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Title:	Wildlife Crime in the UK (2009/2010) Strategic Assessment, February 2009
Author:	National Wildlife Crime Unit (NWCU)
Owner:	Chair of High Level Group
Version:	Sanitised
Document Reference:	DIS52/NWCU
Last Updated:	11.03.2009

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Foreword

Serious Wildlife crime has the potential to cause significant harm not only to the specific species affected but also to certain sections of our communities, who in part rely on wildlife for their employment, be that through tourism, scientific research, sport or legitimate trade.

This Wildlife crime Strategic Assessment (SA) describes and assesses the current threats posed by criminals involved in Wildlife crime. This Assessment has been produced by the UK's National Wildlife Crime Unit (NWCU), the creation of which underlines the UK Government¹'s determination to reduce the harm caused by wildlife criminals.

While it has been produced by the NWCU this Assessment is a collaborative effort which has involved the whole of the UK Wildlife crime Law Enforcement Community plus many other partner agencies. We would like to thank all those who have contributed to it. The work conducted in producing this report has proved that criminal threats do exist in Wildlife crime and there is clearly a need to act against them.

The challenge to all involved in any aspect of Wildlife crime is to take personal responsibility to ensure that all available information is shared appropriately to allow the UK to be confident that all criminal threats are identified and allow for effective management of each threat to occur. Only by identifying and tackling serious Wildlife crime can UK Law Enforcement Agencies (LEA's) support UK Government objectives, such as reducing the rate of the loss of biodiversity. Wildlife crime is not confined to certain communities or areas within the UK, and metropolitan and rural areas both suffer forms of Wildlife crime. It is imperative that law enforcement and partner agencies, particularly PAW, continue to engage with all communities to educate them as to what Wildlife crime is, and how LEAs have a legal responsibility to respond to this criminality.

Executive Summary

Wildlife crime offences are being committed at all times of the year, and LEAs have a real challenge ahead if they are to effectively respond to the identified threats. Within the UK there are a number of dedicated resources, with considerable expertise, committed to combating Wildlife crime. It is vital that all appropriate agencies communicate clearly with each other, work to a common agreement and co-ordinate an effective response to the identified threats. UK LEA's alone do not have the capacity to deal with the identified Wildlife crime threats.

Introduction

Wildlife crime can threaten the conservation status of a species or it can pose a significant public health risk. Although there is not yet an agreed UK-wide definition of Wildlife crime², it can be *broadly* categorised by one or more of the following³:

1. The illegal trade in endangered species

¹ Throughout the document, the term 'UK Government' includes all 3 devolved administrations unless specifically stated otherwise

² Consultation is under way to provide a definition of Wildlife crime

³ This broad definition of Wildlife crime is not intended to include incidents relating to domestic animals such as dogs or cats

2. Crimes involving native species that are endangered or of conservation concern
3. The persecution of wildlife species⁴
4. Criminal offences affecting global biodiversity

The National Wildlife Crime Unit (NWCU) acts as an intelligence unit for all United Kingdom (UK) Wildlife crime related information. The NWCU collates all wildlife intelligence disseminated by agencies and records each Wildlife crime/incident that they are made aware of in the UK via an agreed crime/incident referral scheme. Where appropriate, from analysing this information, the NWCU produces and disseminates intelligence products identifying pertinent threats to relevant LEAs.

Aim and Purpose

This assessment has been produced to provide an overview of the criminality affecting the wildlife of the UK. A protectively marked version of this assessment is produced to inform the setting of the UK wildlife crime law enforcement priorities. This NOT PROTECTIVELY MARKED version is aimed at informing non law enforcement personnel of the threats currently faced by the UK, and raising the potential for new information sources to be developed which will enable law enforcement to prevent future criminality.

2007/2008 Priorities and Intelligence Requirements

The UK Wildlife crime priority issues 2007/2008 were:

1. Bat Persecution
2. Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES) Enforcement
3. Freshwater Pearl Mussels
4. Hen Harrier Persecution
5. Poaching

The UK Wildlife crime intelligence requirements 2007/2008 were:

1. Badger Persecution
2. Finch Trapping
3. Illegal Taking of Wild Birds Eggs
4. Poisoning
5. Raptor Persecution

All the 2007/2008 Priorities and Intelligence Requirements have their own sections within this assessment, where more detail can be found relating to each issue.

2009/2010 Priorities and Intelligence Requirements

New Priorities and Intelligence Requirements were identified and agreed upon at the High Level Group meeting (3rd February 2009) where we looked at a revised 'scoring' process. In summary, it was agreed that:

- a) Matrix criteria should be limited to two - volume (i.e. number of incidents (based upon this Strategic Assessment) and the conservation status (previously agreed at Wildlife Law Enforcement Working Group meeting);
- b) Matrix criteria scorings should be ranked from 1-8 and multiplied together rather than added

⁴ Including crimes involving or causing suffering to any wild animal

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As a result of the new scoring process, we highlighted that the 2007/2008 UK Priorities all still remain valid and we also expanded the list to now include Badger Persecution (due to its high volume).

