservatives" commitment to tackling bovine TB', following meetings with local farmers in Devon. He restated his Party's intention to 'pursue a targeted cull of infected badgers as part of a broad strategy' to tackle the problem.

OSPREYS ENTANGLED IN FISHING LINE

The famous Speyside ospreys at the Loch Garten sanctuary faced disaster after both adult birds became entangled in discarded fishing tackle. The male bird Odin was seen trailing around 40ft of line while his mate EJ had a 6in length lodged in her beak.
Richard Thaxton, RSPB Loch Garten Osprey Centre manager said: "Everything was going brilliantly but unfortunately this has real potential to ruin this year's osprey season. It's vital that anglers don't leave discarded fishing tackle lying around, especially at this time of year, as Odin and his offspring are now in real danger. He could become entangled on almost anything and we're really worried about him bringing food back to the nest and the potential consequences. We're considering ways to safely catch him and disentangle him without too much risk as this may be a better option than leaving him to get stuck somewhere while on a fishing trip."
Discarded fishing line poses a significant threat to ospreys, as these flying anglers rely on some of the same lochs for food that humans use for recreational fishing.
Another male osprey disappeared after being seen entangled in discarded line at another nest near Aberfoyle, and the nesting attempt there subsequently failed.

MARCH FOR ANIMALS IN LABORATORIES DAY IN CHILE

On Saturday, 25th April, about 500 people marched in the centre of Santiago against vivisection. The march started with a performance that represented a person wounded by vivisectors, expressing how people and animals suffer and feel the same.
The march moved through the university neighborhood of Santiago, where several private universities that practise vivisection are situated. They use animals for classes in biological sciences careers and perform 'research' on them, just to get more funds and prestige. The compassion and anger could be felt in the people, shaming these universities and exposing their dirty actions.

After passing this place, the march continued through one of the busiest avenues in Santiago, showing the horrors of vivisection. The message was sent to everyone with banners, chants, placards and leaflets, making them know what happens in these universities, cosmetics and household products companies, and HLS and their filthy customers.
The march ended in a park, where there were animal rights organisations, information stalls and lots of vegan food.





FOX CUB RESCUED FROM SNARE

A three month old fox cub survived being trapped in a snare for two weeks after his mother brought him food every day. He was discovered with horrific injuries after being heard screaming in agony on scrubland close to homes in Southend, Essex. RSPCA Inspector Sam Garvey, who helped rescue the terrified fox, said: "Due to the amount of time he had been there, we think he must have been fed by his mother because he was still quite chubby." But the RSPCA inspector added: "These traps don't just catch foxes, they can trap cats and dogs as well. Someone laid this trap, probably because they were having a problem with foxes in their garden or getting into the rubbish. But causing an animal unnecessary suffering is a criminal offence and we will not hesitate to prosecute whoever is responsible." The snare was caught around the cub's stomach and had pulled so tight it had cut through to the bone. Despite the cub's horrendous injuries he was stitched up and making a good recovery at South Essex Wildlife Hospital in Orsett.

World Day For Animals in Laboratories



On Saturday 25th April, over two thousand anti-vivisectionists marched through London to mark World Day for Animals in Laboratories. The day is an internationally recognised, UN-sanctioned event for reflection and remembrance of the countless millions of animals that suffer and die in vivisection laboratories around the world each year in the name of science. The march was organised to call for an end to vivisection both in the UK and elsewhere, in response to Labour's abandoned pre-election promise for an official inquiry into animal experimentation.



By midday, thousands of activists had gathered at the designated meeting point in Hyde Park, where a series of speeches set the tone for the rally. A good mixture of new and seasoned activists took the opportunity to build new links and friendships, and strengthen existing bonds. The sunshine on the day ensured a buoyant mood despite the understandable anger and frustration which was targeted at all those involved with vivisection and animal exploitation. By the end of the march, the Met confirmed that not a single arrest or incident had occurred throughout the entire day, negating the necessity they felt to line each side of the march with baton-armed officers and the ever intrusive Forward Intelligence Team (FIT) squads.



At approximately 2pm the demonstrators began to line up near to the memorial in Hyde Park for animals killed by war and set off behind a banner proclaiming "No more torture, no more lies!". The flow of people filing around the corner stretched as far as the eye could see and drums, whistles and megaphones kept a steadily chanting crowd moving along as one. The police, clearly nervous at first were later seen reading campaign leaflets given to them by protestors and discussing animal rights issues amongst themselves. As the protest filtered through towards the city centre, the numbers were swelled by unconnected passers by who spontaneously joined the march in a show of disgust with the practice of vivisection.

Rounding the corner into Trafalgar Square, a call went out from the front of the demonstration for silence which, owing to the length of the procession, took several minutes to filter through to the back. There was then a moment of quiet reflection and a slow, sombre march which emphasised the serious nature of the event and horrific atrocities committed in the name of science. This presented an eerie sight to the tourists and residents of this part of London, no doubt used to reading in the mainstream press stories of undisciplined, foaming at the mouth anarchists who only ever campaign using violence and threats. The positive, focused attitude and approachability of everyone involved in the march was fundamentally important in showing the true face of animal activism, and thousands of unconnected people will have left the city with an enlightened understanding of why opposing vivisection is such a huge issue for so many. As the crowd left the square, a huge spontaneous cheer and round of applause broke out amongst both the activists and the watching public, showing that attitudes can change and the time is right for these issues to take centre stage once more.

After a short but noisy walk through one of the busiest streets on earth, the demonstrators then began to slowly file into the location for the rally, ironically held in front of the boarded up Ministry for Agriculture and Fisheries building. Food was available for a donation towards costs by the renowned Nottingham based Veggies Catering Campaign who were more than happy to share the street with two superb new vegan catering collectives, Fair Foods and Green Garden Cafe.
Following refreshments there were speeches from Caroline Lucas, Green Party leader and MEP, Daniel, an anti-vivisection activist from Sweden, John Carmody, founder of the Irish group Animal Rights Action Network (ARAN), Richard Deboo from Animals Count, and Debbie, an activist from Stop Huntingdon Animal Cruelty (SHAC).

Activists Paid Thousands in Compensation By Kent Police

Animal rights protesters who claim Kent police "imprisoned" them on a coach to Dover docks have received thousands in compensation. Police have paid out a total of £27,500 to 22 protesters, with each one who sued receiving a total of £1,250, based on damages for two hours of false imprisonment and compensation. There are still four cases pending, and 15 other people on the coach could make claims.
The incident took place when a coach from London arrived for a protest against live exports in Dover. The coach, carrying about 40 protesters, was stopped by police on the edge of the town centre. Some of the protesters decided to walk the rest of the way to reach the demo, which was a few hundred yards away along the seafront. But they were stopped by a senior officer who said they would be arrested unless they got back on the coach.
Two police evidence gatherers got on the coach and starting walking down the aisle taking photos and video. Eventually, the coach driver was ordered to return to London. The coach was escorted by several police vehicles and motorbikes who blocked every exit to a motorway junction or service station.

