



PAW Bulletin

Number 30

December 2008

Mission statement

“Working in partnership to reduce wildlife crime by raising awareness and promoting effective enforcement”

Launched in November 1995, the Partnership for Action Against Wildlife Crime (PAW) provides opportunities for both statutory and non-government organisations to work together at a strategic level to combat wildlife crime.

Hello and welcome to the latest edition of the PAW Bulletin and many thanks to those who have contributed articles.

News from the Secretariat

In October the Prime Minister announced a Cabinet reshuffle and the creation of a new Government Department for Energy and Climate Change (DECC). Information on DECC can be found at; www.decc.gov.uk

As a result of the reshuffle there have been some Ministerial changes for Defra and Huw Irranca-Davies has been appointed Minister for the Natural and Marine Environment, Wildlife and Rural Affairs.

Changes to the WWF Wildlife Law Enforcer of the Year (WEOTY) Award

At present the award is open to Police and Customs officers only. From 2009 the award will be opened up to allow nominations for enforcement officials working in any of the UK statutory enforcement agencies that deal with wildlife crime issues.

The nomination form will be revised and will simply ask for a ‘Reason for nomination’ instead of the current listed criteria. Guidance will be given to nominators on what could constitute a good nomination. More information will be issued in due course by the Secretariat.

Other news

Hunting conference

In October 2008 the Association of Chief Police Officers hosted a conference to allow representatives from police forces across England and Wales to share knowledge and experience on enforcing the Hunting Act. IFAW staff have also run training sessions on enforcing the Hunting Act for police forces across the UK this year. IFAW have launched a website at: www.huntingact.org in partnership with the RSPCA and the League Against Cruel Sports



PAW Partner of the Year Award 2008

Please find attached to this Bulletin nomination forms for the 2008 PAW Partner of the Year Award. The award is made to the PAW partner organisation or individual who has made the greatest contribution to the aims and objectives of PAW over the last year. The closing date for this year's nominations is **16 January 2009**. For more information please contact the Secretariat.

Police and Customs Wildlife Enforcement Conference 2008

This year's conference took place at the Scottish Police College, Tulliallan, over the weekend of 29 – 30 November . The conference was opened by MSP Michael Russell (Minister for Environment) and was attended by over 170 delegates. The packed programme included a number of presentations on Saturday morning followed by workshops in the afternoon. Sunday morning consisted of a number of case study presentations and a nostalgic look back over 20 years of conference.

WWF Wildlife Law Enforcer of the Year 2008

Winner: Andy Small, Kent Police

Runner up: Rob Taylor, North Wales Police

Life time achievement award: Jerry Simpson, Norfolk Police

Congratulations to all three and for more information about this year's winners achievements please go to the PAW website at www.defra.gov.uk/paw

Certificates of Merit: Three Certificates of Merit were presented at the conference to:

- Chief Constable Richard Brunstrom – North Wales Police
- Chris Kerr – Cleveland Police (Former Head of the UK National Wildlife Crime Unit)
- Stewart Scull – Former Head of Game-keeping, British Association for Shooting and Conservation (BASC).

Memorandum of Understanding

Natural England, the Countryside Council for Wales, the Association of Chief Police Officers and the Crown Prosecution Service signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) at the conference. It facilitates partnership working between the organisations to prevent, detect, investigate and enforce against crime affecting protected species and habitats.

Criminal activity contributes to protected species such as freshwater pearl mussels and hen harriers being on the brink of extinction, whilst protected habitats are being damaged by illegal activities such as arson and off-roading. The partnership will target such vulnerable species and damaging activities. The MoU was welcomed by Dr Helen Phillips, Chief Executive of Natural England who recognised the need to establish regional partnerships between Natural England local Police forces and the Crown Prosecution Service.



Wildlife Crime and CITES at the Kent County Show 2008

Acting Sgt Andy Small, Kent Police

The annual Kent County show took place from 11-13 July 2008 and is one of the main events of the agricultural and rural community. The show gives an opportunity for Kent Police to showcase some of the work undertaken and this year. In my role as Kent Police Rural and Environmental Crime Coordinator I used the event to deliver information on wildlife crime.

The stand provided information on various wildlife offences including poaching and hunting as well as that of the trade in CITES species informing the public of the wider international issues of wildlife crime.

With grateful assistance from HM Revenue and Customs, a variety of exhibits were on display that were used to inform the public on endangered species law. This provided the ability for visitors to see first hand some of the species that are endangered and the ability to ask questions on the legislation surrounding a number of species.