Therefore, the UK Wildlife Crime Priorities for 2009/2010 are:

1. Badger Persecution
2. Bat Persecution
3. CITES issues (with 5 current CITES priorities of Caviar, Ivory, Ramin Timber, Tortoises and Traditional Medicines)
4. Freshwater Pearl Mussels
5. Poaching (Deer Poaching/Coursing, Fish Poaching and Hare Coursing)
6. Raptor Persecution (including Poisoning, Egg Theft, Chick Theft and Nest Disturbance/Destruction and to concentrate on Golden Eagle, Goshawk, Hen Harrier, Red Kite and White-Tailed Eagle)

These Priority areas are ones which have been assessed as posing the greatest current threat to either the conservation status of a species or show the highest levels of volume of crime. These Priority areas are those that are assessed as requiring an immediate UK-wide tactical response.

Furthermore, the following 4 areas are the new UK Wildlife Intelligence Requirements for 2009/2010. These areas are ones which we assess as needing a 'watching brief' kept on them, i.e. they require further monitoring before any specific coordinated UK-wide tactical response is implemented.

1. CITES - Annex A Orchid Species
2. European Eel Poaching
3. Finch Trapping
4. Illegal taking of Wild Bird Eggs

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Assessment of 2007/08 Priority Areas**Overview****Incidents**

There were 2022 Wildlife crime *incidents*⁵ reported to the NWCUC in 2008. The breakdown of all reported incidents is shown in Table 1 (rows in yellow are the current UK Priorities and Intelligence Requirements)⁶.

Table 1 – all Incidents 2008

Category of Incident	Total	%
Other	579	29
Poaching	464	23
Badger Persecution	188	9
Shooting	155	8
Nest Destruction/Disturbance	103	5
Habitat Destruction	88	4
Traps/snares	83	4
Raptor Persecution	80	4
Bat Persecution	76	4
Suspicious Activity	66	3
Poisoning Raptors	39	2
Poisoning (non raptors/baits)	30	1
CITES Other	25	1
Egg Theft	9	0
Theft of chicks	8	0
Freshwater Pearl Mussels	7	0
Release of non native species	6	0
CITES Tortoises	5	0
Finch Trapping	5	0
CITES Ivory	3	0
Seal Persecution	2	0
CITES Caviar	1	0
Total	2022	

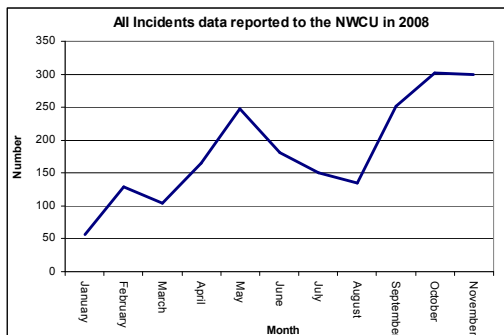
In terms of current UK Wildlife Crime Priorities, as the table shows, Poaching was by far the most reported category of incident in 2008 (23%). Badger Persecution is the next most common category of incident with 9% of the total for 2008. However, the actual highest category of incidents is the 'other' category (29%). A full breakdown of this category is shown in Appendix A, but the 2 main types of 'other' incidents are Road Related (149 incidents; 30%) and Fox Hunting (64 incidents; 13%).

⁵ All *incident* data is based upon what the Police Forces submit to the NWCUC on a monthly basis

⁶ Hen Harrier Persecution is included under Raptor Persecution. There were no reports of CITES Traditional Medicine or Ramin incidents

Seasonality

Figure 1: Depicts all incident data submitted to the NWCU in 2008 by UK Police Forces



There is an increase in the frequency of *incidents* in May and between September and November, as shown on Figure 1, however this can be partly attributed to the recent increase in the number of forces submitting incident data to the unit. The next Strategic Assessment will have two years worth of fully categorised incident data, and we will be able to assess seasonality with much more accuracy.

Intelligence

Between January 2007 and November 2008, 3218 *intelligence* reports have been submitted to the NWCU. There has been a 5% increase in the number of *intelligence* logs submitted to the NWCU in 2008, 1653 logs were recorded between Jan and Nov 2008 compared to 1565 in the whole of 2007. This has been depicted in Figure 2:

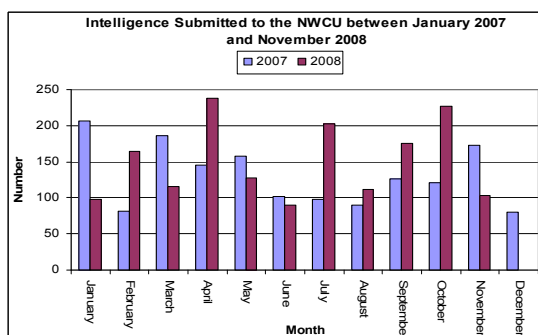


Figure 2: All intelligence reports submitted to the NWCU between January 2007 and November 2008.

