Most registered fox and hare hunts claim to now be ‘trail’ hunting – an activity that was not even in existence when the hunting ban came in. But every day during the hunting season, new evidence appears showing hunts chasing and killing animals just as they always did.

Hunts claim they now follow a trail, rather than chase live quarry. This is similar to the traditional, non-lethal sport of ‘drag’ hunting, but in reality there are key differences. Notably, in trail hunting the hounds are trained to follow an animal-based scent (rather than an artificial scent like aniseed, as in drag hunting), so if they end up chasing and killing a fox or hare this is passed off as an ‘accident’. Trail hunts also deliberately operate in areas where foxes and hares live; and if the hunt is accused of killing an animal, the huntsman will claim that ‘he isn’t told where the trail was laid’ – unlike in drag hunting – which gives him justification for not calling off the hounds.

We believe that trail hunting is a deception. There is no reason to train hounds to chase and kill animals unless your aim is to chase and kill animals. Please help us expose the myth of trail hunting by taking action today.

How can you help?

• Sign and share our major new petition to stop animals being killed by hunts, at www.league.org.uk/huntingkills

• Write to your local MP and your Police and Crime Commissioner calling on them to back proper enforcement of the Hunting Act

• Lobby major landowners, like the National Trust and the Forestry Commission, urging them to introduce a complete ban on Trail Hunting on their estates

• Join us! Animals don’t have a voice, but you do. Become part of a growing movement. Sign up now at www.league.org.uk/join

Trail Hunting on National Trust Land

As one of the country’s largest landowners and Britain’s leading conservation body, the National Trust continues to award licences for ‘trail’ hunting on its land. A proposal to ban this was narrowly defeated but the League continues to campaign for an end to this barbaric cruelty.

Help Us Expose the Myth of Trail Hunting

If you see riders, horses and hounds out in the countryside, they are probably ‘trail’ hunting. They claim that trail hunting is a non-lethal sport where the hounds follow a trail, not real animals. However, an abundance of evidence shows that these hunts are regularly chasing and killing animals – illegally.
What does a Trail Hunt look like?

1. The hounds are still trained to follow the scent of an animal, leading to them chasing and killing foxes, hares and deer ‘by accident’.

2. ‘Terrier men’ often attend trail hunts, but they have no place on a non-lethal hunt as their purpose is to find and kill foxes which have escaped underground.

3. Hunts deliberately take place in areas where foxes and hares live.

4. Hounds often cause havoc on private land – many people are too intimidated to complain about these disturbances.

5. ‘Bagged’ fox – Hunts are known to capture foxes so they can then be released in front of the hunt - to be chased.

6. Hounds have been killed on railway lines and roads. If a trail was really laid, this wouldn’t happen. If a trail layer is used by a hunt, we believe it is for show only.