The Kent show gave me an ideal opportunity to demonstrate that wildlife crime manifests itself in many forms both at a local and international level and the exhibits clearly informed visitors of the work carried out to protect endangered species. What was encouraging during the three days was the reaction of the public in relation to the killing of endangered species. Most considered the activity as abhorrent and were very supportive of the work conducted by all agencies to tackle this type of wildlife crime.



Rural Partnership Officers, from left to right: Sgt Andy Small, PC Michael Laidlow, PC Wayne Wright, PC Marc Pennicott



A Manual on Controlled Delivery Operations

Published jointly by the CITES and Interpol Secretariats

John Sellars, Interpol

The use of 'controlled deliveries' is a law enforcement tool that is 'tried-and-tested' and has been used extensively, especially to combat the trafficking in narcotics. This technique enables law enforcement agencies to identify, arrest and prosecute the criminals involved in the delivery chain stretching from where a form of contraband is produced, along its delivery routes, to the point of its supply to consumers.

Recognizing that controlled deliveries could be an extremely helpful tool in responding to illegal trade in wildlife, the CITES and Interpol Secretariats sought out advice on this issue but discovered that there seemed to be none readily available. Consequently, they set about researching the subject and subsequently prepared a manual on managing controlled deliveries.

Although the text is primarily aimed at the law enforcement personnel who have to deal with the smuggling of endangered species, the text covers the wide range of issues that must be addressed to ensure that evidence acquired during such operations will be admissible.



Cross-border, transnational controlled delivery operations are fraught with potential problems, ranging from: deciding which agency should take the lead; ensuring effective liaison and coordination; avoiding detection by the criminals involved; acquiring legal authority to conduct the operation; surveillance of the final delivery; and subsequent investigations. A fall at any of these jurisdictional and judicial hurdles could not only place the entire operation at risk but could also place the enforcement personnel involved at risk of criticism or, at worst, personal prosecution.

The guide highlights the basic steps that must be taken from the very outset, in determining whether to initiate a controlled delivery, to its hopefully final outcome in facilitating the arrest of criminals, often on opposite sides of the world, and seizing the contraband.

In preparing the guide, its authors obtained assistance from the World Customs Organization and the U.S. Department of Justice. The guide was launched by the Secretaries General of CITES and Interpol during the Interpol Environmental Crime Conference on 16 October 2008. The guide has been uploaded to the restricted-access areas of the CITES and Interpol websites.



Operations news

Operation Cockerel – Leading the fight against game thefts

Stuart Doe – Norfolk Police

During the 2008 shooting season Norfolk Police is re-launching Operation Cockerel to ensure that measures are in place to deal with game thefts across the county. In 2007, a large number of incidents were reported with landowners losing pheasant poults and partridge chicks and valuable feeding equipment. Crime valued in excess of £60,000 was committed across Norfolk and it's believed that some crimes went unreported to police.

In response to this, Norfolk Constabulary launched Operation Cockerel and stepped up patrols in areas thought to be most vulnerable to this type of crime and also began working with the shooting fraternity to look at ways to work more closely together.

Three dedicated officers act as specific points of contact to liaise between local breeders, game dealers and shoot organisers and their police officer colleagues who patrol those areas. Using the 'Country Watch' ring round scheme, intelligence and information can be passed quickly to relevant parties.

Lincolnshire Poacher Watch scheme

Martin Green – Lincolnshire Police

For several years the Lincolnshire Poacher Watch scheme has been running based at the Grimsthorpe Estate near Grantham. The area has a high proportion of deer and other wildlife such as badgers, foxes and hares. A regular group of poachers travel to Lincolnshire from outside the county.

Deer are chased by large 4 wheel drive vehicles across cropped fields causing immeasurable damage to new crops. Joint operations have been run in conjunction with local game keepers, Forestry Commission staff and Lincolnshire Deer Group members.

Recently a vehicle involved in both poaching and plant machinery theft was seized. It was found stuck in a wood with lamping equipment. An operation that included four gamekeepers, four armed response units and three Rural/Town Response vehicles from Grantham along with the local Wildlife Crime Officer resulted in two separate lamping/poaching teams being identified. Further action will be taken against the vehicle owners. Full details of the

Lincolnshire Poacher Watch Scheme can be found at;

<http://lincs.police.uk/index.asp?locID=138&docID=-1>



The illegal trade in otter furs

Grace Yoxon

International Otter Survival Fund (IOSF)



© Belinda Wright WPSI/EIA

The International Otter Survival Foundation was set up to protect and help the 13 species of otter worldwide. IOSF supports projects which will not only conserve otters but also to ensure that we have a healthy environment for all species of otter.

