



LEAGUE
AGAINST CRUEL SPORTS

PROTECT

No18 AUTUMN 2017

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Meet some of the dogs we have come across as we delve into the world of dog fighting

EDUCATE

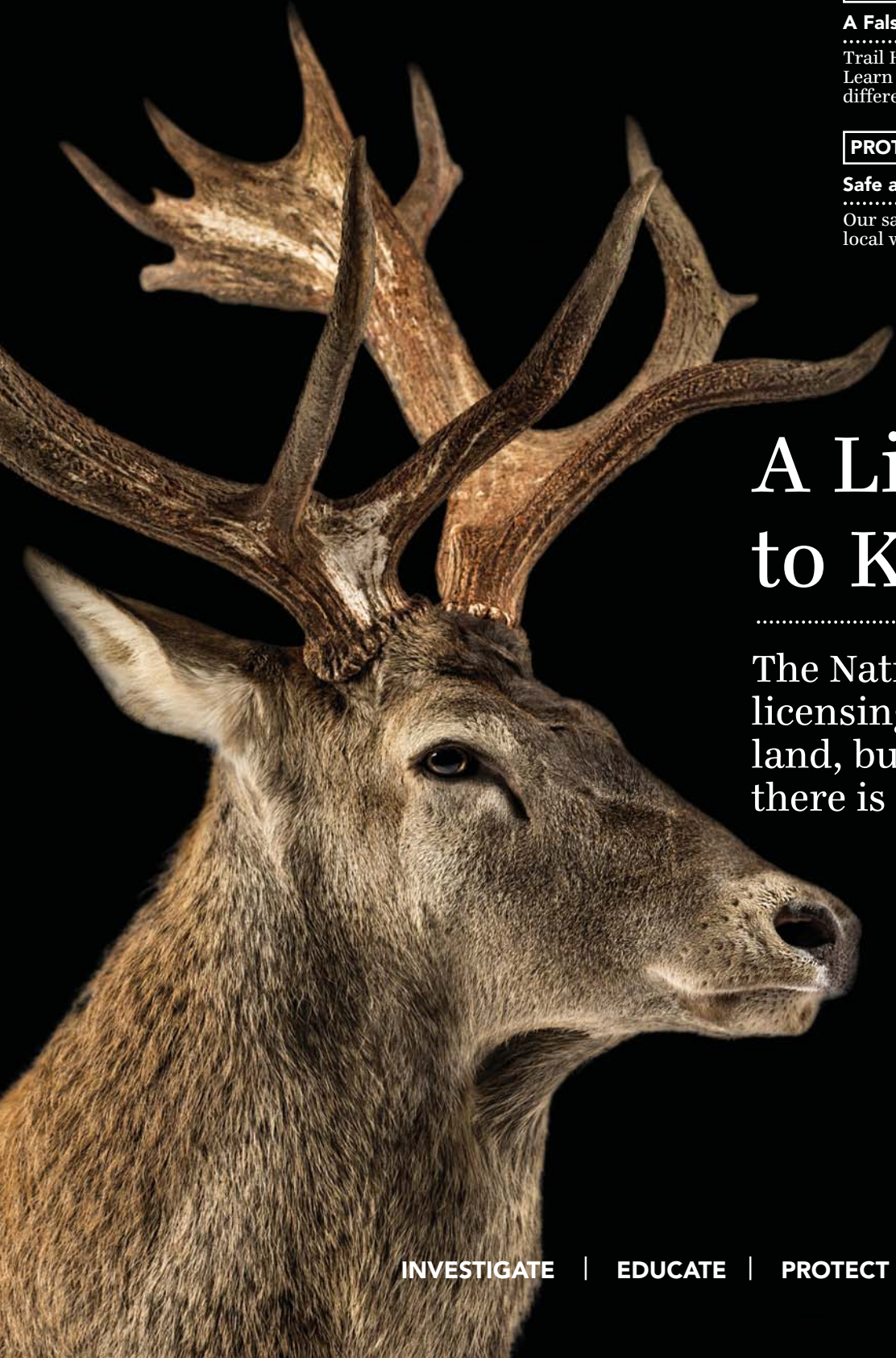
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Our sanctuaries are not only home to local wildlife, but rescued animals too



A Licence to Kill

The National Trust is licensing hunting on its land, but this month there is a vote to stop it.

WELCOME

Busy busy busy.

Three words (or is it one word?) that sum up how things always are at the League, but perhaps this year more than ever. It seems that no matter where you turn, certain people continue to revel in the suffering they cause animals in the name of 'sport'.

Shooting season is in its full inglorious flow (page 13), and we have been able to build on the momentum from last year's parliamentary debate (brought about by you) to continue to expose this outdated practice in the media.

We continue to push forward thanks to the action and dedication of you, our supporters. Just look at what's happened in recent months: the government has suspended its plans for a free vote on the repeal of the hunting act; major travel and holiday companies have pulled their support for the Pamplona Bull Run; thanks to evidence gathered by investigations funded by your donations there has also been the first conviction for hunting in Scotland.

We are proud to be continuing our investigations. The gathering of evidence is vital to the work of the League, and this is made possible through your donations and reports through Animal Crimewatch. With this hunting season approaching, the team will be out in force, attempting to catch hunts breaking the law.

As the nation becomes more aware of how much hunting goes on, it is important to expose the lie that is trail hunting (page 16), and to stop respected institutions falling for this lie and allowing it to happen on its land.

But we don't just investigate hunting, we are also delving into the murky world of dog fighting. It is important work, and the stories we discover (page 14) continue to remind us of that.



So yes, we are busy, but we are busy thanks to your support. But I for one, and I'm sure I speak for my colleagues too, am happy to be working with you to end cruelty to animals in the name of 'sport'.

Nick Weston & Winnie
Editor & Greyhound

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A Licence to Kill

The National Trust, the UK's second largest membership organisation, third largest land owner and beloved institution is allowing illegal hunting to take place on its land.