HUNTING IN THE LAKES AND OPPOSITION TO IT

INTRODUCTION

The 1960s witnessed the emergence of hunt sabs in the U.K. At first it was mainly hunts in the south of the country who were being targeted by sabs. The hunting community up in Cumbria, were under the impression that the antis would not dare set foot in Cumbria to disrupt their way of life!

One publication at the time on the subject of fell hunting in the lakes, states that any antis (weirds with beards) who turn up in Cumbria would find themselves in a stream head first with just their wellies on view (have not come across that yet!).

However it would not be until the late 1980s that Cumbrian fell packs would see sabs on a regular basis, disrupting their activities up in the hills.

FELL HUNTING

In the lakes hunting and farming go hand in hand. Hunting in these parts has been part of the social fabric for centuries. Each farm would have terriers and hounds. The local community would come together if one of the local farmers was having trouble with foxes (or under that impression). These packs where known as bobbery packs, later on known as trencher-fed. Subscription packs came later on in the 19th and 20th century, and hounds were kept in the same kennels during the hunting season. In the summer they would go to the local farmers to be walked.



Generations of the same families have been linked to the local hunts. It's these strong community ties they claim, which keeps hunting going on in the lakes, and stops the local farmers from being isolated in such vast rural areas. The local inn provides a meeting place for the fell packs; these inns have been frequented by the local hunts for years. At the end of the day they will gather for some tattie pot and a sing song. Long dead huntsmen and hounds and terriers are immortalised in songs. The Melbreak have the Kirkstile inn (home of the Melbreak foxhounds), and the Blencathra have the Salutation inn at Threlkeld down the road from their kennels. To the locals, these places are shrines to days gone by of days spent on the fells hunting. The masks of foxes can be seen on the walls, trophies etc won at the local shows during the summer.

On the subject of shrines, people travel to Caldbeck from far and wide to pay their respects at the graveside of the so called legendary hunt thug John Peel.

FELL PACKS



The fell packs have their own committee, the Central Committee of Fell Packs. The Masters of Foxhounds Association (MFHA) did not want to be closely linked with the fell packs as some of the practices do not sit well with the MFHA, e.g. not giving law to the fox. Up in the fells, when a fox is bolted the pack is laid on straight away.

Six fell packs are full members: Blencathra, Coniston, Eskdale and Ennerdale, Lunesdale, Melbreak and Ullswater. Also there are three affiliated packs: North Lonsdale, North Pennine and Wensleydale.

They go out two or three times a week from Oct to April, then they are on call-outs in May during the lambing season. Most meets start about 9.30am and can go on to mid-afternoon. The fell packs don't advertise their meets publicly now; they are kept in-house. Any meet cards we do get our hands on only advertise to March and don't include the Easter meets due to us coming up on fell week and disrupting their meets.

In an article a while back, Barry Todhunter, Blencathra's huntsman, declared the one thing that upsets him the most whilst hunting

is the tourists who inadvertently walk over the scent line lain down by their quarry. He stated that more hunts are disrupted this way than any other. Another thing which does not sit well is that the public have the right to roam. So we can go wherever they go which works to our advantage.

CUMBRIAN HUNT SABS



Carlisle, and Workington, plus Ulverston in the South Lakes, had groups going out in the late 1980s. As well as the fell packs, we have two mounted packs, plus the Bewcastle foxhounds (who hunt on foot), the Dalston mink hounds, plus grouse shoots to deal with.

Over the years we have uncovered false earths in the lakes, right next to fields with sheep in. This received widespread coverage, and a great deal of embarrassment to the fell packs in the area. In 1993 whilst attending a meet of the Blencathra on Easter Monday, with a presenter from Radio Four, we came across a terrier in appalling condition, tied up next to two dead badger cubs. We took the terrier to a local vet, but sadly the dog had to be put to sleep due to its injuries. The vet estimated that the dog had been at the sett for about a week! No one was prosecuted. And it was made clear that the Blencathra were not involved. However if you look at old publications on hunting in the lakes it mentions terriers coming into conflict with badgers and huntsmen killing them.

Recommended book to borrow is Willie Irving (Melbreak huntsman), Terrierman, and Huntsman and Lakelander. Sean Frain ISBN 978-1-906122-02-7.

TRIED AND TESTED TACTICS



Sabotaging a fell/upland pack is not easy. It usually comes as a shock to most people, especially those sabs more used to "lowland packs". All hunting of foxes is done solely on foot, the terrain precluding the use of horses. The main problems in sabotaging a fell pack are the terrain, with some of the mountains hunted rising to between the 2000 and 3000 ft, plus the distinct lack of roads means that sometimes sabs have to walk long distances just to get anywhere near the hunt. The weather in Cumbria can change in minutes from bright sunshine to mist/fog, meaning that the hunt can often be nearby but remain unseen by sabs. The fitness of the hunters (and lack of fitness of sabs) often means the hunt can put vast distance between them and us. The huntsman regularly loses touch with his pack. Sabs are often split and mobile phones often don't work; CBs when used are very helpful but it has to be remembered that the hunt use them too.

The first organised hits by local people occurred in the South Lakes around about the 1985 season. Groups then sprang up in Mid and North Cumbria. The end of the 1988 season saw the first of the very successful fell weeks, where sabs from all over the country descended on Cumbria, giving the local groups the support and help they needed. Some fantastic (albeit long and very hard) days were had including a sab on the Coniston FH during the 1990 week. Within minutes of the hunt moving off from the meet, the pack was split in two and any hounds coming within the reach of sabs were caught and put on makeshift leads. Later on in the day the huntsman was spotted with 3 hounds under his control and one of them was taken off him leading him to call it a day whereby his hounds were returned to him.

With the low numbers that we usually get, probably the most effective tactic to sab a fell pack is to get on the fells before the hunt move off and occupy the high ground above the meet; this has been used to great effect over many years. With larger numbers, sabs can split up and cover more areas, each group "guarding" their patch meaning no matter where the hunt go there are always sabs near enough to intervene when needed. As with all forms of hunting, the more you know about the pack and the area which is hunted, the more effective you will be. Study the area to be hunted, look at past hit reports and try and ascertain which area is to be hunted that day. When the hunt starts, the huntsman will usually make his way up towards a good vantage point from which to watch and control his hounds. Then, when the huntsman casts his hounds, this is the best time to sab them (making sure you are not calling them into any danger or onto a fox). Fell hounds are trained to respond to holloas and voice calls and these can be used to devastating effect. Once you have got the hounds' attention it will be very difficult for the huntsman and any nearby followers to stop the pack coming to you. The hardest part is to keep the pack interested in you and often they will start drifting back to the huntsman.

