



LEAGUE
AGAINST CRUEL SPORTS

PROTECT

Nº 28

OCTOBER 2021

END SHOOTING OF ANIMALS FOR 'SPORT'

Find out how we're working to ban caged breeding and snares in Wales.

WILDLIFE SANCTUARIES

Tales of autumnal animal activities from our flagship sanctuary, Baronsdown.

END HUNTING

Take part in a crucial vote on the future of hunting with hounds on National Trust land.

WELCOME | *A letter from Andy Knott, CEO*



Our charity is also on an epic rescue mission for animals. We will effect their escape from cruel sports by changing the law, ensuring it is enforced, and by bringing the growing legions of the animal welfare conscious public to our side. We will do what we ought, not what is easy.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Andy Knott'.

Andy Knott MBE
Chief Executive

Beacons of hope burn brightest in dark times. Few things have inspired me more than Operation Ark, the story of fellow veteran Pen Farthing rescuing his NOWZAD charity cats and dogs from Kabul, a city I know well. Animals in Afghanistan are often treated brutally. This one heroic act caught the imagination of the world.

Whilst life here bears little resemblance to Afghanistan, for animals the same is not always true. We are a land where dog fighting, hunting, 'game' bird shooting, snaring and other brutal and senseless 'sporting' activities go on. There is no aircraft big enough to evacuate the tens of millions of animals persecuted for 'sport' each year. Nor should one be needed.

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CAMPAIGN IN FOCUS: NATIONAL TRUST

This month, on 30th October, National Trust members will take part in a crucial vote on the future of hunting with hounds on trust land.

With your support we have been able to use the full might of our campaign machine to reach as many National Trust members as possible in order to end hunting on trust land. You have played a vital role in raising awareness of this issue and we thank you for your commitment.



THE RESOLUTION

A resolution has been submitted by concerned trust member Dr Denise Taylor, and will be voted on at the charity's AGM. The resolution states:

"That the members agree that the National Trust will ban trail hunting, exempt hunting and hound exercise on their land, to prevent potential illegal activity in breach of the Hunting Act 2004 and the protection of Badgers Act 1992 and to prevent damage to other flora and fauna by hunts, their hounds and their followers."



NATIONAL TRUST:
END FOX HUNTING

We fully support this motion and have made every penny of our supporters' donations work really hard so we can reach trust members; taking roadshows up and down the country, meeting the public, generating media coverage, running online advertising, creating new campaign films, running social media advertising, placing adverts in magazines and even projecting slogans across National Trust land.

Every action has been designed to reach the maximum amount of people possible and get them to take action at the National Trust AGM this month.

League on tour

Did you know that one in 12 people in the UK is a member of the National Trust? This is why we have been up and down the country to reach as many members as possible. Thanks to the amazing support of our staff and volunteers so far, we have managed to visit:

Bath, Bristol, Cambridge, Cardiff, Cheltenham, Cirencester, Exeter, Giant's Causeway, Godalming, Leamington Spa, Manchester, Oxford, Peterborough, Plymouth, Reading, Stratford Upon Avon, Winchester, Worcester and York.

Campaign History

This is not a new campaign for the League. Following the general election in 2017, with the support of our amazing volunteers, we worked tirelessly to support a similar motion, which was narrowly defeated by a mere 299 votes. Over 60,000 members voted on the issue of hunting, double that of their second highest voter turnout. Under National Trust by-laws, the same issue cannot be voted on for three years, so since then we have continued to highlight the issue with members, the board of the Trust and continued to monitor hunts using Trust land.

Finally, four years later (Covid-19 having caused the 2020 AGM to be cancelled), we are ready to see an end to trail hunting on National Trust land.

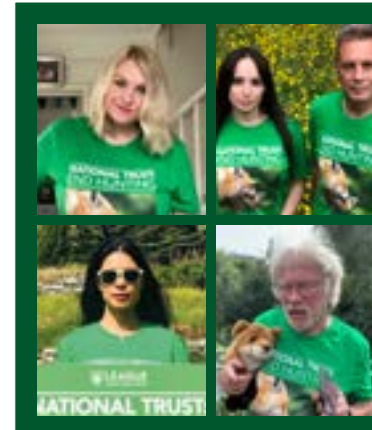


What is 'trail' hunting?

