

Conservation news supplement

Appendix

Full details of active cases and convictions mentioned in the wildlife crime section of October's Conservation news (*BW* 35: 73) are given below.

BIRDS OF PREY

Prosecution - Peregrine disturbance & egg theft:

Christopher Wheeldon, 34, of Lime Grove, Darley Dale, Matlock has been charged with taking the eggs of a Schedule 1 wild bird and disturbing the nesting site of a Schedule 1 wild bird following an incident at a Peregrine nesting site at Bolsover, Derbyshire in April 2023. He is due to appear at Chesterfield Justice Centre on 16 October 2023. Source: <https://tinyurl.com/ycka5hue>.

Prosecution - Goshawk shooting:

Thomas Edward Jones, 38, appeared at Welshpool Magistrates Court on 5 September 2023 charged with the shooting and killing of a Schedule 1 wild bird (a Goshawk) in July 2022 at Pentre Farm, a commercial pheasant-rearing facility in north Powys. Jones confirmed his name, age and address but did not enter a plea. The case will continue on 19 September 2023. Source: <https://tinyurl.com/y24pz5hs>.

Appeal for info - Buzzard

shooting: A buzzard was found with shotgun injuries in a field off Birch Grove Road near Chelwood Gate in East Sussex on 23 July 2023. An x-ray revealed two shotgun pellets, one causing a wing fracture and the other one lodged in the buzzard's leg. Vets were able to remove both pellets and in August the buzzard

was released back into the wild. Source: <https://tinyurl.com/a5pbtfwc>.

Appeal for info - Sparrowhawk

shooting: Durham Constabulary issued an appeal for information in August after the discovery of a dead sparrowhawk that had been shot in a public woodland in Darlington. Source: <https://tinyurl.com/2e7a6f9k>.

Appeal for info - Suspicious disappearances of three satellite-tagged Hen Harriers:

Three more satellite-tagged Hen Harriers 'disappeared' in suspicious circumstances on driven grouse moors in England within days of each other in early August, according to the RSPB. One vanished in the N Pennines and the two in the Yorkshire Dales National Park. This brings the total number of Hen Harriers known to have 'disappeared' or been killed, mostly on or close to grouse moors since 2018, to 101 birds. Source: <https://tinyurl.com/4sua36j4>.

Conviction - Unlawful possession of wild Tawny Owls:

Alan Mee, 61, of Larch Avenue, Newton-le-Willows appeared at Crewe Magistrates' Court on 17 July where he pleaded guilty to three counts of failing to take reasonable steps to ensure the needs of an animal, and two counts of possessing a wild bird, namely Tawny Owls. He was disqualified from keeping birds for five years and also incurred a fine and court costs

to the value of £823. Source: <https://tinyurl.com/2s3atr9r>.

BADGERS

Prosecution - Badger baiting:

Jason Lee Kennedy, 35, of Ross Road, Enniskillen has been charged with 36 offences relating to alleged Badger baiting in the Derrylin area of Fermanagh in June/July 2022. His case has been upgraded from the Magistrates Court to the High Court where more severe penalties are available for such offences. The next court hearing is scheduled for 18 October 2023. Source: <https://tinyurl.com/yc548drc>.

Conviction - interfering with a Badger sett:

Christopher Woodward, 38, of Quarry Lane, Horton, Oxfordshire appeared at Mold Magistrates Court on 10 August 2023 where he pleaded guilty to a charge of blocking the entrance to a Badger sett. The incident took place at Iscoyd Woods, Whitchurch, Shropshire, on 3 February 2023, where Woodward worked as a huntsman for the Wynnstay Hunt. Woodward was fined £500 and ordered to pay costs of £85 to the Crown Prosecution Service and a £200 surcharge fee. Source: <https://tinyurl.com/mr3mnrw>.

HARES

Arrest: Bedfordshire Police have arrested a teenager after a vehicle using cloned number plates failed

to stop in Luton on 9 August 2023. The vehicle was found to contain 15 dead hares, powerful lamps, and three lurchers in the back of a car. The investigation is ongoing. Source: <https://tinyurl.com/yrxyunj>.