In 2016 79 licences were issued by the National Trust to 67 hunts operating under what we believe are the false pretences of exercising the hounds and 'trail hunting.' Not only that, but stag hunts are unopposed in their trespass onto Trust land in their long pursuit of terrified deer

Paid for by your donations, League investigators have captured evidence of hunts ruthlessly pursuing, torturing and killing wildlife on National Trust property. Earlier this year, footage was presented to National Trust staff in a meeting to discuss this matter. Despite this graphic imagery they declined to take action citing that they did not have the resources for monitoring and enforcement. The League was happy to oblige the National Trust with training and the use of investigative staff, but these offers were also declined.

But there is still hope, supported by the League, a group of intrepid National Trust members successfully submitted a motion for the 'cessation of trail hunting, exempt hunting and hound exercise', which will be voted on at the Trust's AGM on October 21st. If passed, the motion will prevent hunts from legally accessing large amounts of land across England and Wales.

This could be a landmark moment. The National Trust is a treasured institution which does wonderful work, but it has allowed itself to be embarrassed by the hunting fraternity. The reasons hunts give to justify being on National Trust land have been shown time and time again to be mere excuses covering up illegal hunting.

So, let's take a close look at the lies that the hunts have been telling:

TRAIL HUNTING

Evidence suggests that trail hunting (not to be confused with drag hunting) is not a genuine sport, but in fact a cover for illegal hunting. Our analysis was done looking at over 4,000 hunt monitoring reports - from different organisations - and found that since 2005, only on an average of around 0.04% of occasions did monitors believe they may have witnessed a genuine trail hunting event. In other words, licensing hunts for trail hunting is turning a blind eye to a blatant lie.

EXEMPT HUNTING

Hunts can claim various 'exemption' excuses that the law allows as their purpose for being on National Trust land - and it's stags that are feeling the effects the most.

Continued on next page...

A LICENCE TO KILL (CONTINUED)

League Investigators obtained footage of one such exempt hunt across National Trust protected moorland, with hunters using quad-bikes to keep up with and surround a stag as it attempted to escape its death. In this case, the hunt claimed it was conducting 'research and observation' – one of the exceptions of the Hunting Act. No reports have been filed after this supposed, 'research'.

HOUND EXERCISE

Citing that hounds need exercise, hunts often let full packs of hounds loose in the countryside which can cause all kinds of disturbance to the local wildlife as well as damage to natural ecosystems. The League regularly receives reports of unsupervised hounds entering protected natural reserves – endangering the habitats of foxes, hares and other animals. The reality is that there are many other ways that these dogs can get adequate exercise without disrupting or killing animals.

It is because of these excuses that with your support we are using all the campaigning methods at our disposal to highlight the grim reality of what is being allowed to take place.

THE NATIONAL INTEREST

Thanks to donations to our recent appeal, we have been able to spread the word far and wide. Through the wonder of digital media, the League is placing hunting footage in front of National Trust members and urging them to vote in the AGM. But what is just as important is a visible presence at National Trust properties, so paying customers know how high the price of entry really is. These actions launched on August bank holiday weekend, when visitors to Polesden Lacey, Surrey and Knole House, Kent were greeted and handed leaflets by League staff and supporters in high visibility vests. This has been followed with actions taking place all over the country, with volunteers and supporters educating the public about this crucial vote.

THE FACTS

To coincide with this campaign, the League has launched new reports about hunting in the UK, and by extension that which has been allowed to take place on National Trust land.

'The Conservation Problems of Hunting with Dogs during the Hunting Ban in England and Wales' highlights the environmental damage caused by hunts – including disturbing habitats and protected species, blocking up badger setts, spreading animal by-products such as animal urine and leaving contaminated hounds' faeces in the countryside. The report launched the day after the Trust compared the damage caused by hunting to that caused by mountain biking (yes, really).



A second-report 'Observed to death' was launched later in the campaign. This report highlights the various ways stag hunts abuse the exemptions of the Hunting Act 2004, and how they have managed to transform the afore mentioned 'Research and Observation' exemption into an effective loophole that allows stag hunts to get away with chasing and killing deer as often as they did before the ban. Stag hunts have often been seen trespassing unopposed onto National Trust land.



THE INDEPENDENT

National Trust members are trying to chase fox hounds off their lands for good

theguardian

Aniseed or urine: is the National Trust on the right trail?

WHAT CAN YOU DO?

You support is vital to this campaign. Without you we cannot muster the public support needed for the National Trust to bring its hunting policy into the 21st century.

- **Are you a National Trust Member?** If you are then you can have a direct say in stopping this by voting to support the motion to ban trail hunting. You can attend the AGM to place your vote directly, or you can vote by post or online. Visit www.league.org.uk/nationaltrust or call **01483 524 250** to find out more. But hurry, postal and online voting closes on **October 13th**.
- **Tell your friends.** It's likely that you know a member of the National Trust, or at least someone who visits their properties. Tell them about this atrocious misuse of the British Countryside.

FROM THE CEO



A matter of trust

I'm not angry, just disappointed. Very disappointed. Disappointed that an otherwise highly regarded institution like the National Trust inadvertently allows illegal hunting to take place on its land – despite the ban. Disappointed that even those that aren't licensed to hunt are free to trespass on Trust land in pursuit of wildlife unopposed and without reprimand. Disappointed that, despite the swathes of evidence presented to the Trust by myself and my colleagues that this so called 'legal' Trail hunting is bogus, and nothing but a cover for breaking the law, they still don't want to stop licensing. Not only this but since accepting a motion to vote on this very issue, they have advised their members to vote in favour of continuing trail hunting.

“I have nothing against the National Trust. It is an organisation that does wonderful work, but I do not understand how those that claim to care about the UK's flora and fauna can allow such cruelty.”

