

Conservation news supplement

Appendix

Full details of active cases and convictions mentioned in the wildlife crime section of June's Conservation news (*Issue June 35.7*) are given below.

BIRDS OF PREY

Appeal for information – shot

Red Kite: Wiltshire Police are appealing for information following the discovery of a shot Red Kite that was found dead by a member of the public near Green Hill, south of Purton on 4 February 2024. Source: <https://shorturl.at/fZZPQ>

Appeal for information – suspected shooting of Buzzard: North Yorkshire Police are appealing for information after the suspected shooting of a Buzzard in the North York Moors National Park. The Buzzard is thought to have been killed near to Laskill, Bilsdale, on 4 April 2024. Source: <https://shorturl.at/U1ptE>

Appeal for information – shot

Buzzard: West Yorkshire Police have issued an appeal for information following the discovery of a shot Buzzard that was found dead on the edge of Ilkley Moor on 17 April 2024. Source: <https://shorturl.at/PjkFY>
Prosecution discontinued – Attempting to trap Goshawks: The prosecution of 47-year old gamekeeper Stuart Hart, who had been charged in relation to the alleged attempted trapping of Goshawks on Ruabon Moor, near Wrexham, North Wales, was discontinued at Wrexham Magistrates Court April 2024. The reason for this decision has not yet been published. Source: <https://shorturl.at/9degZ>
Police believe Golden Eagle was 'shot

& killed' in South Scotland: Police Scotland believe a satellite-tagged Golden Eagle 'Merrick' was 'shot and killed' whilst sleeping in a tree before 'someone then removed her body and destroyed her satellite tag' in November 2023. Merrick disappeared from woodland next to a grouse moor in the Moorfoot Hills and the South Scotland Golden Eagle Project has now published further details and photographic evidence relating to this wildlife crime. Source: <https://shorturl.at/Buu5z>

Appeal for information – shot

Peregrine: The RSPB is appealing for information after the discovery of a shot Peregrine on the Dove Stone nature reserve in the Peak District National Park on 4 April 2024. The Peregrine was euthanised due to the extent of its injuries. The RSPB is offering a reward for information that leads to a conviction. The Peak District National Park Authority has matched this reward, taking the reward total to £10,000. Source: <https://shorturl.at/FDSqH>
Appeal for information - shot Tawny Owl: Northamptonshire Police are appealing for information after an injured tawny owl was found with a rifle shot wound in Badsaddle Wood, between Orlingbury and Broughton off the A43, on the afternoon of Monday April 1 2024. It was taken to a rescue centre but didn't survive its injuries. Source: <https://shorturl.at/JA9vn>

Conviction – causing unnecessary suffering to owls:

The founder of Barrow's Owl Sanctuary in Cumbria has been disqualified from keeping or owning birds for five years after a judge ruled he had housed his animals in 'woefully inadequate conditions'. Paul Rose MBE, 71, pleaded guilty at Preston Crown Court in May 2024 to two counts of causing unnecessary suffering to a protected animal and one count of failing to ensure animal welfare, contrary to Section 4 and Section 9 of the Animal Welfare Act 2006. 26 owls were seized from the charity's premises in March 2022 after they were found to have been crammed into cramped, cluttered cages that had no windows and where the owls had insufficient space to open their wings. The court was told a further five owls were seized by the RSPCA from the defendant's property on Foxfield Lane, Walney, including a Barn Owl that had a fractured wing. Rose also admitted he had displayed a Tawny Owl for commercial purposes without an Article 10 certificate. In addition to a five-year disqualification, Rose was sentenced to a 20-week prison sentence suspended for two years with one requirement of completing a one-month curfew between the hours of 9pm – 7am. Source: <https://shorturl.at/JwTDW>

OTHER BIRDS

Conviction – serial egg collector:

Serial egg collector Daniel Lingham

has been convicted for the third time for offences relating to the taking and possession of wild birds' eggs. Lingham, who has been jailed twice previously, appeared at Norwich Magistrates Court on 3 May 2024 after pleading guilty to his latest offences that occurred in 2023 when over 2,000 wild birds' eggs were found hidden at his home, including over 1,000 from Red and Amber-listed species. Lingham also pleaded guilty to breaching a 10-year Criminal Behaviour Order which had banned him from visiting nature reserves in Norfolk during the bird breeding season. Lingham received a 12-week custodial sentence suspended for 18 months, was ordered to pay £483 in costs and compensation and was handed a 12 month mental health requirement and 15 rehabilitation days. Source: <https://shorturl.at/0HKq0>

Arrests – animal fighting:

Lincolnshire Police have arrested three men aged 33, 45 and 52, on suspicion of being involved or attending an organised animal fight. The arrests followed the execution of four search warrants at a Traveller's site in Beckingham on 24 May 2024 in a joint operation with the RSPCA. A number of items were seized, including cockerels, dogs, a suspected stolen caravan, two vans and a quad bike. Source: <https://shorturl.at/EQPf7>

Ducklings stoned to death:

Lincolnshire Police have reported Mallard ducklings being stoned to death in April 2024 by teenagers at the Shiregate duck pond in Metheringham. This is an offence under Section 1 of the Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981 which provides protection for wild birds, their nests and eggs. Source: <https://tinyurl>.

[com/mw4n6d89](https://shorturl.at/mw4n6d89)

Conviction – causing unnecessary suffering to Magpies:

Richard Robin Orton, of Westland Road, Wolverhampton appeared at Birmingham Magistrates Court on 17 April 2024 where he was convicted of causing unnecessary suffering to two Magpies that were being used as decoys inside Larsen traps in his garden to trap and kill other Magpies. Orton had failed to provide a suitable environment for the two birds, including the presence of filthy water, no food and 'a significant amount of faeces'. Orton was banned from keeping birds and ferrets for five years and ordered to pay £312. His conviction also means he can no longer use Natural England's General Licences. Source: <https://shorturl.at/pVyne>

HARES

Appeal for information – Hare coursing and serious assault:

South Yorkshire Police are appealing for information about several men seen using dogs to hunt animals on private land on Lodge Lane in Braithwaite near Doncaster on 2 April 2024. After being challenged by the land owner, an altercation took place during which it is alleged that the men became aggressive and used a hammer to cause criminal damage to farm machinery and inflict a facial injury to a 37 year-old woman. Enquires have led officers to believe that the vehicle the men were using was being driven on cloned registration plates. Police have released images of the men they would like to question. Source: <https://shorturl.at/Zvxcg>

Prosecution – Hare coursing:

Craig Rooks, 57, from Vicarage Gardens, Todmorden near

Calderdale, West Yorkshire, has been charged with an offence of being equipped for searching for or pursuing hares with dogs in Lincolnshire. Police stopped his vehicle in North Greetwell on 14 October 2023 and found items used for Hare coursing. Rooks will appear at Lincoln Magistrates' Court in May. Rooks has previous convictions for Hare coursing and causing criminal damage to crops [as reported in BW April 2024 edition]. Source: <https://shorturl.at/TmHHH>

Conviction – Hare coursing:

Two men have been convicted of Hare coursing offences and have been ordered to pay more than £4,500 in fines and kennelling costs and have been handed Criminal Behaviour Orders banning them from private land in Lincolnshire, Derbyshire, Leicestershire, Northamptonshire and Nottinghamshire during the Hare coursing 'season' (31 July – 30 April) for the next 10 years. George Miller, 32, of Loupsefell Drive, Morecambe, Lancashire and Lewis Sheridan, 37, of Thicketford Road, Bolton appeared at Boston Magistrates Court on 1 May 2024 where they pleaded guilty to hunting a wild mammal with a dog, contrary to Schedule 1 of the Hunting Act 2004. Both men relinquished ownership of their dogs which have subsequently been rehomed. Source: <https://shorturl.at/xn708>

Conviction - Hare coursing:

Four men from Doncaster will pay nearly £20,000 after they destroyed a farmer's field in Lincolnshire and were caught in possession of Hare coursing equipment in Apley, near Wragby, Lincolnshire, in October 2023. Animal fights had been recorded on their phones. All four were charged with being

equipped to Hare course, breaching section 9 of the Animal Welfare Act and criminal damage. They pleaded guilty to these charges and were sentenced at Lincoln Magistrates Court on 25 April 2024, where they were ordered to pay a combined sum of £19,791.72 in costs and compensation as follows: Eugene Meenaghan, 23, of Skellow, Doncaster to pay £5,262.93; Joseph Murtagh, 22, of Woodlands, Doncaster to pay £4,842.93; Jay Poole, 20, of Woodlands, Doncaster to pay £4,842.93; Jake Reidy, 18, of Stainforth, Doncaster to pay £4,842.93. They were also given a 10-year Criminal Behaviour Order not to enter Lincolnshire with longdogs and have been banned from keeping dogs for 10 years. They will also have to carry out 100 hours of community service under probation and were asked to forfeit belongings such as their mobile phones and lamps. Source: <https://shorturl.at/uhFsi>

Conviction - Hare coursing: Three men appeared at Hull Magistrates Court on 5 May 2024 for sentencing after earlier pleading guilty to multiple Hare coursing offences on farmland near Rawcliffe Bridge in November 2023. Joel Miller, 27, of North Wales was fined £199, issued a Community Order requiring him to undertake 120 hours unpaid work and was disqualified from driving for 42 days. Connor Waring, 25, of Chester was fined £624. James Callaghan, 46 of Chester was fined £199, issued a Community Order requiring him to undertake 120 hours unpaid work, excluded from entering the East Riding of Yorkshire for 12 months, as well as a Forfeiture Order for the destruction of recording devices. Source: <https://shorturl.at/98qhu>

BADGERS

Conviction – animal suffering relating to badger baiting: A man whose dogs were found suffering from injuries after the RSPCA investigated potential Badger baiting offences has been banned from keeping animals for 10 years. Reece Robertson, 26, of Cook Road, Millom, Cumbria appeared at South Cumbria Magistrates Court for sentencing in May 2024 after pleading guilty to four offences. In addition to the disqualification, Robertson was given a 12-month Community Order requiring him to complete 200 hours of unpaid work. Source: <https://shorturl.at/qvN2M>

Plea change – Badger baiting: Jason Lee Kennedy (35), from Marble Arch Road, Enniskillen has changed his plea ahead of a trial for alleged Badger-baiting and associated animal fighting offences [as covered in Feb 2024 edition of BW]. Kennedy had previously denied 18 charges in total relating to causing unnecessary suffering to Badgers and cats. He has now pleaded guilty to six counts which the prosecution confirmed satisfied the extent of offending which took place between 28 June and 4 July 2022. The remaining matters are to be left on court file. Judge Fiona Bagnall said pre-sentence reports were required given the gravity and nature of the offending. She remanded Kennedy on continuing bail which includes a ban on possessing any animal, electronic tagging and a curfew to return for sentencing at Dungannon Crown Court in June 2024. Source: <https://shorturl.at/RK17Y>

DEER

Police investigation – Stag hunting: Devon and Cornwall

Police are investigating a report of a Red Deer stag being chased by hounds and later shot on land in the Twitchen area of North Devon, between 11.30am and 5pm on Saturday 20 April 2024. The Hunt Saboteurs Association allege that video footage shows it was one of several stags pursued by dozens of members of the Devon & Somerset Staghounds Hunt that day and had been chased across Exmoor National Park for three hours before collapsing exhausted in a river where it was shot. Source: <https://shorturl.at/49kyE>

POACHING

Appeal for information – Rabbit poaching: North Wales Police's Rural Crime Team is appealing for information after wild Rabbits have been found shot in Conwy. The animals were killed around the Bryn Seiri Farm area in early April and Police believe poachers have been entering private land near to residential areas to shoot the Rabbits at night. PC Ian Nicholls said: "Trespass on land at night to take or destroy a Rabbit is contrary to Section 1 of the Night Poaching Act 1828 and could lead to a maximum 51 weeks imprisonment and/or a fine. There are many public footpaths in the area and inappropriate use of a firearm so close to residential areas could endanger the public". Source: <https://tinyurl.com/r2yshxvf>