Trail hunting was invented after hunting with hounds was made illegal by the Hunting Act 2004. The National Trust issues trail hunting licences because of the hunts' assertion that what they do is legal. However, years of evidence has shown that foxes are still being chased and killed by hunts, in direct opposition to the Act. Additionally, in November last year, leaked recordings of a webinar conducted by the Hunting Office and other senior hunting officials - in which they describe trail hunting as a "smokescreen" - can only mean it's a cover for real hunting.

Celebrities join the campaign

We are ever grateful to Chris Packham, Megan McCubbin and Bill Oddie for their unending support of our work, most recently in calling National Trust members to vote. Thanks also to our new celebrity supporters, Vanessa-Mae and campaigner and wildlife blogger, Kate Stephenson, who interviewed League staff about the campaign for her YouTube channel and widely-read blog, Kate on Conservation, read by thousands of people every month.





How to vote

National Trust members can vote in person at the AGM in Harrogate on 30th October, or by appointing the chair to do so on their behalf. It is important that you instruct the Chair how to vote, otherwise it will be left to their discretion.

If you wish to ask the National Trust to stop licensing trail hunting on its land, you can vote FOR the resolution in one of the following ways:

VOTE ONLINE:

1. Go to the [voting website](#)
2. Log in by entering your name, surname, membership number and post code
3. Click the AGM Resolutions button
4. Appoint the Chair of the meeting as your proxy
5. Select the box FOR the resolution to ban trail hunting
6. Vote on any other motions (should you so wish, if not leave blank)
7. Click the Next Page button.
8. Review your choices, then click Submit.

***Please make sure your postal or online vote arrives by 23:59 on Friday 22nd October**

VOTE BY POST:

1. Find the voting form in your orange AGM booklet. This will have come with your September issue of National Trust Magazine
2. Fill in your name, surname, membership number, post code and signature
3. Appoint the Chair of the meeting as your proxy
4. Put a cross in the box FOR the resolution to ban trail hunting
5. Vote on any other motions (should you so wish, if not leave blank)
6. Review your choices
7. Return your form by post to the following short address: Freepost Civica Election Services.*



.....
 **END**
SHOOTING
.....

ENDING CAGE BREEDING IN WALES

Nick Weston - Head of Campaigns

When it comes to sheer loss of life, there are very few cruel sports that can compete with shooting. Millions of birds are bred en masse every year in cramped, dismal conditions, just so they can be shot for 'sport'.



Why campaign in Wales?

Did you know that Europe's largest 'game' bird rearing facility can be found in central Wales? Bettws Hall claims to set more than eight million eggs and rear more than 1.5 million poults every year. This is a staggering amount of animals to bring into this world just so someone can kill them for fun.



So, when the 2021 Welsh Senedd elections were held this year, it meant it was time to put a ban on cage breeding in Wales, as well as snares, the horrific traps that cause great suffering to any animal that predate on game birds, firmly on the agenda for the political candidates.

We, and our many supporters, wrote to Senedd candidates on a mammoth scale in the run-up to the election, seeking commitments on banning snaring and the caged breeding of game birds.

To support this campaign, we launched a new website - www.bredtodie.co.uk - featuring wildlife presenters and celebrities including our youth ambassador and wildlife presenter Megan McCubbin; wildlife presenter Hannah Stitfall; naturalist and conservationist Indy Greene; Mya-Rose Craig, AKA Birdgirl; and author and birder David Lindo.

With Wales still in lockdown at the time, we wanted to be able to replicate the conversations we would usually have with the public face-to-face, so our website featured our well-known celebrity supporters answering frequently asked questions about cage breeding and snaring, and why both should be banned.



Our fantastic supporters sent out more than 16,000 emails to Senedd candidates ahead of the election, seeking commitments to improve animal welfare by banning cage breeding and snaring.

The response from candidates was overwhelmingly positive, many of whom individually went further than their party manifestos in committing to end these practises.