SINCE THE BAN



Since the ban came in to effect in 2005, we and other interested parties have gathered video footage of the local fell packs flouting the law, week in and week out.

A couple of years ago, the Blencathra, unbeknown to them were filmed chasing and killing a fox by hunt monitors, who were not known to the hunt. Once again no prosecution was brought against them. This footage was aired in Cumbria and in the North East on the local TV news. So the question is how much video evidence do you need? Our main priority is to intervene on behalf of the hunted animal. The Blencathra were the only fell pack to advertise after the ban came in. At the opening meet of the first season after the ban, the Blencathra's secretary came smugly over to hand a meet card to us. However, that did not happen the season after!

Four years down the line, the Blencathra have admitted in an article about hunt monitors in the lakes that they no longer advertise on the web, due to us turning up, and bringing the police along (something to hide?). Kate Hoey MP condemned the police for doing their job i.e. policing the act. She went on to say that the police's attitude has changed. She's right – it has changed. The police have seen and realised that the only false trail being laid is that of deceit. The police do turn up at meets unannounced, and we have to say, they are making an effort at last. What we need now is the act to be strengthened, so prosecutions can be gained.

We have noticed since the ban that the local fell packs are resorting to violence to try and deter us from turning up. Two years ago, the huntsman from the Coniston was the first huntsman to be charged and convicted for attacking the car of local hunt sabs. Michael Gerald Nicholson was given a conditional discharge for 12 months and ordered to pay compensation and costs. A couple of years ago a sab was knocked down by a supporter wearing a balaclava and driving a quad bike. No one was arrested for this incident.

However, that has not deterred Cumbria hunt sabs. In recent months the bad weather in the lakes has taken care of a lot of meets. In late Feb we had sabs turn up from the South and the Midlands, not forgetting Merseyside, to do the Blenie and for the first time in a while the North Lonsdale. So on the first day we went out against the North Lonsdale, who basically left the meet, had a bit of a ramble with us for company, could not come up with a cunning plan, so they returned back to the meet, and that was that.

The next day seen us out on the fells of Caldbeck Common, in spitting distance of John Peel's grave. About twelve of us went out on the fells. Barry made every effort to lose us, but could not shake four sabs off, who proceeded to call hounds off the line of a fox. With no joy he called it a day. So that ended two successful days in Cumbria. Thanks to every one who came up and put the effort in.



The last week in March, once again saw sabs coming up from the South and Merseyside to do the Blenie and the North Lonsdale. The Blencathra got wind of us being out and about, so for the second year running relocated from the Lonsdale valley, to try and shake us off but to no avail. Sabs caught up with Barry on Threlkeld common on the line of a fox, so the gizmo and hunting horn were put to good use, proceeding to split his pack. Barry eventually got his hounds back. Being denied his bloodlust he stayed out later than normal, but had no joy.

Another successful day was spent getting to know the N. Lonsdale. They made a futile effort to go out, but soon called it a day, when sabs got control of their hounds.

So that was a good end to the season. Once again a big thanks to those who have helped out this year. The message the hunting fraternity have got in Cumbria this year is that they can run, but they can't hide, we will sniff them out!

Crawley and Horsham hunt drop injunction proceedings



Crawley and Horsham hunt have dropped High Court injunction proceedings against West Sussex Wildlife Protection and Simon and Jaine Wild who they claimed "acted on behalf of members and supporters of West Sussex Wildlife Protection Group and West Sussex Badger Protection Group."

More than a year after commencing High Court proceedings, the Crawley and Horsham hunt have been forced to back out of their legal action which is believed to be due to evidence that they have been illegally hunting. This, together with the approaching election when hunting will return to the political agenda, meant any embarrassing publicity for hunts would be counter-productive.

In October '08, backed by the Countryside Alliance they attempted to obtain a "landmark judgement" in trespass, nuisance, and harassment against West Sussex Wildlife Protection. However, due to "fundamental defects" in their case, the trespass and nuisance claims were rejected by the court, leaving only the harassment claim.

A defence under the Harassment Act is that a person sought to "prevent or detect crime," and this was a hurdle that the hunt could not get over. There was strong evidence of illegal hunting at the Crawley and Horsham hunt, and this had been verified by Professor Harris, Professor of Environment Science at Bristol University. His report prepared for the defence was so strong that it was decided to contest the case and refuse to give any undertakings to settle this case. Some of the strongest evidence was made by a hunt rider using a hidden camera and this showed the principle plaintiff, Simon Greenwood, using his hounds to chase a fox to ground and then call in terrier-men to dig it out and throw it to the hounds. Chasing foxes to ground with dogs was legal before 2005 but is now illegal.

Simon Wild stated: "The Crawley and Horsham hunt has been forced to withdraw from an action that the Countryside Alliance had originally engineered as a master plan designed to defeat the Hunting Act by preventing monitoring. If they had achieved this, it would have spread nationwide and been game, set and match for hunting. Now we have turned the tables, and the hunt will have to write out cheques for hundreds of thousands of pounds for legal fees, having achieved nothing. We have never been able to get the hunt to meet with monitors and the police, and a statement provided for this court case by Sussex Police demanded the hunt becomes 'more transparent'".

The injunction the hunt sought would have excluded the defendants, anyone who participates or supports hunt monitoring and anyone with notice of the injunction, from large sections of West Sussex, including from public rights of way. The hunt, in dropping these proceedings, has also agreed to pay almost the entirety of the defendants' legal costs.

The Crawley & Horsham hunt are backed by the Countryside Alliance and the Masters of Foxhounds Association who treated this as a test case to try and stop monitoring of hunting activities and, it seems, as part of their opposition to the hunting ban imposed by statute. The hunt has taken this step following an unsuccessful application for an interim injunction on 15 July 2008 and two aborted trials in July and October 2008. The trial was adjourned in October 2008 at the claimants' request. This followed a High Court ruling which dismissed the claimants' claims in trespass and nuisance, finding that there were "fundamental defects" and limiting the claim to a claim in harassment.

The defendants deny any harassment to the claimants. On the contrary, Mrs. Wild and other hunt monitors believe they have been the victims of harassment and intimidating behaviour by hunt stewards and other members of the Crawley & Horsham hunt. The defendants had threatened to apply to have the claim struck out for abuse of process and as showing no cause of action and this appears to have prompted the hunt to drop the case over a year since it was instigated.



Victoria Pogge von Strandmann, from Fisher Meredith solicitors who represented Jaine Wild, said: "These proceedings should never have been brought. We are pleased that they are now being withdrawn. The proceedings were an oppressive attempt by a powerful group, which includes the Crawley & Horsham hunt backed by the Countryside Alliance, to seek to use the courts to stop individuals concerned about the welfare of animals holding them to account so that they may flout a law that they have unstintingly opposed. In the process, they were seeking to stifle legitimate opposition and rights to free speech and prevent individuals from going about their everyday lives in their locality."