Prosecution: Andrew Boswell, 38, of Denton Street, Carlisle, Shane Boswell, 40, of Whalley Lane, Blackpool and Tommy Boswell, 45, of Midgeland Road, Blackpool appeared at Blackpool Magistrates Court on 13 September 2023 to face charges of hare coursing offences alleged to have been committed in a field at Westby in November 2022. The trio denied trespassing with the intent to go hare coursing and going equipped for hare coursing. The trial continues. Source: <https://tinyurl.com/v8wezsa>.

Conviction: Joseph Lee, 46, of Allington Lane, Barrowby, has been convicted of attending a hare coursing event at Newham Drain, New York, Lincolnshire in January 2023. On 7 September 2023, Boston magistrates ordered that Lee should be deprived of two vehicles under the Powers of Criminal Court Act 2000. He was also deprived of two pairs of binoculars, one monocular scope, two dog leads and two slip leads, a pulsar thermal imager and two iPhones. He received a three-year Criminal Behaviour Order from the court which prohibits him from going on to any private land with certain types of dogs, including lurchers and greyhounds, between July 31 and April 30, without the written permission of the landowner. Lee was also fined £384 and ordered to pay a surcharge of £154. These wider penalties are a result of new legislation introduced in 2022 making it an offence to go equipped for, search for, or pursue hares with

dogs, and an offence to trespass with intent to search for or pursue hares with dogs. Source: <https://tinyurl.com/2hrbuuv8>.

Conviction: Robert Makepeace, 42, of Headcorn, near Ashford, Kent and Nathan Smith, 57, of Mangravet Avenue, Maidstone, Kent have been convicted of hare coursing offences committed at Ings Lane, Leverton, Lincolnshire in December 2022. Both men appeared at Boston Magistrates Court on 19 July 2023 where they each received a five-year Community Behaviour Order which bans them from entering Lincolnshire. They were also each fined £833 and had their vehicle, phones, leads and all three dogs forfeited. Source: <https://tinyurl.com/2p8k4yn6>.

Conviction: Five men have been convicted of hare coursing offences that took place on farmland at Itchen Abbas, Hampshire, on 18 January 2023. Leonard Pinnick, 36, of Montgomery Road, Southampton, Shane Jefferies, 27, of Hornbeam Close, Hedge End, Lloyd Jefferies, 35, of Tanhouse Lane, Botley, Martin Tony Buckland, 19, from Hound Road, Netley and Martin Eli Buckland, 40, from Hound Road, Netley pleaded guilty to trespass with intent to search for or to pursue hares with dogs, and being equipped for searching for or pursuing hares with dogs. They were bailed and will appear for sentencing on 25 September 2023. Source: <https://tinyurl.com/4ntbsjc4>.

Conviction: Tommy Gray, 19, of Weller Road, Amersham, Buckinghamshire and Joseph Abercromie, 20, of Heartenoak Road, Hawkhurst, Kent, appeared before Basildon magistrates on

13 July 2023 where they pleaded guilty to trespassing with intent to search for, or to pursue, hares with dogs at Paglesham near Rochford, Essex on 6 January 2023. Each was fined £250 and ordered to pay £105 costs and a £100 victim surcharge. Magistrates decided against banning either man from driving because it was their first offence and against disqualifying them from owning or keeping dogs because of their family circumstances. Source: <https://tinyurl.com/34rhk9bz>.

Conviction: Terry Smith, 40, of Oxney Road, Peterborough, Nelson Loveridge, 38, of Maltmas Drove, Wisbech, Cambridgeshire, Stacey Smith, 39, of Baulkins Drove, Sutton St James and Danny Rainford, 33, of Seadyke Bank, Murrow, Cambridgeshire appeared at Boston Magistrates Court in July 2023 after pleading guilty to various offences linked to hare coursing in the Eastern Road area of Spalding on 9 November 2022. They received four months' imprisonment suspended for 24 months, a five year Criminal Behaviour Order not to enter Lincolnshire during the hare coursing season and be on land with a sight hound or be in company with any person with such a dog without permission. They also received a five year disqualification from keeping dogs, disqualified from driving for six months, all items used in connection with the offence were forfeited, including their vehicle and their dogs. They have also each received fines of £239. Smith, Loveridge and Rainford were also ordered to pay £3586 to recover the kennelling costs. Source: <https://tinyurl.com/yc3ezsbv>.