FOXES

Parish Council complaint about lack of police enforcement against fox hunts: Borrowdale Parish Council in the Lake District has made a complaint about a perceived lack of enforcement action by Cumbria Constabulary against 'repeated illegal action of hunting with dogs

within the parish'. A letter of complaint was sent to the deputy Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner for Cumbria and his clerk replied to tell the Parish Council that if making a formal complaint it should be addressed to the Chief Constable's Professional Standards Department. Source: <https://shorturl.at/UhVjY>

Conviction - causing unnecessary suffering: Gregory Edward Baker, 43, of Rhydcymerau, Llandeilo and a huntsman of the Carmarthenshire-based Llandeilo Farmers Hunt was convicted at Llanelli Magistrates Court on 25 April 2024 for multiple counts of animal neglect. The court found Baker guilty of causing unnecessary suffering to six animals, including five equines and one foxhound, due to prolonged neglect. The incidents, which occurred between 21 March and 19 April 2023 were investigated by the RSPCA. Baker, who had originally pleaded not guilty to all charges on 15 November 2023 was sentenced to 20 weeks in prison, suspended for 24 months. The sentence includes a requirement for Baker to carry out 150 hours of unpaid work within the next twelve months. Additionally, Baker is to pay a victim surcharge of £154 and cover the RSPCA's prosecution costs assessed at £2719.45. Source: <https://shorturl.at/r9RND>

VIOLENCE AND THEFT ASSOCIATED WITH HUNT MEETS

Conviction – causing criminal damage and possession of a knife: A supporter of the Grove and Rufford Hunt in Nottinghamshire has been convicted of causing criminal damage and being in possession of a knife which he used to slash the tyres of a vehicle being driven by members of the Sheffield

Hunt Saboteurs. John Partridge, 21, of Knott End, Langold, Worksop appeared at Nottingham Crown Court on 3 May 2024 where he pleaded guilty to the offences that took place at Laxton on 7 January 2023. Partridge had been wearing a balaclava to commit his offences but a Hunt Saboteur was able to remove it, leading to a positive identification of the defendant. He was given a two-year Community Order where he has to attend 20 rehabilitation sessions and has to comply with an electronically-monitored curfew confining him to his home address each evening between 9pm and 6am for eight weeks. The judge also ordered Partridge to pay £390 compensation for the damage he caused. Source: <https://shorturl.at/vjIdC>

TRADE IN ENDANGERED SPECIES

Conviction – illegal sale of jewellery containing African Elephant hair: A man has been found guilty of illegally selling gold jewellery containing hair from African Elephants. Maharaj Sivasundram, 40, appeared at Harrow Crown Court on 26 April 2024 where he was found guilty of seven counts of offering the sale of products containing specimens derived from endangered species after forensic tests detected elephant DNA. Sivasundram, of Malden Fields, Bushey, was fined £8,400. Source: <https://shorturl.at/w4oiu>

MISCELLANEOUS

Investigation – gin trap: Devon and Cornwall Police are investigating the illegal use of a gin trap after a domestic cat suffered severe injuries to its back leg in St Austell in January. It has been illegal to use a gin trap in the UK since

1958. Source: <https://shorturl.at/dfLF0>

Conviction – encouraging torture of wild primates: Holly LeGresley, 37, from Kidderminster in Worcestershire pleaded guilty at Worcester Magistrates Court on 7 May 2024 to being involved with the online torture of wild primates in Indonesia. LeGresley admitted uploading images of monkey torture between March 25 and May 8 2022 and made a payment of £17.24 to a PayPal account to encourage cruelty on April 25 of the same year. Her case has been moved to Worcester Crown Court for sentencing on 7 June 2024 due to the limited powers available to magistrates. A second woman has also been charged - Adriana Orme, 55, from Ryall in Worcestershire – but she has yet to enter a plea. Source: <https://shorturl.at/1ZT15>

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