

Butchers with Royal Warrant fall foul of ancient wildlife law

The Aberdeen Press & Journal reported that The Hare Preservation Trust, campaigners for one of Britain's best loved wild mammals, are today vindicated in their claims of illegal selling of hare meat by Donald Russell of Inverurie, near Aberdeen. The Hares Preservation Act 1892 makes it unlawful to sell or expose for sale any hare or leveret between 1 March and 31 July. The only exemption is for foreign hare imported into Britain for sale. On 16 July a spokesperson for Donald Russell stated: "Our supplier buys in, processes and packs hare within the period

of 1 August and 29 February. Hare can be sold fresh only within this time frame, but can be sold frozen without it." But a spokesperson for Defra has confirmed that the sale of hare remains unlawful from 1 March to 31 July "regardless of when they were killed." So this means Donald Russell are wrong in perceiving frozen hare as a loophole in the legislation which can be exploited.

Chairman of the Hare Preservation Trust, Rodney Hale said: "Scandalously, hares do not even have a shooting close season and the 1892 Act is the only protection

they currently have from unrestricted shooting. We are delighted this limited restriction on profiteering from the destruction of these charming and much loved creatures remains intact."

Constable Dave MacKinnon, Force Wildlife Crime Officer, Grampian Police says: "I would be very surprised if this company breach the legislation (Hares Preservation Act 1892) in the future and if this was the case Grampian Police would look to take formal action and report any offence to the Procurator Fiscal for consideration of prosecution."

Ancient hare discovered

Indiana University

Two professors are credited as co-authors of a paper about a new species of prehistoric hare. They don't have many details yet about how it lived — or died. Professors James Farlow and Anne Argast of the Geosciences Department at Indiana University-Purdue University Fort Wayne, reported their findings in an article for an upcoming scientific book. Farlow and Argast co-authored the report with Mary R. Dawson, Curator Emeritus of vertebrate palaeontology at the Carnegie Museum of Natural History in Pittsburgh. Dawson is one of the world's top experts on prehistoric hares. Fossil remains of the new hare — a portion of its lower left jaw, 14 teeth and a few fragments of limb bones — were found at the Pipe Creek Jr. quarry southwest of Marion in Grant County.

Farlow has been leading research there since 1997, when remnants of a prehistoric sinkhole were unearthed. The 200-foot-diameter sinkhole, has yielded a stunning variety and number of fossils. The finds provide a unique snapshot of life in this area about 5 million years ago, including four new species of mice, the new species of hare, a small rhinoceros, a bear and three types of camel-like creatures.

At that time 5 million years ago, various species of hare existed throughout North America, Europe and Asia. The new species they identified was larger than some hares of that time and smaller than others, Farlow said. He estimates it would be comparable in size to today's snowshoe hare, which measures about 16 to 20 inches long and weighs about 3 to 4 pounds.



Lucky leverets doing fine

Member Doreen Williams has recently been acting as mum to 7 leverets she explained, "The first had been caught and mauled by a cat and it was treated by cleaning the injury on back and the leg with saline with small amount of chlorhexidine gluconate added and given tetracycline injection daily for 5 days. Young lagomorphs respond well to this antibiotic provided they get it soon enough after the injury, before septicemia develops.

The 6 newborns were found in Axminster, huddled under a car on the grassy section of a driveway, following 24 hrs of torrential downpour and most unpleasant weather. The mother had obviously sought a safe dry place for birthing, giving birth to 6 instead of the usual 3/4. They were brought in by a vet nurse who thought they were rabbits just opening their eyes and wobbly on their legs. When they got to us were more alert and I could see that their umbilical cords were obviously freshly severed. I showed this vet nurse pictures of young wild rabbits to show her the difference. All are doing well." Doreen goes on to make a plea to any members living near Cullompton Devon.

"I wonder if it would be possible to enlist some volunteer help for getting leverets back out to a natural habitat, this might be a way of one of our members having a practical input into brown hare preservation, sussing out local site areas for releasing."

Do contact Rodney if you could help with this.