POLICING HUNT BAN LOW PRIORITY

ACPO spokesperson admits the hunting ban is not a priority

NORTH Wales police chief Richard Brunstrom has come under fire after admitting that policing the ban on fox-hunting is "definitely not a priority". The force's most senior officer made the comments after the Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO), for which he is the spokesman for rural affairs, announced new guidelines on enforcing the ban.

Hunt parties will no longer have to inform police in advance of any planned events, meeting places and routes and officers will instead have to rely on information from anti-hunt activists.

Mr. Brunstrom said: "I am pleased with the new guidance, but hunting is definitely not a policing priority. Don't let me give you the impression it is. But that does not mean we are not going to deal with it. We recognise it is the law of the land and the duty of the police to enforce it - but to do so proportionately and prioritise."



The comments have prompted furious reactions from many hunt monitors, who have fought for the abolition of the bloodsport for many years. Among them is Judi Hewitt, a member of Wales Against Animal Cruelty, who is a hunt monitor in Wrexham, Flintshire and Denbighshire. She has written a letter to Mr. Brunstrom accusing him of not caring about wildlife and being "on the wrong side of justice". She said: "I can't say how upset I am over Mr. Brunstrom's remarks. I have worked hard for more than 18 years to stop hunting with hounds and I feel betrayed."

A spokesman for the League Against Cruel Sport said: "We fought for 80 years for the hunting ban and, while we accept it is not a high priority for police, a ban was the will of Parliament and is the will of the people and we are going to press for more prosecution cases to be brought."

New guidance from ACPO states that gathering evidence of illegal hunting is difficult, that the ban is hard to enforce and that chief constables have more pressing priorities. Demonstrating his lack of understanding of the Hunting Act and the democratic process which made it law, Brunstrom said: "Hunting is definitely not a policing priority. It is not illegal to wear a red coat and ride a horse in a public place."

The new guidance undermines one of the most controversial pieces of legislation introduced by the Labour Government, which took up 700 hours of parliamentary time.



He outlined the difficulties which for some reason seem to be more of a problem for police than they are for hunt sabs and monitors all over the country: "If there are offences they are likely to be taking place in a remote rural environment. We are not very well equipped to follow hunts and get evidence and nor do we think we can justify it. Pursuing hunts is an expensive and sophisticated operation." The guidance suggests that in future forces should rely on anti-hunt activists to produce information. What is unclear is why there were always plenty of resources to justify pursuing hunt sabs before the hunting ban came in.

He accepted the need to train more police in hunt investigations and said he hoped that the pro-hunt Countryside Alliance and the RSPCA, the International Fund for Animal Welfare and the League Against Cruel Sports would attend training seminars to give their views. A hunt investigation manual is to be distributed to forces before the autumn season.



David Cameron, the Conservative leader, has made it clear that he favours a repeal of the Hunting Act and in the event of a general election victory will offer MPs a free vote in government time, although a backbencher would have to produce a Bill.

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.

FEB.	**P.FENN**
	M.KENNEDY
	G.FIELDS
MARCH.	**M.DOOR**
	D.THURLEY
	F.MARSHALL
APRIL.	**S.FENWICK**
	H.BEVAN
	D.WESTWOOD
MAY.	**F.DEVINE**
	P.FENN
	P.PERRIN
JUNE.	**A.RADFORD**
	F.INKLEY
	M.MEAD



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.....

GROUP NEWS



South

SOUTHAMPTON sabs spent most of January and February hooking up with Bristol, South Wales and Pewsey. Early in January saw a trip to the Cotswold Vale that ended up in a stand-off between the hunt and a mob of the great unwashed after which they decided not to go out, boxed up and went home. Then about 50 sabs from all over the south made a trip to the New Forest to let them know that tyre slashing and threats are not very sporting, and so did about 60 cops courtesy of the tax payer. After a couple of hours they packed up to save police resources (nothing to do with us then) .

Another trip to the forest saw them on a fox; sabs intervened with whips and sprays which resulted in angry riders try to ride them down. A day on the Monmouth with Bristol, Pewsey and South Wales started with a sab getting hurt and taken to hospital and then them hunting in front of us so again we stepped in. By the beginning of March we had a whole load of new people keen to get out and get stuck in so a couple of trips to the Garth and South Berks were made where we met up with Reading sabs and kept them on the run most of the day. Then a return to the Monmouth with a small but effective mob of Bristol, Pewsey, South Wales and ourselves resulted in the hunt being on the run all day, their angry supporters trying to run over sabs in a field. On another occasion, a tip off on the whereabouts of the Vine and Craven made us leave the Tedworth kennels after an hour of waiting for them to leave, which ended in the Vine and Craven packing up within 20 mins of us finding them.



Our last day out this season was in mid-April on the Royal Artillery with Reading, South Wales, Bath and Pewsey. They did a runner, we kept on them, they packed up, we went to the pub. Job done (also cheers to all the groups who came to the New Forest in January).

With a satisfying away game (New Forest) under our belts, **East Kent** sabs felt inspired for the rest of the season, with regular checks on our little friends the Ashford Valley. Starting with the initial "look at us – we are simply exercising the hounds routine" but when they thought we weren't around, we saw their true colours. Disappearing into woods and attempting to give us the slip has made us more aware and we will keep up the pressure next season.

It seems everyone who's anyone in the world





of blood junkies was out for the final Saturday of the hunting calendar to say goodbye to the East Kent hunt master Richard Blakeney. Everyone except the police, who assured us they were in the area. Which area, however, has yet to be determined. With no police or media hanging around they were able to carry on like they did before the ban. Upon our arrival the riders were holed up in the woods. After witnessing 6 or so quad bikes draped with 3 or more big-eared boys, we decided to make our presence a little more covert. With over 90 riders and the sheer size of their numbers, it made it difficult for them to hunt or even stay together.

With the season over it gives us more time to concentrate on working on tactics and increasing our numbers, ready for the next cubbing season.



READING sabs season ended well with a couple of brilliant trips to the Lake District and an excellent day out with the South Hereford with some neighbouring sab groups where good old-fashioned tactics saved the life of a fox who was just metres ahead of the hounds. We had a trip down to Devon where they really don't bother about all this pretence of following a trail. We also had a good day with the Royal Artillery and some great days out with the Vale of Aylesbury, Garth and South Berks. At one of their local meets, we saw Thames Valley police in their true colours despite some pretence lately of working with monitors. There was a bizarre arrest that day which we'll have to wait and see what the outcome will be. All in all a great finish to the season, no trouble with the police as long as they aren't actually there and no illegal hunting as long as there are no foxes for miles around, roll on next season.

New people are always welcome; if you want to join us call 07984977603 or readinghuntsabs@hotmail.com

North

Cumbria sabs have been busy as always, check out what they've been up to in the fell hunting article or
If yer fancy a visit to the lakes get in touch phcumbria/myspace.