A breakdown of the category of every intelligence report received at the NWCU is shown below on Table 2.

Table 2 – all intelligence between Jan 2007 and Nov 2008

Category	Total	%
Other	845	26
Poaching	753	23
CITES	650	20
Badger Persecution	198	6
Raptor Persecution	197	6
Illegal taking of wild birds eggs	127	4
Suspicious Incident	121	4
Poisoning Raptors	100	3
Finch Trapping	39	1
Traps/ Snares	39	1
Poisoning Non-Raptors	36	1
Poisoning	30	1
Bat Persecution	25	1
Habitat Destruction	25	1
Freshwater Pearl Mussels	19	1
Nest Destruction/ Disturbance	14	0
Total	3218	

In terms of the current UK Priorities, Poaching and CITES enforcement are by far the largest category of intelligence that we receive at the NWCUC (23% and 20% respectively).

Analysis of each of the current UK Priorities and Intelligence Requirements is detailed on the following pages:

2007/2008 PRIORITIES

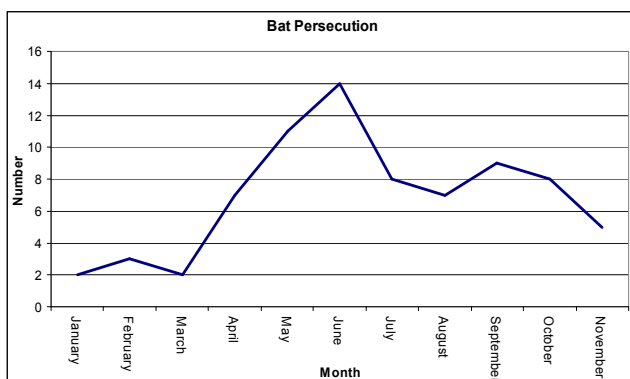
Bat Persecution

Incidents

During 2008 there have been 76 (4%) *incidents* of Bat Persecution.

Seasonality

Figure 3: Depicts all Bat Persecution incident data submitted to the NWCUC in 2008 by UK Police Forces



As the graph shows, small numbers of Bat Persecution *incidents* have occurred in every month of the year.

However, incidents were more prevalent in May and June. This has been depicted on Figure 3.

Intelligence

There have been 25 (1%) *intelligence* logs submitted to the unit regarding Bat Persecution between January 2007 and November 2008. There has been a decrease in *intelligence* submitted in 2008 compared with 2007 (from 16 to nine *intelligence* logs received). Roost disturbance and destruction were the most prevalent methods of persecution.

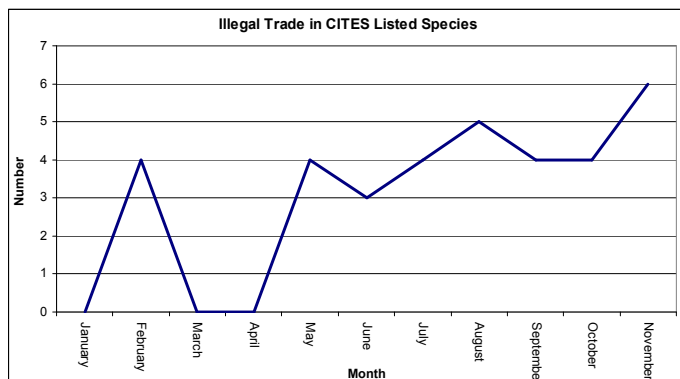
Illegal Trade in CITES Listed Species

Incidents

There have been 34 (2%) CITES related *incidents* reported to the NWCUC in 2008, five of those were relating to Tortoises, three related to Ivory, one related to Caviar and 25 related to a variety of other CITES species (which are not current UK Wildlife Crime Priorities). There have been no *incidents* regarding Ramin or Traditional Medicines.

Seasonality

Figure 4: Depicts all CITES related incident data submitted to the NWCUC in 2008 by UK Police Forces



Incidents have been occurring every month between May and November with an average of 4 *incidents* per month. However this also appears to be an increasing trend although this may be partly due to the increase in the number of *incident* submissions during this time; this has been depicted on Figure 4.