Labour was re-elected to government in the Senedd elections. It is now up to the Welsh Labour Government to stick to its manifesto pledges to end snaring and the caged breeding of farmed animals in Wales.

We were encouraged by support from candidates across all major parties on animal welfare and look forward to working to build consensus across the political spectrum for a comprehensive ban on snares and on the caged breeding of game birds.



Drone shot of mass cage breeding at Bettws Hall, Wales

If you live in Wales, you can ask your MS to write to Lesley Griffiths, Minister for Rural Affairs and North Wales, and Trefnydd, seeking commitments to:

- **Ban the manufacture, sale, possession and use of snares in Wales.**
- **End the use of cages for breeding game birds in Wales.**

Visit: www.league.org.uk/bredtodie

LEAGUE IN ACTION

Nick Weston - Head of Campaigns

Festival of hunting

Peterborough City Council took the landmark decision late last year to ban so-called trail hunting on its land, the first council to do so after hunt officials were heard in two webinars appearing to describe trail hunting as a “smokescreen” for real hunting.

So it was a great shame that in July this year, a cross party motion calling for the Festival of Hunting to be moved from Peterborough was narrowly defeated. It called on the leader of the council to write to the chairman of the East of England Agricultural Society to request that it does not host the Festival of Hunting at the East of England Showground in future.

While the motion was defeated, we are very proud to work with the newly formed Cambridgeshire campaign group, which has been set up by local residents who are unhappy about blood sports taking place in their county - and who will continue to campaign until this outdated celebration of hunting is a thing of the past.



Five years for animal cruelty

In case you missed the last edition of Protect, 2021 finally saw maximum custodial sentences for animal cruelty increased from six months to five years in the courts.

The move comes after the Animal Welfare (Sentencing) Bill was passed into law in April, and from today those committing the most heinous acts of violence against animals face a punishment more suited to their crimes.

We have been campaigning for many years to see sentences increased, culminating in us heading to Downing Street along with ten other animal welfare charities to urge the government to stand by its promise of action. We are calling on the courts to use these new sentences to bring about an end to cruel and savage ‘sports’, like dog fighting, which sadly still take place in the UK.

Greyhound deaths

At least 200 greyhounds died trackside at stadiums across Britain last year despite a racing schedule reduced by a third due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

Figures released by the Greyhound Board of Great Britain show how often these dogs are dying for ‘sport’ after being forced to race on inherently unsafe oval tracks.



Despite the pandemic, 39,697 greyhound races were held in 2020. This was a drop of 17,042 on 2019, but to put it into perspective, the number of dogs dying on the track only dropped from 207 to 200, indicating that greyhound racing proportionally had become even deadlier last year. Greyhound racing needs to be phased out in the interests of animal welfare with racing dogs found a new home where they can live their lives without the cruelty associated with the greyhound industry.

ETHICAL GIFTS FOR ANIMAL LOVERS

**GIFTS
AGAINST
CRUEL SPORTS**

Order by 10th December
for delivery in time for
Christmas

Our range of ethical gifts are exclusive to the League Against Cruel Sports. From greetings cards to cruelty-free organic cotton T-shirts, our Gifts Against Cruel Sports are perfect for friends, family or even as a treat to yourself. The profits raised will help support our conservation efforts on our ten sanctuaries, a crucial safe space for all wildlife.

Fox tote bag £9



T-shirt £15



Fox cub soft toy £12



T-shirt £15



Fox notebook £10

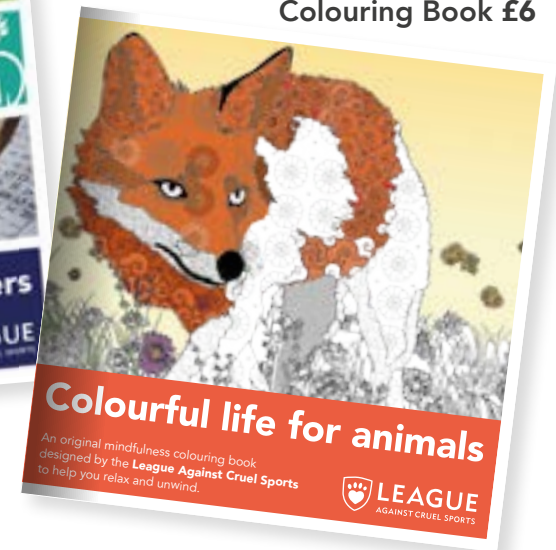


Christmas cards £5



Activity Book £6

Mindfulness Colouring Book £6



Buy online: league.org.uk/shop

AUTUMN IS IN THE AIR



Paul Tillsley - Head of Conservation & Education

More than any other season, autumn has a distinct aroma. Mixed in among the musty damp air and the earthy odour of decaying bracken and leaves, a far more pungent odour lingers on the air.