Nottingham sabs had an excellent end to the season, sabbing sometimes on our own and sometimes with comrades from other groups (cheers all, you know who you are).

Numbers of sabs were up and we've had lots of people expressing an interest for the coming season (they'll probably regret it at 5am on a cold September morning but I'm sure they'll enjoy it!).

We had a couple of excellent days out with the Burton, who despite moving so fast over the flat lands of Lincolnshire, just couldn't seem to shake us. We also paid a return visit to the Badsworth and Bramham moor who had rudely decided to smash a light on one our vans earlier in the season. The hounds seemed to like the sound of our gizmo and we had a good day pinching them off the huntsman at every opportunity. We also stumbled on a gang of lads ratting who took one look at the sabs, dropped their spades and legged it! We then spent the rest of the day being moaned at by angry parents claiming their sons shouldn't be exposed to violence. Missing the obvious point that 1. we hadn't been anywhere near their precious offspring and 2. They were happily murdering rats at the time so if that's not violent I don't know what is.



We rounded off the season with a couple of well-attended benefit gigs and a fundraising lunch where a good time was had by all and valuable funds were made to help us protect wildlife. Thanks to everyone who organised, performed at, catered and attended these events. We couldn't do it without you.

See you next season.

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

VERMIN PATROL

CRUELTY CASES IN THE COURTS

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

bloodsports
VERMIN

A Cumbrian man is set to face a trial after being accused of two acts of illegal hunting. John Harrison, 48, who is the Huntsman of the Ullswater Foxhounds of Grassthwaite Howe, in Glenridding near Penrith, appeared at Eden Magistrates charged with two counts of hunting a wild mammal with a dog. He pleaded not guilty to both offences, and will now go on trial before a district judge in Penrith. Harrison was granted bail.



A Redbourn man was banned from entering farmland throughout two counties with a dog after he was caught illegally hunting hares. Jimmy Cash, 45, of Lybury Way has been given a two year anti-social behaviour order (ASBO), following a conviction under the 2004 Hunting Act. The order, issued at Stevenage magistrates on 5/6/09, prohibits him from trespassing, either on foot or in a vehicle, on agricultural or privately-owned land, with a dog anywhere in Hertfordshire or Cambridgeshire. He has previously been convicted of two offences in connection with an incident near Royston. Cash was fined £700 after being caught hare coursing by police. He pleaded guilty to one poaching charge and a hare coursing offence under the new Hunting Act 2004. At Stevenage magistrates on 8/4/09 he was fined £350 for each offence, plus £400 costs and £15 to help victims of crime.



On 22/5/09 Huntsman Otis Ferry was fined £350 and given a one-year conditional discharge after admitting a public order offence at a hunt in Gloucestershire. Ferry was charged with affray, robbery and assault after a dispute with two hunt monitors. The dispute with the hunt protesters happened when Ferry, from Eaton Mascott in Shropshire, was a guest of the Heythrop Hunt, which covers Oxfordshire and Gloucestershire. Fellow hunt supporter John Deutsch, 55, was also fined £350 after admitting affray. Both men were ordered to pay £100 costs.

On 11/5/09 Robert MacIntyre, of St Patrick's Walk in Heysham, pleaded guilty at Preston magistrates after he was spotted by a member of the public releasing two lurcher-type dogs to chase a hare on farmland. MacIntyre, 22, was fined £350 and ordered to pay £2,500 costs plus a £15 victim surcharge. He was also ordered to forfeit all hunting-related materials in his possession. At the same hearing, a Lancaster man pleaded guilty to failing to meet the needs of a lurcher-type puppy. Zachary Robinson-O'Connor, 23, of Barley Cop Lane, Lancaster, was fined £350 and ordered to pay £5,000 costs plus a £15 victim surcharge. He was banned from keeping dogs for two years, deprived of keeping the three lurcher-type dogs formerly in his care and ordered to forfeit all hunting-related materials in his possession. Hunting paraphernalia, including rabbit carcasses, terrier locator collars, maps, lamps, spotlights and books and DVDs on hunting and lamping were seized from both men's homes, together with mobile phones, a laptop, and cameras.

A huntsman has been given a police caution for illegally hunting a hare, the first case of its kind dealt with under the controversial Hunting Act. Nigel Bell, 53, from the Wick and District Beagles, admitted the breach after he was filmed chasing the animal by anti-hunt monitors. Avon and Somerset Police confirmed Bell was cautioned on 29/4/09 at Thornbury police station in connection with the incident.

A greyhound trainer who kept more than 30 dogs in "concentration camp" conditions with no food, water or light has been locked up for causing unnecessary suffering. Robert Freeman, 19, from Saron Ammanford, Wales, had been entrusted with looking after the animals when his father John, 52, fell ill at the kennels in Tiptree. Colchester magistrates heard on 20/3/09 how Freeman from Swansea left the dogs in cages covered in urine and excrement without food or water for days causing some of them to go "kennel crazy", biting at the bars and walking round in circles constantly. Freeman who runs his own company training railway workers, was ordered to serve 90 days in a young offenders' institute after he pleaded guilty to nine charges of causing unnecessary suffering.



The court heard the National Greyhound Racing Club (NGRC) visited the kennels in Tiptree in February last year after a tip-off from a concerned member of the public. The RSPCA and police were called onto the property when conditions had not improved and seized 30 dogs and three puppies, many of which were underweight, were flea-ridden, had eye problems, a broken tail and untreated injuries. All of

the dogs seized have since recovered, are now at a healthy weight and most have been re-homed. Freeman pleaded guilty to one charge of failing to prevent suffering to animals. He was given a 90-day sentence, which was suspended due to his ill health. He was also fined £500, ordered to pay £2,000 towards the £20,000 RSPCA bill and will be electronically tagged so he cannot leave his house between 9pm and 6am.
Both men were banned from keeping animals for 10 years.



Jason Bradford, 37, from Walsall, Tom Connors, 22, from Cardiff, and Brian Powell, 43, from Pontypool, were arrested near Faringdon. They were held as part of a crackdown on hare coursing in Oxfordshire called Operation Migrate. Bradford and Powell were fined £500 and ordered to pay £315 costs at Oxford magistrates on 9/3/09. Connors was fined £330 and also told to pay £315 costs. Charges against a 15-year-old boy were dropped.

A huntsman for the Duke of Northumberland has been charged with illegal hunting. Robert McCarthy, 34, of the Kennels, Cannongate, Alnwick, is alleged to have breached the Hunting Act of 2004 in an incident. McCarthy also has a previous conviction for two offences of badger sett interference.

equine
VERMIN

On 2/3/09 John Deutsch, 55, of Ebrington Farm, Chipping Campden, was granted unconditional bail at Gloucester Crown Court where he was charged with robbing two fox hunt monitors. He also faced charges of affray and common assault on both women.



