

Hunting Act (2004) Amendments

Following David Cameron's postponement of the debate in the Commons scheduled for 15 July under the threat of defeat at the hands of the SNP we await news of any attempt he might make at introducing an English Votes for English Law (EVEL) bill. This could prevent the SNP from voting on any future amendments to the Hunting Act, but this could depend upon whether these are regarded as primary or secondary legislation. If secondary then it is possible that the SNP could still participate in voting them down. The same question would arise if Cameron goes for a straight repeal of the Hunting Act next time. In view of his claim that the proposed amendments to the Hunting Act would bring it into line with the Protection of Wild Mammals (Scotland) Act 2002 it is interesting to note that the Scottish Government stated recently that this is being widely flouted and is in need of strengthening.

More on sheep's parsley

A member in Devon says: "I know that to add interest to horse pasture you can remove a square metre of turf here and there and sow it with herbs and other things they might like or are good for them as they self medicate when they are free to forage and like berries, bark and twigs etc. If they eat a varied diet they are likely to stay healthy anyway. My horse in Dubai who was an ex racehorse with ulcers used to dig for certain roots! So we could perhaps do that to add sheep's parsley?" (for hares) Hares retreat to woodland during the winter, especially in harsh weather, where they forage on bark and roots, so this is why we encourage farmers to conserve any woodland they might have, or plant if necessary.

From Russia with cash

Our under cover contact in Scotland says: "This includes money laundering to buy property in London, but I'd hazard a guess this is also going on to buy sporting estates both sides of the border. I've also heard of Russian "businessmen", some of whom may be illegal, spending lavishly on pheasant and grouse shooting holidays." This would extend into hare shooting during the pheasant and grouse close seasons. This would mean that some sporting estates and estate agents who sell estates are involved in money laundering."

Snares

We have received this message from Jaine Wild, Secretary of the National Anti-Snaring Campaign: "We whole heartily support you on trying to get snares banned and are very happy to send any photos that you can use, we have had a number of incidents involving snares and hares and we are like yourself working to Ban these disgusting things. If you have space maybe a mention in your newsletter about our organisation would be good or we would be happy to write an article for it on the work we do. Many thanks in advance www.antisnaring.org.uk

Hare coursing counter-measure

With hare coursing and other rural crimes increasingly hitting the headlines an action group chose the recent Game Fair at Scone to launch a new and simple counter measure. The PAW Scotland Poaching and Coursing Priority Group is to make available free of charge a bespoke notebook which will allow anyone seeing such crimes taking place to record at the time as much accurate and detailed information as possible to pass on to the police. The notebook is designed to fit in a glovebox or pocket. The notebook encourages the witness to record as many details as possible about the event including information on the people perpetrating the actions, their equipment, vehicle, dogs and what the apparent quarry was and what happened to the quarry. The notebook also encourages the witness to record the reporting of the incident and the subsequent actions taken. *(Mention of this counter-measure launched at a game fair does not imply that SWAFH approves of such events. Ed.)*

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