It gives me a very strong sense of Déjà vu. Wasn't it just a few months ago that Theresa May pledged to have a vote on repealing the Hunting Act? That decision cost her many votes, and it may be that if the National Trust continues to allow hunting to take place it may have a negative impact on their support too and ultimately their reputation.

84% of the British people are opposed to fox hunting, and even more of the population (88%) are opposed to deer hunting. It does make me wonder if that will ever finally sink in? Not only that the country wants to consign hunting to the dustbin of history, but that the number who do continues to increase.

But then again, perhaps it won't have to? I have been very proud to see what a strong reaction this campaign has generated. Proud to see the volume of requests for campaign packs that have come in. Proud to learn of the volunteers that have given up their time to stand outside National Trust properties and generate support for a ban. I am proud to work with other organisations and National Trust members to affect positive change. It is the League and our supporters that drive home the reality of the 84% and I'm proud to continue to work alongside you.

Eduardo Gonçalves
 Chief Executive, League Against Cruel Sports



INTERVIEW



Really Wild about wildlife

TV presenter and naturalist *Chris Packham* is a wildlife expert, photographer and author with a passionate concern for conservation and the environment. He is also a supporter of the League Against Cruel Sports.

Hello Chris. You recently spoke at the Crush Cruelty March in London. How was that experience?

I liked the idea of mixing fox hunting, the badger cull and raptor persecution together, because to me they are all merely indicators of the way we treat our countryside and the wildlife that lives in it. They are not separate entities, as some others have begged to suggest. I think the more we can unify our objectives, the better things will go. It's not just about these three species; it's about the health of our natural environment.

You are a long standing supporter of the League – do you believe it is important for someone of your stature to lend their voice to a charitable cause?

Having that platform, it is important that I put it to good use. There is also a more personal aspect to it: I'm in awe of the people that go out on wounded badger patrols; I'm in awe of the people that monitor and investigate the hunts, they keep going out there and I just want to salute them. I don't do those things, but I try to do what I can. It's one way for me to say 'thank you' to all of these people and how much I respect and admire your tenacity, energy and your dedication in a very difficult situation.

You are clearly passionate about these issues. Is that simply because of your love of wildlife, or are there wider implications?

What place is there for ripping wildlife to pieces with dogs for enjoyment in the 21st century? What does that say about us as a country, about us as a species, if despite all of the education, all of the awareness and all of the progress we've made in society, there are still people who want to get kicks out of tearing something to pieces with dogs? It just makes you wonder...



© Jim Champion

It's true that you've certainly come into the firing line of the shooting lobby. How does that make you feel?

When they're rattled you know you are winning. I have Asperger's, so do they honestly think that I care about their slurs and lies? It's easy for me to let that all go over my head. My thought is: if they are playing the man and not the issue, that's because they can't deal with the issue. And if I have to soak it up, then maybe that is also part of my job.

The UK is rich with wildlife. Do you have a favourite spot to witness it?

Me and my 14 year-old miniature poodle Scratch love to walk in our own little part of the New Forest. I know every tree on our route, we go there twice a day, every day that we're at home, and this is our patch. I feel a part of it. I enjoy sharing it with him, I love him more than anything and I love to see him sniffing around and enjoying himself. This is where I go to connect and measure my place in time and space. It's a grounding experience, helps me gain perspective of who I am and what it's all about.

Via shows like *Springwatch*, *Autumnwatch* and *Winterwatch* you have helped bring British wildlife into our homes. Do you think it's helping shape a new appreciation for our animals?

Yes, I think television plays a role, I think print media plays a role, certainly education in schools has played an enormous role. When kids leave school they can't escape the knowledge of climate change, overpopulation, fossil fuels and the threats faced by wildlife, and many have an even more sophisticated knowledge than that. I think generally, we are constantly exposed and it helps us be more informed.

Did you know Chris has nearly 200,000 followers on Twitter? You can follow him too @ChrisGPackham



LEAGUE IN ACTION

UP TO 10,000 VICTIMS A YEAR – AND NO WITNESSES?

Cub Hunting – hunting’s dirty secret. In July, we launched an appeal for information into the illegal activity of cub hunting – the cruel practice of hunting fox cubs to train young hounds to hunt.

In order to educate our supporters about what to look for, and to illustrate just how an estimated 10,000 fox cubs are killed every year, the League produced a new video and leaflet showing what a cub hunt looks like. You can view the video at www.league.org.uk/cub-hunting. If you would like copies of the leaflet, please get in contact.



GOVERNMENT SHELVES PLANS TO OFFER A FREE VOTE ON REPEALING THE HUNTING ACT



**Wildlife spared
as Theresa
May formally
abandons plans
for free vote**

In July, one month on from the general election, the government announced the postponement of its plans to hold a free vote on the Hunting Act until 2019.

This is a clear response to how toxic this issue became for the government, as the issue of hunting featured more heavily in the election discussion than ever before.

This may only be a postponement of the attack, but as League CEO Eduardo Gonçalves put it, “it’s a victory for common sense.”

WHEN IS A BAN NOT A BAN?

When you’re banning bullfighting in the Balearic islands! No, it’s not a riddle, but a clever way of getting rid of bullfighting in the Spanish islands that include Majorca, Menorca and Ibiza, without actually implementing a ban.

Following last year’s announcement by the Spanish Government that the bullfighting ban in Catalonia was unconstitutional, the local governments of the Balearics took a tactical approach to make sure their bullfighting block did not suffer the same fate. So instead of declaring bullfighting banned outright, they placed regulations so heavy on the key elements of bullfighting that it would be impossible to carry out a fight in the barbaric way the traditionalists would like.

Under these new regulations: the killing of the bull is now banned; as is injuring the bull in any way; time in the arena is reduced from 30 minutes to ten; the number of bulls from six to three; a ban on attendees under the age of 18; a ban on alcohol, and much more!

Perhaps this technique will pave the way for more de facto bullfighting bans across the globe.