The father of a family who neglected more than 100 horses, ponies and donkeys on a Buckinghamshire farm was jailed for six months. James Gray, 45, and four family members were also banned from keeping equines by Aylesbury magistrates on 12/6/09. Gray's wife Julie, 41, and daughters Jodie, 26, and Cordelia, 20, were given 150 hours community service. Son James, 16, was given a supervision order. During the sentencing hearing, James Gray senior, a horse trader, was ordered to pay costs of £400,000 to cover the expenses of the investigation by the RSPCA and the trial which was held at Bicester magistrates. Julie Gray was ordered to pay £750 costs. Both daughters must pay £500 costs. Jodie Gray, the only family member not to live at the farm, has an unknown address. Along with Cordelia, the women gave notice of appeal against sentence. Gray, 45, and his son were found guilty of 11 charges under the Animal Welfare Act 2006. His wife and daughters were each found guilty of two charges. The trial heard RSPCA staff and vets removed 115 animals from Spindles Farm in Amersham.

An 84-year-old horse show judge has been jailed in "one of the worst cases of neglect" seen in recent times by the RSPCA. Monica Hope Hewitt, aged 84, pleaded guilty to 13 counts of causing unnecessary suffering to the animals at her home in Roston, between Uttoxeter and Ashbourne. She allowed 31 ponies and four dogs to suffer for what a vet estimated to be a "period of up to five years". The court heard that seven of the ponies and two of the dogs had to be put down. Hewitt's daughter, 56-year-old Monica Mary Hewitt, of Rocester, pleaded guilty to 15 counts of causing unnecessary suffering in relation to the incident and was given a four-month sentence, suspended for 12 months. Monica Hope Hewitt was sentenced to four months in jail at Derby magistrates on 6/3/09. Hewitt, who has been a judge for the Welsh Pony and Cob Club since 1990, also had four Jack Russell terriers in pet carrying cases. Hewitt senior was sentenced to concurrent terms of four months for each of the 13 counts against her. She was banned from keeping animals for life. Her daughter was also ordered to undertake 200 hours' unpaid work and given a community order for 12 months.

assorted
VERMIN

A fisherman who clubbed 21 grey seal pups to death on a remote Scottish island was jailed for 80 days. Jimmy Stewart, 47, admitted mutilating, beating and crushing the animals on the Shetland island of East Linga. Stewart, who battered the heads of the seals with a wooden fence post, was jailed at Lerwick Sheriff Court on 25/309. Charges against a second man also accused of being involved, John Eunson, were earlier dropped.

A Dove Holes farmer was given a 17 month prison sentence for illegal waste-tipping and animal welfare offences including causing unnecessary suffering to an injured calf. Timothy Leslie Birchenough, 50, of Wibbersley Farm, Dove Holes, who has now been banned from keeping cattle or sheep for a period of ten years, appeared before Nottingham Crown Court on 5/3/09. Birchenough admitted five offences which included two charges of failing to correctly dispose of rotting animal carcasses and two charges of failing to ensure the needs of his cattle were met. He was sentenced to five months in total for the animal welfare offences and received a further two months imprisonment for breaching a suspended sentence imposed in January 2007. A further five month prison sentence was imposed after Birchenough obtained credit totaling £37,506.10 whilst he was an undischarged bankrupt between January and July 2005. No order was made for costs or compensation, estimated to be in excess of £47,000.

John Knibbs (45) of High Field, Harrowby Hall Estate, Grantham, pleaded guilty to five charges at Grantham magistrates including failing to prevent two Presa Canarias dogs he owned from fighting and owning equipment in connection with dog fighting. Knibbs also admitted owning five pit bull terriers which are banned under the Dangerous Dogs Act. Knibbs was sentenced to 22 weeks in prison. He is already serving time for other offences. He is banned from keeping or owning any animal indefinitely. He must wait at least 10 years to appeal the ban. The prosecution followed a raid on Knibbs' home, during which RSPCA inspectors also found a dead bull terrier discarded in a bin. The dog had died from malnutrition. The court was told how RSPCA inspectors had discovered a breaking stick used to separate fighting dogs, dog fighting books and DVDs, weighing scales and medication to treat injured animals.

Grey squirrel persecution



grandaded@dreamstime

The evil destructiveness of grey squirrels has been well talked about in recent years and is getting worse. Prince Charles has now joined the persecution of these rascals and claims that "It is absolutely crucial to eliminate the greys, which are an alien species to the UK and threaten the very existence of the utterly charming and irresistible reds.'" The likes of Paul Parker from Northumbria, 'pest' controller, all round blood junkie and particular hater of the grey squirrel, is happy to report having murdered 22700 of them (it would be many more when you consider the starving babies left to die). But are they really the foreign imposter storming the countryside, beating up red squirrels and devouring our trees as we are led to believe? Not according to many conservationists. Many would claim that the grey squirrel (Sciurus Carolinensis) could claim nativeness just as much as the red squirrel, which was imported from Scandinavia following local extinctions of the true 'native' reds. In fact, evidence of red squirrels originally living in the North of England seems to be quite lacking and seems to suggest that they did not originate from much further North than Derbyshire. However they are evidently living in the North now and have been for some time, so does this mean we should be questioning the nativeness of the reds and culling them? Of course not. A species can be considered native if it has been introduced or spread across the planet by birds, winds or tides yet if it is introduced by humans – as is often the case – it can then be destined to death by those same humans. The hypocrisy gets even worse, as we get to accept or reject someone's 'nativeness' depending on how much we like that species at the time.

So why is the red squirrel population declining?