Concerns about illegal trade in skins and body parts has been largely concentrated on large fauna such as tigers, leopards and rhino. The exploitation of smaller species including otters, has been largely overlooked but the illegal trade in otter skins is extensive. It's believed that for every one illegal tiger skin, 10 otter furs are found. No-one knows the full effect of the otter fur trade on populations, but in India there is evidence that this illegal trade has caused otters to become extinct in certain areas.

Most furs end up in Tibet where they form part of the national dress. In many areas there is little border control, the main traffic goes through Vietnam to China. In Linxi market, 1,833 otter skins were found openly on sale.

It's estimated that at least 50% of these skins are from India, where otters are now reduced to a few hundred in isolated pockets, they are rarely seen outside protected areas. Skins also come from Pakistan, Turkey and Afghanistan and also Asia. Some are apparently obtained legitimately e.g. American River otter and Sea otter skins but there are also illegal imports of the Eurasian otter, the species found in the UK.

IOSF has set up the Furget-Me-Not campaign in Cambodia and are working with Conservation International Cambodia carrying out community education work around Tonle Sap Lake, training a national team of biology students and villagers. It is hoped that the villagers will find an otter-friendly alternative to hunting and already local rangers and fishermen are reporting illegal nets. For more information about Furget-me-not go to; <http://www.otter.org/otterframes.html>



News from the regions

England

Work on developing Operation Moorwatch is progressing well. Operation Moorwatch aims to combat Wildlife and Environmental crime and is to be piloted in the Peak and Yorkshire Dales National Parks . RSPCA, supported by Natural England, secured a prosecution for recklessly interfering with a badger sett using a Rodenator device in October 2008.

Contact: Paul Horswill, SSSI Enforcement Officer, Protected Areas Team, Natural England, Northminster House, Peterborough, PE1 1UA. E-mail: paul.horswill@naturalengland.org.uk

Scotland

PAW Scotland continue to make good progress implementing the recommendations made following the thematic review of wildlife crime in Scotland. The group has undergone a re-structure, compiled a wildlife crime reduction strategy and received funding to support innovative wildlife law enforcement projects in Scotland.

Contact: Hugh Dignon, SERAD-CANH, Location 1-J, South Victoria Quay Edinburgh, EH6 6QQ. E-mail: Hugh.Dignon@scotland.gsi.gov.uk

Wales

PAW Cymru continues to be active. In February a joint CPS/WCO seminar is to be held in Llandrindod Wells. The next meeting of the Welsh Biodiversity Partnership will consider the UK wildlife crime priorities for 2009 and review the Welsh priorities. The work of WCOs and others addressing wildlife crime in Wales has recently been the subject of a series of programmes aired on BBC Wales.

Co-ordinator: Chief Constable Richard Brunstrom, North Wales Police HQ, Glan-y-don, Colwyn Bay, LL29 8AW. E-mail: Richard.brunstrom@nthwales.pnn.police.uk

Northern Ireland

Work continues on the review of the Northern Ireland Wildlife Order with a planned implementation in 2010. Wildlife crime priorities for Northern Ireland are currently being developed.

Coordinator: Mike Meharg, Biodiversity Unit Environment and Heritage Service, Klondyke Buildings, Gasworks Business Park, Cromac Avenue, Belfast, BT7 2JA. E-mail: mike.meharg@doeni.gsi.gov.uk



New PAW Partners

We are delighted to welcome the following organisations to PAW

Valley Forge Native Wildlife Refuge : www.valleyforge.org.uk
Scottish Estate Business Group (SEGB): www.sebg.org

Dates for your diaries

Steering Group meetings	3 February 2009 - Cardiff 18 June 2009 - London (TBC)
Scottish Wildlife Crime Conference	18 February 2009 – Tulliallan
PAW Open Seminar	25 February 2009 RBG Kew

Useful information

PAW website – www.defra.gov.uk/paw

Pesticides Poisoning Hotline – 0800 321600

NWCU – e-mail: ukwildlifecrime@nwcu.pnn.police.uk
Tel: 01620 893607

(Please note that wildlife crime incidents should always be reported to your local police force office).



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