SNARES IN SCOTLAND

The Scottish Government recently commissioned a review on snaring legislation. The review itself was a toothless exercise which, from the outset, didn’t have a remit to consider a complete ban on the sale, use, possession, and manufacture of snares.

However, the good news is that Colin Smyth MSP, a League member, has put forward a motion to the Scottish Parliament, which has gained cross-party support and means that parliament will debate a ban on snares.

It’s very good news that this debate is taking place, and hopefully as many MSPs as possible will voice their opposition. When we have a date we will circulate it on social media.

SUNDAY MORNING WITH THE SHOOTING LOBBY

League COO Philippa King appeared live on the BBC's show Sunday Morning Live in August to discuss the morals (or lack thereof) of shooting animals for sport.

Putting across the counter-argument was Countryside Alliance member Jim Barrington, as well as two independent pundits. It was a balanced debate, and the points were well heard from the BBC presenters.



There were the usual mistruths about "free-range" birds (ignoring the fact of pheasants and partridges being reared in facilities not suitable for the lowest standards of factory farms) and bogus claims of the environmental benefits (there are none). Each claim was deftly deflected by Ms King, not only correcting the shooting apologists on their mistakes, but clearly highlighting why there is no justification for killing any animal for 'sport'.

ARSENAL OWNER SCORES OWN GOAL

Arsenal football club's owner, Stan Kroenke, launched a new UK TV Channel called My Outdoor TV.

Viewers of the channel can watch trophy hunting programmes featuring the killing of animals such as elephants and lions for 'sport'. Following public outcry (and a petition signed by over 20,000 League supporters in just 48 hours), Kroenke announced that he had decided not to show trophy hunting on his channel. To create this kind of pressure and generate such a response so quickly is a testament to the power of supporter actions.

Disappointingly, it transpires that only the material involving the animals which made the headlines had been removed, such as lions and elephants. The channel still shows an abundance of sickening trophy and 'sport' hunting footage, including bears, buffalo, elk and crocodiles.

We will continue to apply pressure to have this channel taken down. You can sign the petition at www.league.org.uk/trophy-hunting

THE  TIMES

Arsenal chief Stan Kroenke 'tricks public' over hunting on My Outdoor TV

CAMPAIGNING IN NORTHERN IRELAND

The Government may not be functioning in Northern Ireland, but hunters are still out in force causing death and destruction.

There was public outcry recently when the body of a terrier was recovered from a canal, tied to a brick and with scars on his face. It was a horrific death that no animal should suffer and later a vet confirmed the marks on the face suggested this dog was used for badger baiting.

While this was being discussed on the radio, there was a phone in from a lady whose pony had been shot by a hunter in her garden. He claimed upon knocking her door, he mistook the pony for a fox. Both cases are ongoing police investigations and both highlight that Northern Ireland needs a full and robust ban on all hunting.

GOVERNMENT SILENCE

Following the outbreak of Bovine TB in the hounds of the Kimblewick Hunt, the League has been pursuing Freedom of Information (FOI) requests to Defra to find out exactly what was the nature of the communications between the hunt and the government regarding this outbreak.

This can be a long winded process: the government has 20 working days to reply, and it can often result in a request for more time, starting another 20 day period. The League had to endure three months of delays before the response finally told us that the conversation was confidential. Given the three month delay it took to arrive at this conclusion, we are treating these results with scepticism and will continue to chase after the answers that the public deserve to hear.

WELSH CAMPAIGN

In Wales, much of our political campaigning has been around the Welsh Assembly's Environment Committee Inquiry into the use of snares, which was published at the end of June.

This was broadly welcomed by the League, and we feel that it was a comprehensive and thorough report which we hope the Welsh Government will act on. The Committee recommended a ban on the use of snares should it be proved that the current code of practice (which we argued is not effective) is failing. The report also recognised that there is limited data relating to snaring practices in Wales and we were pleased that the report wanted to see that addressed.

In their recommendations, Assembly Members were clear in that the Welsh Government should be prepared to act 'robustly' if non-target species were exposed to unnecessary suffering and should prepare draft legislation immediately. We are keen to work with the Welsh Government on preparing legislation to implement a full ban on snares and also to improve the way information is gathered in this area to see whether Welsh Government policy is effective here or not.

PAMPLONA'S SAN FERMIN FESTIVAL RUNNING OUT OF SUPPORT

Following concerns highlighted by League supporters, an online investigation by the League Against Cruel Sports found several tour companies continuing to prioritise profit over animal welfare by promoting Spain's San Fermin Running of the Bulls Festival.

The League contacted ten companies ahead of this year's event in Pamplona, urging them to immediately cease all direct and indirect promotion of the Festival's cruel activities.

We are pleased to report that Trip Advisor, EasyJet, Airbnb, GetYourGuide and KAYAK responded and removed all Pamplona bull running material from their sites. The League will continue to put pressure on the remaining companies (The Backpacker Tour Company, Festival Adventures, PP Travel, First Festival and Stoke Travel), to respond to our request and cease any promotion of the Festival.



JEDFOREST CONVICTION

This summer saw a landmark event in the fight against hunting in Scotland as the first conviction for hunting was secured under The Protection of Wild Mammals (Scotland) Act 2002 since it was passed.

Father and son, 66-year old Clive Richardson (whipper-in) and 23-year old Johnathon Riley (huntsman) both denied deliberately hunting a wild mammal on Jedburgh on 18th February 2016, but were found guilty with the help of video evidence supplied by the League Against Cruel Sports Scotland (which would not be possible without your support), showing the pair from Abbotrule, Bonchester Bridge breaching Section 1 of the Act.

The Scottish Government has committed to consult on the hunt ban following a review by Lord Bonomy, who clearly stated there was evidence of lawbreaking by Scottish hunts. In finding Johnathon Riley and Clive Richardson guilty, Sheriff Patterson has confirmed this to be the case.