Yes, Christmas cards already...

This year Irene Brierton has done one of her wonderful drawings 'Snow Hare'; giving use of the artwork free to the Trust, for which many thanks.



The prices include p&p and as per last year, orders will be handled by Hare and Bear Designs.

If using the post, please:

- i) indicate clearly how many you want, divisible by 4
- ii) use capital letters if you know your writing is suspect!
- iii) make cheques payable to The Hare Preservation Trust
- iv) include your postal and e-mail addresses
- v) post to: Jane Russ, 28, Kings Road, Banbury, Oxon OX16 0DJ
tel: 01295 270674 e-mail: info@hareandbear.com

There is a minimum order of four cards and thereafter in fours.

4/8/12 cards	90 pence each
16/20/24 cards	85 pence each
28+ cards	80 pence each

Orders can be made on-line at the Trust website www.hare-preservation-trust.co.uk or by post.



Snippet:

www.tarraland.com/bebe.html is part of a Croatia website giving information about raising orphaned hares. Rodney was contacted by Sanja, who runs it, when she discovered the HPT website. Sanja was amazed to find other people out there who care about the welfare of hares. Her English is good and she will put a link to our site on hers and visa versa.

Irish hare numbers falling

The sight of a mad March hare is a rare sight around the hills of Belfast, according to a new report. A study of the Irish hare found numbers of the native Irish mammals at low levels in the area. The survey found only a small population at Divis and Black Mountain and none in Cave Hill Country Park. The species also seems to be absent from the southern side of the hills at Slievenacloy Nature Reserve near Lisburn.

The Belfast Hills Partnership asked environmental consultants Quercus at Queen's University to carry out the survey. Their report calls for increased monitoring, creating a mix of habitats to encourage the recovery of the species, possible fox control and the targeting of resources to locations where numbers still exist on Black Mountain and Divis.

The Irish Hare has some specific accommodation requirements. The Irish hare attracted major conservation concern following a sustained population decline in

Notices:

Exeter Green Fair :

Saturday 6th September This will be in the Bishop's Garden, Bear Street, behind the Cathedral. Rodney will be on the stall so please call him if you can help or just go along for support.

...and hare tomorrow too.

An item appeared on a blog recently where someone who had taken up running saw a hare in a field at the side of the lane. "I went as far as Tripps Farm & back again, not running all the way, hell no but running & then walking, then more running, more walking. Blow me at the same stop I saw the hare again and it sat there until I got nearer and then it took off down the lane in front of me.

I had already decided to turn back at Tripps so I was astonished when the hare took a sharp right into the hedge right opposite the turning for the farm rather than carry on to Goathill like it did the night before!

I caught up panting furiously & stood there catching my breath and just grinning at my rather lovely running companion. I have to say the sight of a hare inspires me rather more than if it had been a tortoise that decided to wait for me along the lane!"

Northern Ireland in the 1980s and 1990s. The picture is much the same in the Republic where the mammal is also declining in numbers. The Quercus study was the first to be carried out into a single, specific upland area in Northern Ireland. Studies were conducted at the beginning of 2008 and included the breeding season in March to correspond with the spectacle of the 'mad March hare'.

Belfast Hills Partnership Manager Dr Jim Bradley said urgent action needed to be taken to avoid the risk of the Irish hare disappearing from the Belfast Hills. "The report has shown that there is a presence of Irish hare in Divis and Black Mountain. It is thought that this is because of different mosaics of different habitats such as rush pasture, meadows and heather which fit the complex requirements of the Irish hare," he said. "The reason it is not found in other areas is thought to be the absence of cover and the variety of grasses and plants that are vital in providing food for the hare over the year."

Mountain Hare Walk :

Sunday 5 October This will be in the Derwent Moors, just west of Sheffield. Please contact Rodney for further details if you are interested in attending.

HARE PRESERVATION TRUST - Working for the preservation and welfare of hares

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E-mail: brownharepreservation@btopenworld.com Website: www.hare-preservation-trust.co.uk ...gone tomorrow?