FOXES

Conviction: John Oliver Finnegan, 38, of Kennel Lane in Cuddington,

Northwich, has been convicted of two charges of hunting a wild mammal (a Fox) with a dog on 12 November 2022 at Chorley Green and again on 26 November 2022 at Marbury, Cheshire. He was due to attend Crewe Magistrates Court on 30 August 2023 but he failed to appear. He was convicted in his absence and was issued a two-year Criminal Behaviour Order which states that Finnegan must be able to evidence where a trail has been laid on the day of a trail hunt for which he is the huntsman, and must be able to produce this evidence when asked by a police officer. It also states he must keep the hounds under close control and they must remain in his sight at all times. The order also bans Finnegan from having more than 10 hounds on a trail hunt that he is the huntsman for. He must not allow the hounds onto private land without permission, which he must have in writing and have in his possession, and he must not let the hounds enter wooded areas unless he can provide evidence that a trail has been laid. Finnegan was also fined £1,000 and must pay £150 in costs to the Crown Prosecution Service, along with a surcharge of £800. Source: <https://tinyurl.com/4wurk9n8>.

Prosecution: Benjamin Wilson, 33, of Barden Avenue, Bradford and Benjamin Grennan, 24, of Burnley Road, Mytholmroyd have been charged with hunting a wild mammal and causing unnecessary suffering to a Fox by keeping it in a snare. The alleged offences are reported to have been committed in January 2023 in Kendal, Cumbria. Both men deny the offences and the case will continue at court on 21 September 2023. Source: <https://tinyurl.com/4erry5u6>.

Prosecution: Alex Warden, 25, of North Bradley, Wiltshire is due to stand trial at Salisbury Crown Court accused of illegally hunting a wild mammal (a Fox) with dogs and causing unnecessary suffering to a protected animal after video footage emerged in February 2023 showing members of the Avon Vale Hunt throwing a fox to a pack of hounds. Two other men have been convicted in relation to the footage but Warden has opted for a trial by jury. His trial will begin on 21 December 2023. Source: <https://tinyurl.com/3hfz89>.

Prosecution: Mark Baldwin has been charged with Section 1 of the Hunting Act 2004 and is due to appear at Scarborough Magistrates Court on 13 November 2023. Baldwin was charged after a Fox was killed by foxhounds at a Middleton Hunt meet on the 25th January 2023. Source: <https://tinyurl.com/3shpzmys>.

Conviction: Aaron Fookes, 30, of Templecombe, Somerset and Stuart Radbourne, 39, of The Common, Bromham, Wiltshire have been convicted of wildlife offences after video footage of a Fox being unearthed and attacked by hounds was posted online in February 2023. Appearing at Swindon Magistrates Court on 5 July 2023, Fookes pleaded guilty to hunting a wild mammal with dogs contrary to the Hunting Act 2004, and causing unnecessary suffering to a protected animal. He was sentenced to 200 hours of community service and fined £1,200. Radbourne pleaded guilty to hunting a wild mammal with dogs and was fined £580. Source: <https://tinyurl.com/eu3m4xje>.

GREAT CRESTED NEWTS

Conviction: Stephen Van Praag from Summerhouse Bay, Llantwit

Major, Vale of Glamorgan appeared at Cardiff Magistrates Court on 25 August 2023 where he pleaded guilty to breaching the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended) at the former Summerhouse Bay Holiday Park, Boverton, Llantwit Major on the Heritage Coast in the Vale of Glamorgan. The court heard how in February 2023, Mr Van Praag drained the pool housing one of the largest colonies of Great Crested Newts in South Wales without the relevant species licencing from Natural Resources Wales or planning permission from the Vale of Glamorgan Council. Van Praag had applied for outlying planning permission to build 20 holiday chalets on the site however had ignored the advice of his ecologist and drained the pool resulting in the loss of a full years' breeding cycle of this protected species. Van Praag was ordered to pay £1,905 in fines, costs and compensation amounting to £700 to The Freshwater Habitats Trust. Source: <https://tinyurl.com/ybt5uzyw>.

SPERM WHALE

Conviction: Tevita Laaki, 50, of Mayfield Avenue, Grove, Wantage appeared at Oxford Magistrates Court on 26 July 2023 where he pleaded guilty to one count each of offering for sale, keeping for sale and selling of sperm whale teeth between August and September 2022 after importing them for sales. Laaki was told to complete 120 hours of unpaid community work to be completed in 12 months and pay a £114 surcharge and £85 in costs. Source: <https://tinyurl.com/2saez78v>.

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