**BBC
NEWS**

**Huntsmen
found guilty of
Jedburgh fox
hunting charge**

RIP KEVIN MCNAMARA

Everyone at the League was deeply saddened to hear about the death of Kevin McNamara, former MP for Hull North. Kevin was a strong opponent of blood sports and a former Vice-President of the League.

In 1992, his Wild Mammals Protection Bill, which aimed to ban hunting, was narrowly defeated – the first vote on the matter for 43 years, and an important staging post in the fight that led to the Hunting Act in 2004. His work as an MP was rooted in compassion, dedication, and good humour. He will be missed.

News in brief

- **On 29th July, Hall Green Stadium, Birmingham,** held its final Greyhound race. The track is set for demolition to make way for houses. It isn't the only major Greyhound track to close in 2017, with Wimbledon track having closed down to make way for a new football stadium.
- **Did you spot the League's Philippa King** and her rescued dog Vinny on Channel 4's Animal Rescue Live? Philippa highlighted the important work the League is doing to tackle dog fighting, and spoke about the joys and trials of owning a rescued dog. Read more on page 14
- **The Scottish Government has responded to our calls** to amend the Animal Health and Welfare (Scotland) Act 2006 to increase the maximum penalty for animal cruelty cases to five years, and introduce fixed penalty notices for less serious offenses. We're also pleased that the Government will legislate to regulate animal shelters.
- **The League's petition calling for tougher animal cruelty sentencing** in the UK is close to reaching 100,000 signatures. Help us cross that line by signing at www.league.org.uk/dogfightingpetition
- **More than 20,000 English badgers have been condemned to death** by the British Government as the Badger Cull has once again been rolled out. None of these badgers may be responsible for the Bovine TB epidemic they have been unfairly blamed for, and in the end no farmer may benefit from all this devastation.

SIGN UP!

Receive the latest news direct to your inbox by signing up for our e-newsletter at:

www.league.org.uk



LEAGUE
AGAINST CRUEL SPORTS



A Sparrowhawk takes respite from soaring through the air at our sanctuary.

INVESTIGATE

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Still hunted



After years of campaigning, there is a good chance things may change for the better for animals persecuted by hunts in Scotland. League Scotland Director, *Robbie Marsland*, reviews the current state of affairs.



In 2002 Scotland introduced legislation which we all thought would ban the cruelty of hunting and chasing wild mammals for sport. As the first nation in the UK to implement what was essentially a ban on hunting, it placed Scotland at the forefront of progressive animal welfare law. However, fifteen years on, the effectiveness of the law has been called into question following the first successful prosecution of mounted huntsmen.

It may seem strange to be critical of the first guilty verdict under the Act when of course successful prosecution should be cause for celebration. What is being called into question is why it took so many years to reach this point, when we know hunts have done little to change their behaviour post ban. In the case of Clive Richardson and Johnny Riley, both huntsmen with the JedForest Hunt, the court took eight

This is a pivotal time for hunting in Scotland, we have a Government which recognises the weaknesses in the law and has committed to acting on this.

days to find them guilty. Much of this time was spent analysing the nuances of what constitutes “cover”. Even with the best will in the world it’s hard to defend such a lengthy use of court time to debate whether a fox was in short or long grass!

So where do we go from here? Do we accept the guilty verdict and think job done, we know the law can work, or do we learn lessons from this lengthy trial and use these to campaign to improve the law and make it fit for purpose? The answer is without doubt the latter. This is a pivotal time for hunting in Scotland; we have a Government which recognises the weaknesses in the law and has committed to acting on this. It goes without saying we will be taking full advantage of this opportunity and working closely with the Government to improve the law.

A public consultation due to be published to review Lord Bonomy’s recommendations gives us a legitimate route to strengthening the law and making it work more effectively. The time where hunters could ride roughshod over the law has long gone. How the next season plays out in light of June’s guilty verdict remains to be seen but one thing is for sure, whatever the hunters are doing, the League will be watching.

TAKE ACTION

Do you have information about where and when hunts are meeting, including in Scotland, information about cruelty to hunting dogs or details of foxes being kept for release for hunting, or artificial earths used to encourage foxes into specific locations?

Please report to our Animal Crimewatch team

www.league.org.uk/crimewatch

Call 01483 361 108



**ANIMAL
CRIMEWATCH**

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What price Glorious 12th?

As you are reading this, grouse are being frightened from their heather homes by a line of beaters shouting and stomping to drive them towards eagerly awaiting men with guns.

By the time grouse shooting season closes in December, up to 700,000 birds will have been needlessly shot from the sky. Many will not be killed outright, but will be shot and wounded before hurtling to the ground where they will lie maimed, suffering and terrified.

It's a massacre, but the suffering and damage caused isn't limited to the shooting season itself.

To raise enough grouse to make a good day's shooting, estates burn heather to encourage it to re-grow and provide food and shelter for the grouse. These intensive burning practices are causing serious environmental damage, mainly in National Parks and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty. Links have been made to climate change and urban flooding.

To ensure the birds stay alive long enough to be shot, grouse moors are

ringed with wire snares, which cause indiscriminate suffering and death to potentially hundreds of thousands of animals each year. Birds of prey and mountain hares are also targeted for their alleged role in reducing grouse numbers.

Claims from shooters that some bird species thrive on grouse moors may be true to an extent. But this is an accidental benefit of an unhealthy monoculture focus which is designed to eliminate all unwanted, but natural, predators from the area. Ironic really, considering the grouse they are striving to 'protect' will be shot anyway.

The fact is the only creatures that benefit from the shooting industry are a minority of people that get their kicks from taking pot-shots at terrified birds and those that profit from it.

In 2016, the League, as well as key stakeholders like Mark Avery and Chris Packham, was key in securing the UK's first parliamentary debate on grouse shooting, following a petition signed by over 123,000 concerned citizens: people like you.

With your support we will continue to work towards a ban on this so-called 'sport' so that in the future we can look back disdainfully at the practice, and justifications, of shooting animals for 'sport'. Hopefully that future isn't too far off.



