

From: [Emily O'Hara](#)
To: [2002 Act Review](#)
Subject: Fox hunting with hounds
Date: 31 March 2016 17:06:16

Dear Lord Bonomy,

I am writing to you to express my opposition to hunting with hounds in Scotland (and anywhere else).

The fox is not nearly the incredible menace to rural society it is sometimes made out to be. The MAFF (Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries, and Food) regard the threat from a fox as 'negligible'. Scientific studies have shown that a fox may take dead or dying sheep, but a healthy sheep is easily a match for a fox. Sometimes foxes may get into sheds and take chickens, but if the shed was made reasonably secure this would not happen - and most chickens are kept in factory farms anyway. In the end, you are left with the farcical image of a fox with a crowbar.

Scientists such as Steven Harris and David Macdonald have disproved this. In studies carried out in Scotland, an absence of fox 'control' had no effect on the population, or on lamb mortality. From information gained during rabies control in Europe, it is known that to have anything other than a very short term effect on population, 70% of foxes need to be killed. The reason for this is that fox populations are very stable, and adapt to the available food supply. As the death rate varies, more or less vixens will breed, maintaining the population at the level appropriate to the food supply.

Hunts tend to kill 2.5% of the local fox population a year. These are BFSS (British Field Sports Society) figures, so if anything are exaggerated. Plainly, hunts do not control foxes, even if there was the necessity.

Furthermore, this tiny drop is generally more than compensated for by the efforts hunts make to increase numbers: creating artificial earths, discouraging shooting and snaring, and importing foxes (e.g. Isle of Wight and Australia). Sheep carcasses have been known to have been left outside earths.

The antiquated use of words such as 'tradition', 'country life' and 'sport' should not be used as an excuse for what is essentially an industry built for animal cruelty.

I hope that you are persuaded to side against fox hunting with hounds, many thanks for your time.

Sincerely,

Emily O'Hara

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