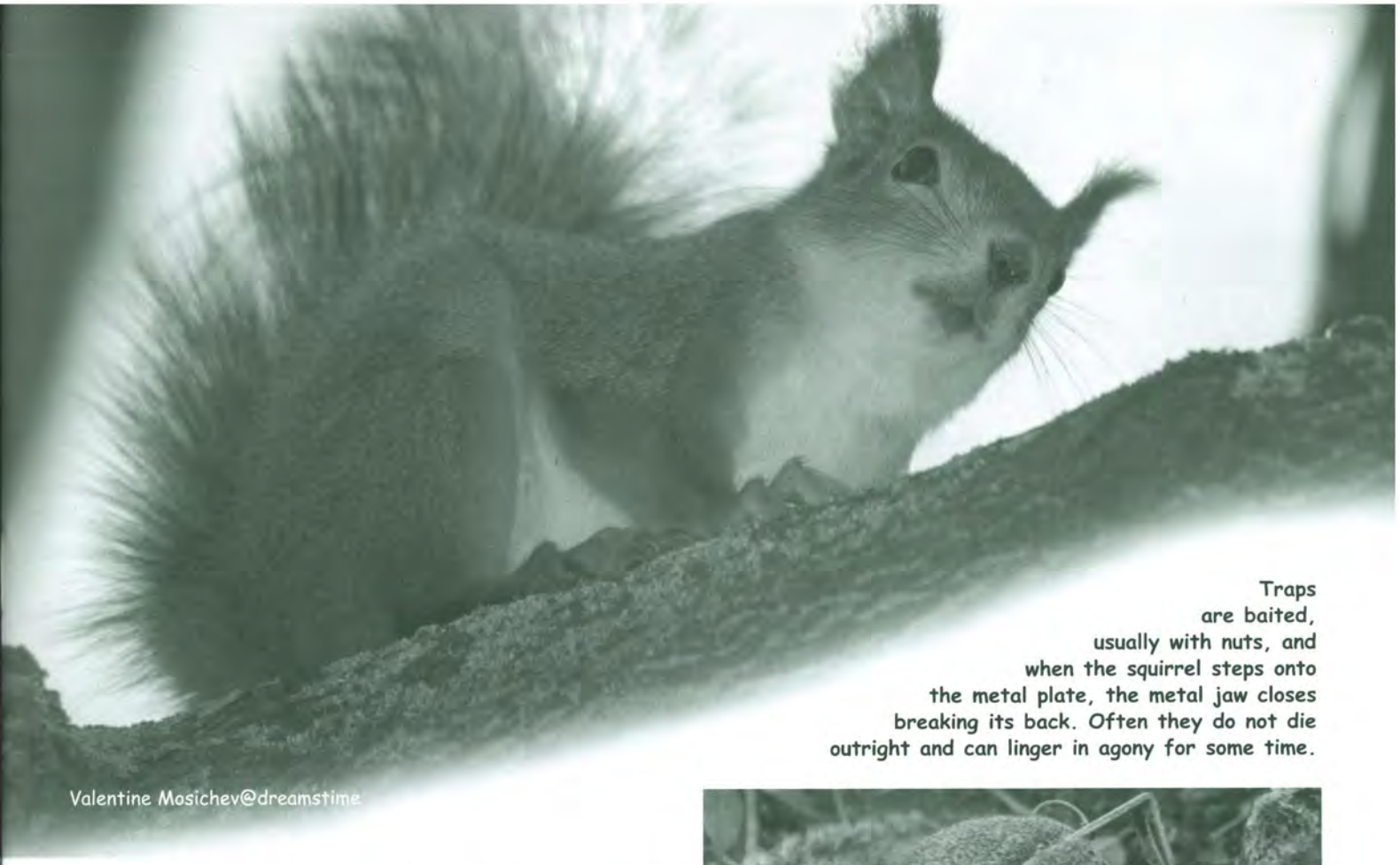
Most people would agree that the decline of the red squirrel is a tragedy although this has not always been the case. We all know that reds prefer pine trees and grey squirrels prefer deciduous woodland. Pine forests have tended to move North along with climate change as they prefer a cooler climate. Populations of red squirrels tend to be found in Scotland where the best pine forests are located. Red squirrels are not as adaptable as greys and as their habitats are increasingly destroyed for agriculture, housing and industry, red squirrels are suffering.

Grey squirrels do not forcibly drive out the reds. They often share a habitat which is more suitable to the grey, meaning a better food supply for the greys and as the greys are more prolific breeders, sadly the reds begin to dwindle in number. This process takes a long time and there are many cases of reds and greys living alongside each other with no evidence of bullying before the inevitability of reds living in a grey favourable territory means they disappear.

So what would be a better course of action than sickos like Paul Parker getting their thrills killing these adorable little creatures? Recent trends to try and reintroduce deciduous woodland in this country have been fantastic for grey squirrels but pretty bad for reds. If we want to increase their numbers we need to start by planting large pine forests. Also the deciduous corridors being introduced are leading grey squirrels straight into red territories. Careful tree planting can encourage habitat for the reds and can also keep greys in their own habitats.

The question we need to ask of course is whether humans really want red squirrels back in large numbers or is this just an excuse for blood junkies to go out killing. One of the original reasons for red squirrel decline, long before greys came along, was human persecution. Up until the 1920s, following their re-introduction back into the Highlands in 1844, red squirrels were heavily culled because they were seen as a pest by gamekeepers (sound familiar?). The Highland squirrel club alone killed 80,000 red squirrels during its 30 years in existence.

It was during this time of habitat shortage and intense human persecution that the poor red squirrel was first documented as



Valentine Mosichev@dreamstime

Traps are baited, usually with nuts, and when the squirrel steps onto the metal plate, the metal jaw closes breaking its back. Often they do not die outright and can linger in agony for some time.

having parapox virus. Grey squirrels were not widespread at the time so cannot be blamed for this one. It is often said that grey squirrels are naturally immune to pox virus but reds aren't. This is partly true. Grey squirrels have had the pox virus in the past, the result being that as a population they now have immunity. The red squirrels could also develop this immunity; however, while grey squirrels living in an ideal environment are adaptable, stronger, healthier and carry more fat reserves, the red squirrels are living in an often unsuitable habitat and are weaker and thinner. Based on the case study of a captive red squirrel, it would appear that if the squirrel has plenty of food and shelter to keep warm while his/her immunity fights the virus (about 6 weeks) they can survive and develop immunity.

Another reason given for murdering our small furry friends is that they destroy forests! Tree barking is done during the late summer season to line their nests, and sometimes the sap beneath the bark can be used as food in emergencies. Trees are rarely killed by squirrels and while tree barking is less of a problem for low quality logging, it can cause blemishes on high quality timber such as beech. Putting this into perspective of course, we don't necessarily own all resources and their nests are considerably smaller than our vast demand for wooden furniture and building materials. And of course red squirrels build nests too!

Another reason given to kill grey squirrels is to supposedly protect bird species. Now, grey and red squirrels are vegetarian by nature, but will take advantage of a nest of eggs if they come across one. It's not a main part of their diet however, so how much of an effect can it have on bird numbers? Dr Mark Avery, Director of conservation for the RSPB (an organisation not averse to culling programmes) wrote that "grey squirrels are not found in most other parts of Europe, yet woodland bird population is also dropping on the continent.....Poor woodland management, climate change and factors affecting migrating birds are far more significant."



As with any culling programme, taking out isolated pockets of the population will encourage rapid breeding as there will be an abundance of food and can also encourage neighbouring squirrels to move in.

So how are they killed?

