



LEAGUE
AGAINST CRUEL SPORTS

HARE COURSING

Hare coursing an illegal activity involving the use of sight hounds to chase and often kill a hare.

WHAT IS HARE COURSING?

Hare coursing is an illegal activity involving the use of sight hounds [long dogs] to chase and often kill a hare (*Lepus Europaeus*)



WHY IS THE LEAGUE AGAINST CRUEL SPORTS INTERESTED IN THIS?

The League Against Cruel Sports campaigns to end cruelty in the name of 'sport' and this includes hare coursing.

Using our Animal Crimewatch reporting system we can receive information that can help us to end this type of cruelty.



**ANIMAL
CRIMEWATCH**

WHAT KIND OF DOGS ARE USED?

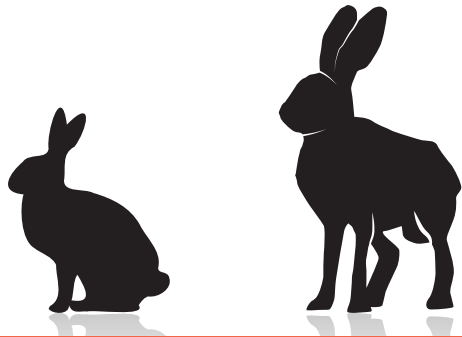
A variety of sight hounds are used.



WHAT IS THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN A HARE AND A RABBIT?

Key differences between a European brown hare and a rabbit:

- A hare is noticeably much larger
- A hare has noticeably longer ears
- A hare has noticeably longer hind
- A hare lives above ground and a rabbit below ground in a warren



WHEN DOES IT HAPPEN?

It is accepted there is a season for hare coursing that runs from when crops are first harvested through until the end of March.

Hare coursing is normally undertaken during daylight hours.



WHERE DOES IT HAPPEN?

Typically hare coursing will take place in open fields that are fairly flat.

Access to the fields is usually without consent of the landowner and conflict can occur if hare coursers are challenged.

Vehicles will often be driven onto the fields causing significant damage.

Most obvious areas are the flat lands of East Anglia (Norfolk, Suffolk, Cambridgeshire and Lincolnshire) as well as Wiltshire and Areas of the North of England, but could happen at any location.

LOCATION, LOCATION, LOCATION - WHAT3WORDS

Often describing where the incident took place can be difficult. We would ask you download and use the free app called **what3words** which can easily pinpoint your location. This app is also used by some police forces and will help them as well if you report the incident to them.



WHAT3WORDS



WHAT'S THE LAW?

Hare coursing is an illegal activity and associated laws may apply

- Hunting Act 2004 (Hunting British wild mammals with dogs)
- Section 30 Game Act 1831 This creates two separate offences in relation to trespassing during the day in search of game, depending on the number of people involved (an offence involving five or more people carries a higher fine)
- Criminal Justice & Public Order Act 1994 - Aggravated Trespass
- Criminal Damage Act 1971
- Money laundering (If gambling and betting is involved)
- Vehicle related offences (No Insurance / No tax)
- Section 1 Night Poaching Act 1828 Only deals with offences committed at night. Two separate offences are created by section 1.
 - The first provides that it is an offence if, by night, a person “unlawfully” enters onto land (i.e. trespasses) and takes or destroys game or rabbits.
 - The second one provides that it is an offence if, by night, a person is “unlawfully” on land with a “gun, net, engine or other instrument” for the purposes of “taking or destroying any game”.



CPS

There is a really helpful CPS guidance section covering all aspects of hare coursing

<https://www.cps.gov.uk/legal-guidance/hare-coursing>

WHAT SHOULD I LOOK OUT FOR?

Hare coursing is a daylight activity involving one or more people, usually men.

Those involved will often travel distances to undertake this illegal activity and will generally use larger 4x4 type vehicles.

Look for groups of men with several dogs acting suspiciously in or around fields.



SOCIAL MEDIA POSTS – WHAT CAN I DO?

Social media platforms such as Facebook and Instagram are frequently used by those involved to post images indicating an interest or taking part in hare coursing.

It is important to identify:

1. Is the image daytime or nighttime?
(Daytime = Hare coursing)
(Night-time = Poaching)
2. Is it a hare or a rabbit?

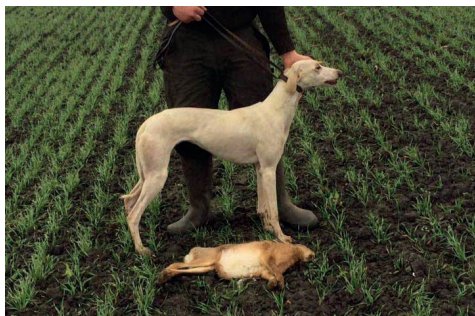


IF I THINK IT IS HARE COURSING, WHAT SHOULD I DO?

Take a screen shot of the Social Media Profile page, to include the name of the person.

Copy the url name of the profile

Screen shot examples of the images you have concerns about.



Contact Animal Crimewatch to report your concerns.

<https://www.league.org.uk/forms/animal-crimewatch-report>



**ANIMAL
CRIMEWATCH**

OTHER USEFUL RESOURCES

Operation GALILEO

This is a national police response to tackle hare coursing which is being led by Lincolnshire Police. They can be contacted through their social media profile using the hashtag **#OpGalileo**



Hare Preservation Trust

The Hare Preservation Trust works to:

- Gain legal protection for hares during the breeding season
- Raise awareness of threats to hares particularly illegal hunting
- Supports research into the reason for the hares decline
- Provides information for the public when they find injured or abandoned hares
- Act as a focal point for hare information which will be included in members' monthly bulletin



<http://hare-preservation-trust.com/>

WHAT CAN I DO?

If you suspect hare coursing is happening now, we recommend you call the police using 999 if you feel the matter is urgent, alternatively call 101 for non emergency.

When calling the police, ask for an incident reference number, which can help when you contact us.

You can report the incident to us via our website reporting form

<https://www.league.org.uk/forms/animal-crimewatch-report>

or by calling our Animal Crimewatch Line **01483 361108**

It would be helpful if you can (without putting yourself at any risk) make a note/record any vehicle registration numbers and a description of the people and their dogs.



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League Against Cruel Sports is a registered charity in England and Wales (no.1095234) and Scotland (no.SC045533)

