

Hares Preservation Act 1892

As in previous years John Rimington of the Hare Preservation Trust can be notified of any observed breaches of the Hares Preservation Act as from today at his hotmail address: johnrim2@hotmail.co.uk John would need the name and address, including county, of the place (game dealer, butcher or restaurant) where British hare (in any format in England and Wales) is being offered for sale until 31 July.

Excerpt from Adjournment debate – rural policing and hare coursing

This was held in the Commons on 7 March and reported in Hansard
Motion made, and Question proposed: That this House do now adjourn. (Mark Spencer.)
Contribution from John Glen (Salisbury) (Con.)

I am grateful to my Hon. Friend. As somebody who used to live in his constituency, I empathise strongly with the concerns he raises. I will set out similar examples of my constituents who have shared the same experience. My first and principal concern is the threat that hare coursing poses to farming communities. Hare coursers are not simply a few individuals quietly chasing hares on unused land: they are, most often, large groups who show serious contempt for the law. This results in a number of significant problems for my constituents. Farms are vandalised, people are intimidated, and often farmers are isolated and unable to count on the law for timely protection. The National Farmers Union has found that hare coursing is now the most common crime experienced by farmers in Wiltshire. That has a number of troubling implications for rural communities. (*No mention of hare welfare. We believe the police and Crown Prosecution Service would have no interest in hare coursing were it not for the damage to property caused. Ed.*)

Caged rabbit farming – proposed farm at Gnosall, Staffs.

We contacted the Rabbit Welfare Association/Fund who replied:

We are aware of this, and publicised it in recent days on our Facebook page. Sadly, because of the limitations of our charitable remit, we may not take this up in terms of the RWAFF campaigning as it's a meat/fur farm and not a pet breeding facility, but as individuals we are all against it and in support of the action being taken by Compassion In World Farming. (*Restrictions which would be imposed on our lobbying are the reason for SWAFH remaining a non-charity. Ed.*)

Tips on viewing hares

Stay upwind of the hare as much as possible ie. your scent is blowing away from the hare, even if obliquely. Hares have 360 degrees vision apart from a blind spot straight ahead, so crop tramlines can be good places to view them and they can trundle down very close before they realise you are there. Single hares are more nervous than groups, so make the best of groups when you have the good fortune to find them. The last known group at West Sandford was one of five several years ago and one hare was rolling on its back with its legs waving in the air. Don't leave your camera at home!

Mountain hare viewing opportunity

Take a pair of binoculars on a trip to Ladybower Wood SSSI Nature Reserve, in the Derbyshire Peak District and look for hares warming themselves on rocky outcrops which catch the afternoon sun. The last of their winter coat makes them stand out against the dark stone. To find out more about the wildlife you can find in the Peak District, visit www.derbyshirewildlifetrust.org.uk

Coursing incidents

South Norfolk and Lincoln 1 March, Saffron Walden 4 March, Dickleburgh 6 March and 8 March, Laverstock 6 March, Boston 6 March, 9 March and 11 March, Brockdish 7 March

SWAFH@actionforhares.org.uk