It is time for the red deer rut and on the League's wildlife sanctuaries the best stags are vying for the attention of the hinds, hoping for their opportunity to pass on their genes to the next generation. Any wet patches of ground soon become centres of activity, as stags leave their scent in generous proportions and then wallow in the mud to ensure they are fully coated. The hinds also get excited by the pungent cocktail and they too join in the mudfest. Frustrated younger

and less virulent stags take out their angst on trees and bushes, sometimes scoring deep grooves in the trunks with their antlers or breaking off branches. At this time of year, stags are often seen sporting an array of headwear, including discarded bags and netting that they have picked up on neighbouring land. The rut involves a lot of posturing by the stags, so maybe antlers adorned with netting is enough to woo a hind that is looking for something a bit different.



No stag wants to get injured and so fights only take place when two rivals are equally matched and neither is willing to yield to the other.

While the red deer are strutting their stuff, the rest of the wildlife on the sanctuaries is preparing for the winter ahead. Badgers are piling on the pounds, just in case the weather turns really cold and they have to spend a few nights tucked up warmly in their setts, and hazel dormice, hedgehogs and the several species of bats that live on the sanctuaries are preparing to hibernate until spring arrives. For the animals that have to tough it out, a thick coat and a good layer of fat is their best protection against whatever weather the winter will bring.

Plants are pulling in their resources ready for winter, resulting in a spectacular display of yellows, reds and oranges, as trees and shrubs store what they can before leaves are finally shed. On Baronsdown, the mix of exotic tree species that have been planted over the years in addition to the native trees, add extra spice to the show.

Autumn is a great time to get out into nature to experience what it has to offer and its good for your physical and mental health too.



"...and hazel dormice, hedgehogs and the several species of bats that live on the sanctuaries are preparing to hibernate until spring arrives."



SUPPORTERS IN ACTION



The League in microcosm

By Ted Dowling, League supporter

Sadly, animals suffer at the hands of humans for a number of reasons: poverty, ignorance, greed, stupidity, even misplaced kindness. But surely the most despicable kind of cruelty is that inflicted for the amusement of the perpetrators, such as with hunting. The League is one of a small number of charities fighting this cruelty.



The good work done by animal rescue charities is uncontroversial, but actively investigating and opposing hunting, as the League does,

is a different matter. Some hunt supporters have a track record of intimidation and violence. Others are powerful people with allies in the media, ready to cast the charity in as poor a light as possible.

So, the League focuses on arguably the worst kind of animal cruelty, in arguably the most difficult of circumstances (in this country, at least). It wields great influence for a charity its size, and it deserves all the support it can get, whether from volunteers, donors or fundraisers.

All these strands were brought together when Jenny and I were lucky enough to visit the League's sanctuary at

Baronsdown on Exmoor. We were shown around by Paul, the League's Head of Conservation and Education. There are other smaller sanctuaries too, and all are looked after by just Paul and one other staff member.

Principally, of course, the sanctuary is what it says: a place where deer, and other animals, can come and go, to escape hunts and have a peaceful place to raise their young. Naturally, the hunts don't like this and Paul pointed out obstacles that had been erected just outside the sanctuary to try to prevent deer getting onto the sanctuary when being chased.

He also told us of the damage caused to League property, and the intimidation and abuse he suffers personally. This is not just when hunting is going on. Although the sanctuary has existed since the 1950s, it seems some people still think it somehow wrong and 'unnatural' that it should be there.

The animals, of course, think differently. We saw a herd of 70 or 80 red deer hinds and calves, with a couple of young stags, peacefully gathered in one field.