The Problems of Snaring in the UK, and its Alternatives

In August, the League published a report that for the first time grades different methods of animal control in terms of how efficient, humane and conservation-friendly they are.

Snares finished equal bottom of the 16 methods, scoring zero in all three areas.

Read the report:
www.league.org.uk/snares



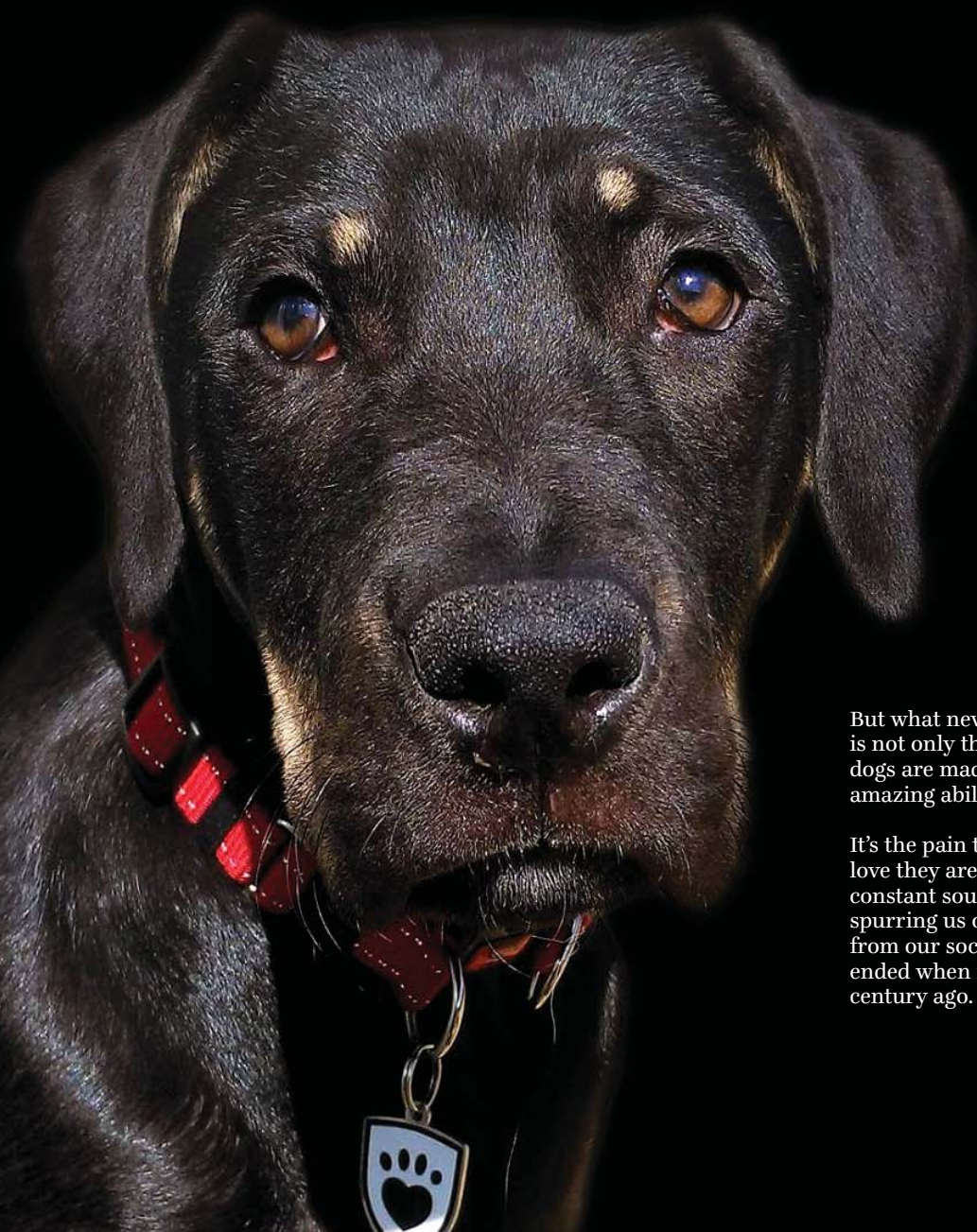
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VICTIMS OF DOG FIGHTING

The League's investigations into dog fighting have helped us learn many things about the dark underworld it inhabits. Some of our findings have surprised us, others less so.



But what never ceases to amaze us, is not only the suffering these loyal dogs are made to endure, but their amazing ability to bounce back.

It's the pain they have suffered, and the love they are still able to offer that is a constant source of inspiration to us, spurring us on to remove the scourge from our society that should have ended when it was banned over a century ago.

Vinny

It is through one of our investigations that we came to meet a tiny mastiff-cross puppy, we later named Vinny (pictured opposite).

Vinny was being sold for his potential fighting abilities, destined for a life that doesn't bear thinking about. Although safe in the care of our investigators, his troubles were only just beginning. Being Christmas time, there weren't many places available to care for Vinny. But attempts to find him a foster home were cut short when he started to show signs of being very sick.

Our Chief Operating Officer, Philippa King took Vinny in to care for him, but when he arrived at her house he was already very weak. His eyes were weeping, he had apparent mange and was refusing to eat anything. After numerous veterinary tests it was discovered Vinny had canine parvo virus and spent the next couple of weeks in intensive care in a critical condition.

Thankfully Vinny came through it. He grew stronger and after a few weeks of love and rest he was ready for us to find his forever home – but of course by this time, there was no way Philippa was letting him go! So Vinny has stayed with her ever since and now as you can see he is not so little anymore!

Hector

This stray was found in the Peterborough area with bite marks around his face and neck after collapsing in the street through dehydration.

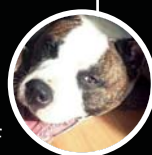


It's believed that he had been forced to fight with other dogs and may even have had his teeth filed down to stop him from defending himself.

