

**KEEP
CRUELTY
HISTORY**

**LEAGUE
AGAINST
CRUEL
SPORTS** 



**WEETS
AGAINST
HUNTING**

Working to expose and end the cruelty
inflicted on animals in the name of sport

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Hunting - Views from the Vets

Arguments about whether or not hunting is cruel or harms animal welfare are often passionate and sometimes biased. So we asked the people who should know the truth - vets. Some vets are aligned to the agricultural industry, but we asked independent vets who have no affiliation other than to their stated profession and desire - to help animals. This is what they said.



“ Post mortem examinations of hunted foxes highlight the barbarity of fox hunting. The proponents of fox hunting claim that the fox dies quickly following a well-judged bite, by the lead hound, and a shake of the neck . This is a myth. The reality is that the fox is seized by the hind legs, or over the back, and then dies as he is ripped to pieces by the hounds.”

Professor Ranald Munro

BVMS, MSc, DVM, Dip Forensic Med, MRCVS

Honorary Professor of Forensic Veterinary Pathology at the RVC
Honorary Fellow at the R(D)SVS
Chair of the Independent Expert Panel on the Badger Culling Pilots



“ I've been a veterinary surgeon for almost 20 years and involved with animal welfare on many different topics including hunting with dogs. The Burns inquiry confirmed what most of us knew; hunting with dogs is not effective, not efficient, not humane and the rural economy does not rely on it. Britain took a big leap forward in banning an outdated, violent and pointless means of pest control. The ban needs enforcing, not repealing. Our international reputation when it comes to welfare matters will take a devastating blow if the act is repealed. It must not be allowed to happen.”

Emma Milne

BVSc MRCVS

TV Vet, author and animal welfare campaigner



“ As a practicing vet of nearly 20 years with a passionate interest in animal welfare, I believe repealing the Hunting Act would be a gigantic step backwards for Britain; leading to immense suffering for foxes, hares, and deer. There is absolutely nothing natural about chasing wild mammals with a pack of forty dogs accompanied by dozens of riders, horses, horn blowing, and hollering. Glorification and celebration of what is always an extremely stressful experience for the hunted animal is not only barbaric, but on the rare occasion they manage to escape alive, causes lactic acid build-up in the pursued animal's blood and muscles resulting in severe pain. That is why hunting was banned more than a decade ago, and why it must be consigned to the dustbin of history forever”

Marc Abraham

BVM&S MRCVS

Winner 'Vet of the Year' CEVA Animal Welfare Awards 2014
Founder PupAid campaign against puppy farming



“ Fox hunting advocates claim that hunting is not cruel, and that hunted foxes experience quick, clean and certain deaths. In fact, pathology reports have established that it is extremely rare for hunted animals to be killed instantly. Multiple bite wounds to the face, head, throat, chest and abdomen are common, and in many cases foxes are disembowelled prior to death. Other wildlife are not safe either. As an expert witness in a legal case I recently viewed footage of a deer severely injured by hunt dogs, that was subsequently killed. Hunts cannot reliably control a pack of dogs in hunting mode. Hunting is indisputably dangerous to wildlife, and frequently causes extremely severe stress, pain and suffering to hunted animals.”

Andrew Knight
DipECAWBM (AWSEL), PhD, MRCVS, SFHEA

Professor of Animal Welfare and Ethics, University of Winchester
Director, Centre for Animal Welfare, University of Winchester



“ I was reminded of the upcoming vote in Parliament by Caroline Allen (Green Party and Veterinary Surgeon) and I would like to add my voice to the what must surely be the majority of vets in the UK who would oppose this activity. Hunting foxes with dogs is not complicated or a difficult issue. It's simple: inflicting prolonged fear and distress followed by an uncertain mode of death with the risk of pain and suffering is unjustifiable. The practice is contrary to every principle of animal welfare.”

Roland Sabin
BVetMed MRCVS



“ As a vet I am appalled by the possibility of a return to hunting with dogs. The scientific evidence is clear; animals suffer severe physiological and psychological stress when hunted- whether they are killed or not - and if killed the death is likely to be painful and prolonged.

We should not tolerate this level of animal suffering in a civilised society. The hunting of foxes and other animals with dogs must remain illegal - we banned dog and cock fighting years ago and would never countenance their return, why allow a u-turn on this cruel sport?

The arguments used in favour of hunting -such as it controlling a predator - simply do not stand up to any scrutiny. Fox levels remain steady since hunting was banned. The only reason this 'sport' exists is so that people can get enjoyment out of animal suffering. It's time to strengthen the Act- banning dogs being used underground, increasing penalties for breaking the law and inserting a provision to ensure wildlife injuries and deaths caused by hunters cannot be explained as an accident.”

Caroline Allen
MA VetMB MRCVS

Green Party Spokesperson on Animal Issues

“ As a vet committed to upholding the highest possible standards of animal welfare, I wholeheartedly oppose any dilution or repeal of the Hunting Act. The hunting of wild mammals with dogs is barbaric and cruel, does not represent a humane or effective method of wild animal population control, and has no place in modern society. The majority of the UK public, both urban and rural, oppose the cruelty of hunting with dogs and support the retention of the Hunting Act. I call upon all members of my profession, to whom the public look for guidance and direction when it comes to matters concerning animal welfare, to do the same.”

