

Petition to ban hunting from National Trust land

There is abundant evidence that hunts are exploiting weaknesses and loopholes in the Hunting Act so it is virtually business as usual. The legislation needs to be strengthened and meanwhile the National Trust should be setting an example in banning all hunting on its land. Please add your signature here:

<https://you.38degrees.org.uk/petitions/end-all-hunting-on-national-trust-land?bucket>

Association of Lawyers for Animal Welfare

The Association of Lawyers for Animal Welfare (ALAW) is a charity which aims to bring together lawyers interested in animal protection law to share experience and to harness that expertise for the benefit of the animal protection community, including by securing more comprehensive and effective laws and better enforcement of existing animal protection laws. Further details are here: www.alaw.org.uk

Quotes

In days gone by hunts were much more candid about the suffering they inflicted upon their quarry and even the hounds. Here are just three from among dozens to be found in the hunting literature:-

The best run the Beagles had during his Mastership was in the region of Dorney, where they ran a hare for an hour and five minutes, covering more than six miles. In the end she burst her heart just in front of hounds. (The Eton College Hunt by M.F. Berry and C.M. Floyd. Pub. Collins 1968. Page 21)

In 1912 there was a very good hunt, which ended with the hare swimming out and drowning in a reservoir at Staines. (The Eton College Hunt by M.F. Berry and C.M. Floyd. Pub. Collins 1968. Page 80)

What fun it can be playing with hounds during the Summer. As I say, there will be litters of puppies to admire and play with (those that have not been knocked on the head!) Fox and Hare in Leicestershire. 1954 edition.

(It is well known that hounds are shot or hit on the head well before their natural lifespan, sooner if they fail to come up to par in the field Ed.)

Shooting close season in England and Wales

The following is an abstract from a paper by Andy Butterworth et. al. which appeared recently in the journal Wildlife Biology

The European brown hare *Lepus europaeus* shows relatively high fecundity, and changes in the hare population can be influenced by the timing of shooting and reproductive activity. Between February and August in Europe, the majority of female hares are either pregnant or suckling young, or both, and if a female is killed during the suckling period, the leverets are orphaned and are likely to die of starvation. In England and Wales, in contrast with other European countries, there is no close season when shooting hares is prohibited, and the peak time of shooting in February coincides with the start of reproductive activity. We explore the impact of shooting practices on the risk of death by starvation of dependent young. By modelling scenarios of shooting at the highest documented rate at times of the year based on practices adopted in England and Wales, and by comparing this with the close season practice in Scotland, we quantify seasonally variable risks of orphaning and death by starvation of leverets. Shooting in February leads to a profoundly damaging combination of population shrinkage and levels of orphaning of leverets, poor welfare and poor population recovery outcomes for the hare. These compare very unfavourably with the modelled Scottish population and levels of orphaning of leverets. We anticipate that these findings will stimulate consideration of the impact of shooting practices, and that increased understanding of the effects of the timing of shooting may aid policy development aimed at protecting dependent young hares.

(We have been campaigning since 2002 for shooting close seasons as a step towards full protection. Let us hope the success in Scotland can be repeated at Westminster Ed.)

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