This sweet natured and timid dog is now recuperating with a foster carer.

Dewy

Dewy was brought into a rescue centre in Buckinghamshire.



He'd been subjected to violence from the age of about three months by his owner forcing him to fight. His ears had been cut off to help prevent other dogs from holding onto them during fights.

Dewy is currently in foster care, and he needs extra support because he's nervous around new people and other dogs. Hopefully, in time, he'll find a new, loving home.

Bert

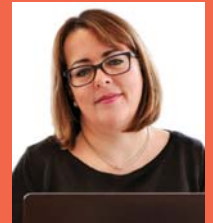
Bert was kept on a chain in his owner's back garden in Berkshire for nearly seven years.



Fed on a diet of steroids, other dogs were brought into the garden to fight with him. Instead of being cared for while his owner was away he was taken out by associates and street-rolled several times. Bert sustained scars to his face, head and legs and his teeth had been filed down. He also has kidney stones believed to have been caused by the steroids.

Fortunately, Bert has been successfully rehomed.

Isn't it time to make dog fighting penalties stronger?



Dogfighting Programme Manager Suzanne Heaney discusses why increasing animal cruelty sentencing is a vital part of the campaign to end dog fighting.

Surely no one can doubt the depravity of forcing dogs to fight! These poor creatures live in a truly brutal world where they are forced to fight for their lives time and time again. Many die in the ring or shortly after from their injuries. Those too injured to fight again are violently despatched, while those who survive are patched up and treated with crude homemade veterinary kits and forced to fight again.

Despite being banned since 1835, dog fighting remains a significant animal welfare issue in England and Wales. Wherever you live (be it in a city, town or rural area), you're probably not too far away from someone that's forcing dogs to fight. But the courts are handing out lenient sentences that ignore the level of cruelty and suffering involved. Typically, for even the most serious cases the maximum sentence is just four months.

It's time the Government introduced a maximum custodial sentence of up to five years to ensure the severity of the crime is properly reflected. We know from our undercover investigations around the country that the majority of the people involved in dog fighting also have links to other crimes such as anti-social behaviour, drugs and violent crime. A short stay in prison is little deterrent given the large sums of money that can be obtained from illegal betting on the outcomes of dog fights. Serious crimes need serious penalties.

England and Wales has amongst the most lenient sentencing for animal cruelty in Europe, sentences that have remained unchanged for over a hundred years. It really is time for the Government to increase penalties so that the punishment acts as a real deterrent to stamp out this abuse once and for all. We'd also like to see a national register of those who are banned from keeping animals to prevent them obtaining more animals to abuse.

It's long overdue; as it stands you can get a longer sentence for fly tipping than for forcing a dog into the brutal world of dog fighting. Sign the petition calling for tougher sentences at www.league.org.uk/dogfightingpetition

INVESTIGATE
EDUCATE
PROTECT

A false trail

‘Trail Hunting’ is the false alibi created by the hunts to cover for illegal hunting.

Unfortunately, this is frequently confused with Drag Hunting. One of the crucial battles in the fight against hunting in the 21st century is to understand that these two terms are not interchangeable and these are two very different activities. It is a mistake that the hunting community is happy for reporters, journalists and members of the public to make as it helps mask their illegal activity.

But what are the differences, and why is understanding them so important in the fight against illegal hunting?

TRAIL HUNTING	DRAG HUNTING
Created in 2005	Created in the early 1800s
Objective is to make an activity look as similar as possible to hunting before the ban	Objective is to practice a sport using hounds to search for a scent without the pursuit or killing of wild animals
Considered a “temporary activity” only undertaken while there is a hunting ban	Long-lasting sport
No written rules	Specific rules created by the Masters of Drag Hounds and Bloodhounds Association
Animal-based scents	Non-animal based scents
Hounds still trained to follow live quarry Hounds taken to search for the scent in areas where live quarry presence is likely	Hounds trained not to follow live quarry Hounds taken to search for the scent in areas where a live quarry presence is unlikely
Uses the same areas, meets and fields where pre-ban fox hunting took place	Does not use areas, meets and fields where pre-ban foxhunting took place
Huntsman and whipper-in deliberately do not know where the scent was laid	Huntsman and whipper-in always know where the scent was laid
Focus is on the hounds searching for a scent rather than encouraging them to find it at the start so riders can join the pursuit	Focus is on the riders following the hounds, who are encouraged to find the scent quickly
No time limit on how much earlier the scent may be laid before casting the hounds to find it	Scent laid only around 20 minutes earlier than casting the hounds to find it
Terriermen follow the hunt and still pursue foxes underground	No terriermen present and no need for terriermen
Hounds left unsupervised for longer periods, which increases the likelihood of ‘accidents’ with chasing and/or killing of live animals	Hounds always kept under close control so no ‘accidents’ with chasing of live animals

TAKE ACTION

Do you have information about where and when hunts are meeting, information about cruelty to hunting dogs or details of foxes being kept for release for hunting, or artificial earths used to encourage foxes into specific locations?

Please report to our Animal Crimewatch team

www.league.org.uk/crimewatch

Call 01483 361 108



INVESTIGATE

EDUCATE

PROTECT

Safe and sound

The League Against Cruel Sports works closely with wild animal rescue centres in the West Country to help rehabilitate and release animals that they have received that were either injured or orphaned.

The welfare of the animal is always our primary concern and we would never consider releasing any animal that wasn't capable of surviving in the wild.

During late summer, the League released a small group of young foxes from a temporary holding pen on one of our wildlife sanctuaries in Devon. The location of the release site was kept strictly secret, as there are people out there who would try to find and kill the foxes if they knew where they were. After a short period of supplementary feeding, to give the foxes chance to become used to their surroundings, the foxes dispersed naturally into the wild.

The individual back stories for these young foxes makes upsetting reading. One was found on a bridleway near its dead mother and sibling, another was found by a country road with no sign of its mother and another was found in a woodland with its mother missing, presumed dead. At the League we think it is only fair to give these unfortunate animals another chance.