Baronsdown is the League in microcosm. It protects wild animals from the needless cruelty of hunting, carried out for perverted pleasure. At the same time, it provides a peaceful environment for other animals. Its success depends not just on Paul and other League staff, but on supporters who provide funds for equipment. Further, it symbolises the League's determination to help animals in the face of threats and vandalism. It was great to visit it.

Despite all the positives, the sanctuary still faces opposition and allegedly legal hunting still continues. Clearly, civilisation has yet to reach everybody! However, I am old enough to think back 50 years to when, despite the work of the League and others, hunting was seen as a normal part of life with no chance of it stopping. The same applies to many other animal welfare issues. Now real progress has been made, albeit that the fight is not over and change should be faster.

But with help from the League, all animals will eventually gain the peace and respect they deserve, and already receive at Baronsdown.



Photo of Ted and Jenny Dowling (left), photo of deer on Baronsdown Sanctuary taken by Ted (below)



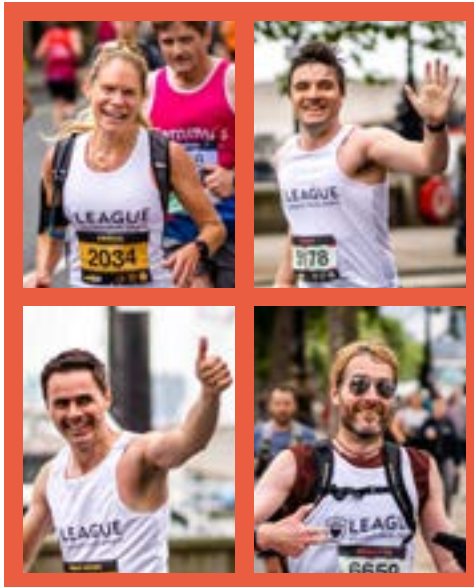
STANDING OVATION FOR OUR SPORTS FUNDRAISERS

Lily Chamberlain - Community Fundraising Manager



The thrill of a sporting event is always tangible, but the London Landmarks Half Marathon in August was particularly special. It was the first post-Covid fundraising event we could offer to our wonderful supporters, and it was an inspiring and emotional day.

I was part of the League support crew, standing on Victoria Embankment cheering on our runners and I felt so proud to be part of the League community. It was hard not to get caught up in the frisson of excitement in the air and knowing this event was being held to help a myriad of worthy charities made it all the more worthwhile.



Special thanks to **Andrew House, Abigail Brooks-Daw, Brynar Agnarrson, Matthew Erskine and Conor Evans** for your training, your physical achievements in London and your outstanding fundraising efforts. Your commitment is an inspiration and as a team you raised £3,950 to help end hunting, shooting and animal fighting.

BECOME A LEAGUE HERO!

There are many ways you can fundraise for us. Visit our website for inspiration and details of how to sign up.

league.org.uk/league-fundraisers



AWARD WINNING SUPPORTER



A big congratulations to Sheila Burkitt, a long time League supporter, who has been awarded the Lord Houghton Award for Services to Animal Welfare.

Previous recipients of the prestigious award include Linda McCartney; Barbara Castle, MP and Baroness Castle of Blackburn; comedian and actor Ricky Gervais; and violinist Vanessa-Mae.

Sheila said: "I'm overwhelmed and feel very privileged to have been presented with such a special award. It was a total surprise, and it means a great deal to me."



Wild about poetry

Thank you to everyone who took the time to pen an entry for The Indigo International Wild Nature Poetry Award 2021 which closed on 30th September and featured a special prize for League members.

All entries will be adjudicated from anonymised entries by our Poet in Residence, Ronnie Goodyer, and Dawn Bauling of multi award-winning Indigo Dreams. The League prize longlist will be sent to us for final adjudication.

So, watch this space for the winners in the next issue of Protect in 2022. We will also bring you news of the new anthology, Voices for the Silent.



FOX: NEIGHBOUR, VILLAIN, ICON

We're delighted to announce we will soon feature in a new publication about red foxes in the UK.