Squirrels can be killed any time of year so any dependent kittens will starve to death if their mother is killed. Sometimes grey squirrels are shot straight out of the trees, probably causing more damage to the trees than any tree barking. Often they are poisoned; this poison can be left out in plastic or metal tubes and should be treated with care if you come across it. It leads to a horrible death of the squirrel. Squirrels are also commonly trapped, either in fenn traps or cage traps. Fenn traps are often tucked in to a wooden box and are either placed near pheasant feeders or at the bottom of a tree. They are baited, usually with nuts, and when the squirrel steps onto the metal plated the metal jaw closes breaking his/her back. Often they do not die outright and can linger in agony for some time. Cage traps are usually about two feet long and again are baited with a tasty treat for a squirrel with a spring loaded trap door which closes behind the squirrel. He/she will then be either shot or beaten to death. These traps are not uncommon in our woodlands, especially in woods overseen by game keepers.

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 (A4228AC)
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 & YOI Guys Marsh, Shaftesbury, Dorset SP7 0AH
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. 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 Send, Ripley Road, Woking, Surrey GU23 7LJ.
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 Send, Ripley Road, Woking, Surrey GU23 7LJ.
Sentenced on 21 Jan 2009 to nine years in connection with HLS.

Cheques/postal orders made out to 'The Governor'. Stationery, stamps; saes, blank cards, but no Bday or Anni cards. 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.
What you can send: stamps (12 in letter); Saes, cheques/postal orders made to 'HMP Headquarters' with Gavin's name, number and sender's details on reverse. (Please remember that Gavin has poor eyesight and will appreciate if you write in clear, large writing).

HEATHER NICHOLSON (VM4859)
Birthday: 30 January
HMP Foston Hall, Foston, Derby, Derbyshire DE65 5DN
Sentenced on 21 Jan 2009 to eleven years in connection to the campaign against HLS.
Cheques/postal orders made out to 'The Governor'. Stationery, stamps; saes, blank cards. 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 Frankland, Brasside, Durham, County Durham DH1 5YD
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

NICOLE VOSPER VM9385
Birthday: 15 February
HMP Bronzefield, Woodthorpe Road, Ashford, Middx TW15 3JZ
Nicole Vosper made a plea at Winchester Crown Court on 16/03/09 on charges relating to Huntingdon Life Sciences and was remanded.
Cheques/postal orders made out to 'The Governor'. Books, stationery, stamps; saes. Write prisoner name/ number on the back.





HUNT HAVOC

Woman traumatised as hunt hounds run amok

Lyn Taylor, 60, was left traumatised after hounds charged into her garden in tranquil Woodham Walter. "Before the law changed, the hunt would send a card round beforehand saying they were going to be in the area. But since then we don't get one any more." The first time Mrs Taylor realized they were in the area was when she heard them in her garden, "All of a sudden I heard the hounds yelping. There were at least half a dozen in my garden going berserk."

Mrs Taylor said the dogs broke some branches from a prize rhododendron, and frightened off a stray cat which she looks after. The cat didn't return for two days. She said her pet dog and five other pedigree cats were also left unnerved by the experience. "I shouted at the huntsmen to go away but they did nothing. In the end I was screaming and shouting so much they called the hounds off. Two of them even laughed as they left. I felt humiliated and I am so angry there were hounds in my garden when they shouldn't even be around here. What right have they got to come round here and interfere with our property and disturb our peace?"

The incident was reported to Maldon Police who are investigating. The response from Mervyn Clarke, a master of the Essex Farmers and Union Hunt was "I find it bizarre that somebody can make these sorts of comments," he added. "Animals run through back gardens, it happens."



Elderly cat killed by hunting dogs

An elderly couple watched in horror as a pack of hunting dogs killed Hoppy their 18-year-old pet cat. Hoppy was a much loved family pet who only had three legs and was brutally ripped apart by out-of-control hunting dogs in their garden outside of Moynalty in Co Meath. Hoppy's owners, aged 90 and 77, who do not wish to be named, were left traumatised and in shock by the incident. The family has notified the ISPCA of the killing.

Cornwall hunt hounds disembowel pet cat

Molly, a 15 year old pet cat, has been ripped apart in her own garden by hunting dogs which had strayed from the main pack. And now the cat's owner Amanda Richardson is calling for the Western Hunt to make sure its pack is properly trained and under control. About 12 dogs had broken off from the rest of the Western Hunt meeting at Sennen and rampaged through the Crean Bottoms area before four or five of the dogs chased after and caught Molly. Ms Richardson saw and heard the dogs roaming round her garden and actually witnessed the moment when Molly was ripped apart. She said "I think they were hunting at the top of the valley and about a dozen peeled off and came down into Crean Bottoms. The huntsmen were slow to realise that their dogs were missing and they were running wild round my garden. My other cat (Salmon) is younger and quicker and immediately ran to safety in the woodpile but Molly is older and she was chased round to the garden at the back of the house. I ran round screaming and kicking at them but they ripped her apart and disembowelled her – it was horrific; I was appalled."

Ms Richardson, who had owned Molly for 12 years, and described her as "a very domesticated and beautiful cat" phoned Penwith dog wardens. Three of them arrived very quickly but she said that they were unable to get the dogs under control and it was an hour and a half after Molly's death before huntsmen rounded up the final dog.

She says she doesn't blame the hounds but she does want the Western Hunt to ensure that such an incident never happens again. "The dogs were only doing what comes naturally; they are bred to chase and kill animals – how can they tell the difference between a wild fox and a domesticated cat? But this wasn't the first time that something like this has happened – there've been a number of occasions over the 12 years that I've been here that some of the dogs have become detached from the main pack and have run wild in my and my neighbours' gardens. I want the Western Hunt to improve the quality of its dog control."

Rebecca Kirk, Penwith's chief environmental health officer, said officers were investigating the incident. "The dog warden has confirmed that the lady concerned was understandably very distressed by what had happened," she said. "The dog warden is now looking into whether any specific legislation has been breached and if it has then the appropriate legal action will be taken against the hunt."

Apology over out-of-control hounds

Hunt officials from the Holderness Hunt today apologised after complaints that foxhounds chased a fox through a private garden in an East Yorkshire village.

The incident happened after the hunt had met at Halsham, near Ottringham. Humberside police received two separate complaints about the hunt. The first call from a member of the public shortly after midday was over concerns about horses, hounds and vehicles potentially obstructing the road. At about 1pm, a second person reported that the hunt had run into his garden in Station Road and a fox had been attacked by hounds.

A spokesperson for Humberside police said that "Police officers attended the area and located members of the hunt and spoke to a number of them. They were made aware of the allegation of damage, trespass and upset caused to local residents. However at this time no dead fox has been located and as such there is no evidence of any offences."



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

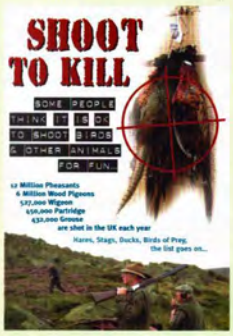
Stop DEathFra Badger Killers
www.badger-killers.co.uk

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.

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see inside front cover or order online!



not actual size



get involved, sab, join the HSA,
donate, buy HSA stuff or
stick us in yer will!

www.huntsabs.org.uk