“... there are people out there who would try to find and kill the foxes if they knew where they were.”

.....

This is a far cry from the other recent arrival on our sanctuary when the Devon and Somerset Staghounds were observed pursuing a stag on land neighbouring the League's Baronsdown sanctuary.

The frightened and exhausted stag managed to reach the safety of Baronsdown, but two hunting hounds continued to chase the terrified animal on to land that is meant to be safe for wildlife. One dog was apprehended by League sanctuary officer Graham Floyd and returned to the hunt.

You can watch the video on our YouTube channel.

While the hunts are barred from our Land, League members are most welcome.

If you would like to visit please get in contact to make the arrangements.



YOU'RE HELPING

**EVERGREEN INSURANCE:
HELPING WILDLIFE, HELPING YOU**

We are happy to be supported by Evergreen Insurance, a company with an ethical ethos and a priority of giving something back. We spoke with founder **David Gardiner** to learn more about why the League's work is so important to him

Why the League?

On a recent nature walk I was horrified to witness a fox hunt on the land opposite the reserve we were on, our instinct was to reach out to the animals and protect them, given there were over 100 people on horseback we were not going to win and it broke my heart that these poor animals would succumb to the terror of this hunt.

How does the Evergreen model help to assist wildlife, and how can our supporters help?

Insurance isn't the most interesting of subjects but we do all need it, so why not use a company that is doing the

right thing and helping? So whether it is home, car, travel, life, pet or business insurance we can help and for every £1 we earn I donate up to 25% back to the client's favourite wildlife charity, it is a win win.

What's your favourite League campaign?

Working to protect foxes – I recently had the pleasure of a family of foxes raise a cub at the end of my garden, we watched from a distance and didn't interfere but was delighted they chose our garden. Having witnessed the fox hunt I have a strong affinity with wanting to help protect foxes.



You can request a quote by visiting www.evergreeninsuranceservices.co.uk or call the phone number 020 3907 1360 dedicated for League supporters.

BECOME A LEAGUE HERO

Get your FREE Fundraising Pack by contacting Mike on 01483 524 250, emailing fundraising@league.org.uk or visiting www.league.org.uk/LeagueHero



ONE TOUGH MUDDER!

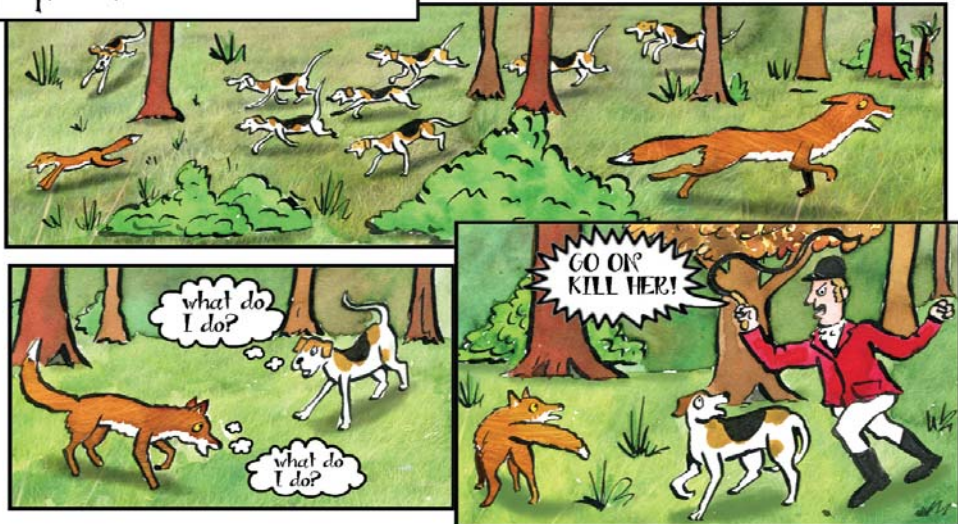
Well done to amazing League Hero Martine Peacock who took part in Tough Mudder this year, all in the name of helping animals "It was so much fun," she said "This may be the start of an addiction – I didn't want it to end. So much for my resolve during those too-hot summer training sessions to quit exercise and take up knitting after the event!"



If you would like to become a League Hero see details above.

Fauna - a fox's life

Episode 7



ALL THE FUN OF THE BIRDFAIR



Birdfair, the world's largest birding festival, takes place each year at Rutland Nature Reserve. For the last few years, the League has had a presence there, led by the superb Midlands Supporter Group (pictured above with Chris Packham).

This year our focus was on educating Birdfair attendees about our campaign to end hunting on National Trust land, urging those who are National Trust members to use their AGM vote.

As well as the stall, League Director Chris Luffingham joined TV's Mike Dilger and the Badger Trust's Dominic Dyer on a panel discussing 'the politics of wildlife crime' to a capacity crowd.



AUTUMN RAFFLE

Over £2,000 in cash prizes to be won plus the chance to be entered into a Super Seller Draw with a chance of winning an extra £200!

1st prize = £1,000

2nd prize = 2 x £250

3rd prize = 3 x £100

4th prize = 10 x £25

With so many cash prizes up for grabs, please consider taking part and helping to protect more animals from cruelty.

And that's not to mention the bonus Super Seller draw. This is your chance to be automatically entered to win a £200 cash bonus prize – just from buying or selling £20 worth of tickets.

All profits raised will help us to protect animals, so why not ask friends and family to take part too? This is a great way of helping us combat wildlife crime over the coming months.

You can also play securely online at: www.league.org.uk/raffle

To request an Autumn Raffle booklet if there is not one enclosed and you do not wish to play online, please contact us and we will be delighted to post one to you.

You can also call to request extras!

Call 01483 524 250
or email info@league.org.uk

Story by the League Against Cruel Sports,
illustration by www.woodyfox.co.uk

Episode 8



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