Mark Jones
BVSc MSc (Stirling) MSc (UL) MRCVS

“ Wilfully seeking out living creatures in order to inflict pain or suffering is a disturbing character trait in any human being. To do this without feeling any sense of concern or remorse is bad enough but it is utterly repulsive that it is considered by a minority group to be a source of enjoyment. Like all veterinary surgeons I made a pledge to be a custodian of animal health and welfare. Knowing that any vet could actively partake in or support cruel sports leaves me without words.”

Jo Lewis
BSc BVMS (Hons) MRCVS

“ I am a veterinary surgeon with 26 years experience of dealing with foxes.

I hold a BSc degree in Agriculture & Applied Zoology and an MSc in Animal Production in addition to my veterinary qualifications. I am totally opposed to a return to fox hunting. Fox hunting is, in my view, a cruel and barbaric pastime which cannot be properly described as “sport”. Equally, it cannot be described as an effective means of population control for foxes. On the one hand, hunters say that it is an effective form of control while on the other hand, they suggest that most foxes escape the hunt. Those two arguments do not support effective population control. Other evidence also supports this.

Those foxes that are caught are not killed by a quick nip to the neck - a myth still widely quoted. This was quite clearly demonstrated by the fox that I treated on 6th February 1999, nicknamed “Copper”. They are caught by the hind legs, brought down and then ripped to pieces, whilst still alive. In no way can that be described as something that anyone in the modern world should be supporting. Those foxes which are not caught are forced to use significant bodily resources to escape and evade their immediate destruction which, as a predator, they can ill afford. This will compromise their viability thereafter and will very likely result in the animals being unfit to catch further prey and therefore will likely die a slow death and lingering from starvation later. Again, this cannot be something anyone in the modern world should be supporting.

I find it difficult to understand how any veterinary surgeon, whose primary duty is to preserve the welfare of all animals and prevent cruelty, can support fox hunting.”

Richard Edwards
MRCVS





“The hunting of foxes and other animals with dogs must remain illegal- we banned dog and cock fighting years ago and would never countenance their return, why allow a u-turn on this cruel sport?”

Caroline Allen

“ As a veterinary surgeon in animal welfare for 30 years I find it increasingly difficult to reconcile 21st century Britain with the continued practice of blood sports reminiscent of the Middle Ages.”

Dr Andre Menache
BSc(Hons) BVSc MRCVS

“ I had always assumed that the 2005 Hunting act would be but the first step in our taking a more humane approach to how we treat wildlife. With time I had expected it to be strengthened. The idea that we might now weaken this act and allow packs of dogs to again chase foxes and other animals to exhaustion and death is beyond belief. The implementation of the act has shown that foxhunting plays no part in the control of fox numbers, it is a leisure activity. Torturing animal as a pastime, for entertainment and social purposes only, should be consigned to history.”

Derek Moran
BVSc MRCVS

“ I am totally opposed to the repeal of the Act. No pro-hunting argument has ever convinced me that hunting with dogs is an effective or humane method of fox control and I am always astonished that members of a profession purportedly dedicated to the welfare of animals can support this anachronistic and rather stupid activity.”

Pete Southgate
BVetMed MSc MRCVS

“ The Hunting Act 2004 was enacted because the deliberate pursuit and killing of wild mammals by a pack of dogs was cruel and unnecessary. The Government plans to amend this act and remove the current restriction that allows no more than two dogs to flush a wild mammal to be shot. This will have the effect in practice of allowing a return to wild mammals being chased and killed by packs of hounds, much as they were before the Hunting Act came into force. As a veterinarian, I am committed to upholding the highest possible standards of animal welfare and preventing cruelty and I am vehemently opposed to any dilution or repeal of the Hunting Act. The hunting of wild mammals with dogs is barbaric and cruel, does not represent a humane or effective method of wild animal population control, and has no place in modern society.”

Professor Alastair MacMillan
BVSc MSc PhD FRCPATH MRCVS
Veterinary advisor to Humane Society International/UK

“ On Wednesday 15th July, the Government will introduce a motion in the House of Commons ‘to approve a statutory instrument relating to hunting’. If successful, this amendment could result in a return to wild mammals being chased and killed by packs of hounds, much as they were before the Hunting Act came into force, either under the law, or by weakening the law to the point which enforcement is difficult to achieve. As a veterinarian committed to upholding the highest possible standards of animal welfare, I am opposed to any dilution or repeal of the Hunting Act. The hunting of wild mammals with dogs is barbaric and cruel, does not represent a humane or effective method of wild animal population control, and has no place in modern society. The majority of the UK public, both urban and rural, oppose the cruelty of hunting with dogs and support the retention of the Hunting Act. I call upon all members of our profession, to whom the public look for guidance and direction when it comes to matters concerning animal welfare, to do the same.”

Richard Saunders
BSc (Hons) BVSc FSB CBiol DZooMed (Mammalian) MRCVS
RCVS Specialist in Zoo and Wildlife Medicine

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