The book, entitled *Fox: Neighbour, Villain, Icon*, with the foreword by Chris Packham, is due for publication in Spring 2022. It's being produced by award-winning wildlife photographers Matthew Maran, Andy Parkinson and Neil Aldridge, and edited by Keith Wilson.

The book aims to tell the truth about foxes through powerful imagery and dispel myths that surround fox natural history and folklore. It focuses on our complex relationships with the fox and asks questions about how and why it has come to divide opinion so strongly in the UK. The images will sit alongside informative essays written by some of the country's leading natural history experts, professors, farmers and those who have close relationships with these enigmatic animals.

The League has kindly been recognised in the book and is due to receive proceeds from its sales (more details of

how you can get your copy will follow next year). We're delighted to be involved with this book of such social and scientific importance and creative merit.

Take action

You can help make this book a reality by contributing to the Kickstarter campaign running throughout October. Visit [Kickstarter.com](https://www.kickstarter.com) and search 'Fox: Neighbour, Villain, Icon'.

Instagram: [@mattmaranphoto](https://www.instagram.com/mattmaranphoto)
[@aldridgephoto](https://www.instagram.com/aldridgephoto)
[@andyparkinsonphoto](https://www.instagram.com/andyparkinsonphoto)

ENTER OUR 2021 ANIMAL PHOTOGRAPHY AWARDS



Calling all photographers. Enter your most captivating animal photos by 11th November and you could win up to £150, as well as an online class with an award-winning professional photographer.

THE CATEGORIES

This year we are asking for entries in the following categories:

- Beautiful Birds
- Wild Mammals
- Beloved Dogs

THE PRIZES PER CATEGORY

- First prize:** £150, exclusive online photography class with award winning photographer
- Second prize:** £75
- Third prize:** £25

The 2021 Animal Photography Awards close on 11th November so submit your entry today!

Visit [league.org.uk/photography](https://www.league.org.uk/photography) for further details

**All winners will feature on the homepage of our website and in our supporter magazine.*



ANIMAL ADVOCATES

Every action you take brings us one step closer to achieving our mission for animals. These pages highlight the many ways you can help animals from the comfort of your own home. Thank you for your compassion, commitment and collaboration with us as we strive to end hunting, shooting and animal fighting.

Share the League of Animals website

www.leagueofanimals.org.uk

We are proud to announce the launch of League of Animals. A free educational resource for Key Stages 1, 2 and 3; created by teachers for teachers. Our goal is to engage future generations in the protection and conservation of both animals and the world around them.

From quizzes to exploring animal tracks, scavenger hunts to myth busters, our resources are here to inspire curiosity. Visit the League of Animals website and don't forget to share with teachers and children alike.

LEAGUE
OF ANIMALS 



Join our email list

www.league.org.uk

If you want to hear about our progress as and when it happens, simply go to our website (scroll to the bottom of any page) and sign up for our newsletter. We'll let you know the very latest news on our fast-moving campaigns, as well as appeals and other actions such as petitions and emails to politicians and other decision-makers so you can continue to help protect animals.

Shopping with benefits

www.easyfundraising.org.uk
www.smile.amazon.co.uk

The festive season is fast approaching. Did you know you can raise money for the League from your computer or mobile phone every time you shop online?

Simply register with the sites above, select the League Against Cruel Sports as your chosen charity, and every time you shop we will receive a donation. Amazon Smile lets you see in your account how much has been donated to us from our supporters, so you can see the gifts pile up for animals, as well as under your Christmas tree.



Take action

www.league.org.uk/map-of-cruel-sports

You can help make your local council's land a sanctuary from hunts and help protect wildlife from suffering in the name of 'sport'. Use our online interactive map to contact your council, and demand they stop being made complicit in fox hunting, by banning trail hunting and all other hunting related activities. If there is no land, there is no hunting.



Summer Sunshine Raffle

Over £2,000

to be won

LEAGUE
AGAINST CRUEL SPORTS



And the winner is...

Thank you to all who entered the Summer Sunshine Raffle. We are delighted to announce the £1,000 winning ticket number is 163310.

GET IN TOUCH

League Against Cruel Sports

New Sparling House

Holloway Hill

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league.org.uk

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