Intelligence

There has been a decrease in CITES related *intelligence* submitted to the NWCUC in 2008 compared to 2007, 274 and 376 respectively. This results in a total of 650 (20%) *intelligence* logs over the two years with 177 (27%) of these relating to Tortoises and 108 (17%) relating to Caviar. There was limited *intelligence* received regarding the other CITES priorities for 2007/2008; during the two year period, there was 41 *intelligence* logs received regarding Ivory, 34 relating to Ramin and 31 *intelligence* logs relating to Traditional Medicines.

CITES Analysis

Illegal international wildlife trade has been one of the factors responsible for the decline in the numbers of many species of animals and plants. The Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) is an international convention aimed at ensuring that trade in wild animals and plants does not threaten their survival. A hundred and seventy two countries have signed up to the Convention. Supported by national legislation, trade in species listed in the three CITES Appendices must conform to CITES requirements and provisions outlined in the text of the Convention. The three CITES Appendices list over 30,000 species of wild animals and plants.

The species are grouped in the Appendices according to how endangered they are. They include some whole groups, such as primates, cetaceans (whales, dolphins and porpoises), sea turtles, parrots, corals, cacti and orchids. But in some cases only a subspecies or geographically separate populations of a species (for example the population of just one country) is listed. The protection offered by CITES is dependent on the listing a species has been assigned. Species listed in Appendix I receive the highest level of protection.

In the UK, the UK Borders Agency (UKBA) has the primary responsibility for carrying out documentary checks and physically examining CITES listed specimens at the time of introduction into and/or the time of (re) export from the European Union. With the powers granted under the Customs and Excise Management Act (CEMA) 1979, they are responsible for carrying out enforcement action when the relevant CITES documentation is not presented in accordance with CITES law.

The Police have primary responsibility for enforcing the provisions of the Control of Trade in Endangered Species [Enforcement] Regulations (COTES) 1997 and the WCA 1981, as well as other wildlife related legislation.

Overall Current Picture

The main CITES issues that have been identified as UK Priorities are the illegal trade in Caviar, Ivory, Timber (Ramin), Tortoises and Traditional Medicines. These offences are suspected to occur throughout the UK, with the use of the internet a main facilitator of crime. EU CITES offences occur throughout the year, and are resulting in serious financial gain to offenders, many of whom are suspected to have links to other serious crime.

Key Points

1. The offences that are being committed in the UK are where no documentation is being used, or where documents have been obtained by providing false information to the issuing authority.
2. Offences are believed to be occurring throughout the UK, with links to the rest of the world in particular the EU and the USA.
3. No seasonality has been identified with the exception of increased Caviar trade in the run up to Christmas.
4. Offenders involved in the illegal trade in CITES are usually motivated by personal financial gain and are making large profits from illegal trading. There are also some offenders who trade illegally for personal gratification – e.g. to enhance private collections. In ten wildlife trade prosecutions that occurred in the UK between 1996 and 2008, the total value of wildlife involved totaled £4,218,000. These cases involved commodities such as rhino horns, parrots, birds of prey, elephant Ivory and orchids.
5. Throughout the UK, and the world, the internet is continually being used to commit criminality by facilitating the exchange of illegal products or to showcase criminal acts that have already occurred⁷.
6. Of the many enquiries received by the NWCU for assistance from the Investigative Support Officers, at least 50% relate to CITES matters.

Illegal International Trade in Caviar

There is an illegal trade in Caviar within the UK linked to the EU. The demand for this commodity is affecting the conservation status of the sturgeon. The expansion of the EU has contributed to the laundering of Caviar within the EU. The illegal trade is facilitated by fraudulent means including falsifying paperwork and tin labels, use of old Caviar or overfilling tins. Illegal wild Caviar is also integrated into the legal market disguised as farmed Caviar (as the aquaculture industry increases in size). This illegal trade occurs throughout the year, with some indication of increased demand in December due to the holiday period, and results in considerable financial gain for the offenders. Due to the planning that is needed for this criminality and the significant profits made offenders in the illegal trade should be considered as serious and organised criminals.

⁷ Previous cases - sale of DVDs showing poaching and badger baiting.

Elephant Ivory

All elephant Ivory is listed on Annex A with the exception of Ivory coming from the elephant populations of Botswana, Namibia, South Africa and Zimbabwe which are on Annex B. Trade in elephant Ivory is illegal unless the specimen is antique (pre 1947 and significantly worked), or the specimen is an Ivory carving for non commercial purposes from Zimbabwe and accompanied by a CITES permit, or is an individually marked certified ekipa (traditional necklace) from Namibia for non commercial purposes accompanied by a CITES permit. There is no personal effect derogation for Ivory under CITES and trade in un-worked Ivory, even if antique, is not permitted under the worked items derogation (Article 2 of the Council Regulation)⁸. Elephant Ivory is being illegally sold from, and imported into the UK. Intelligence indicates that one of the main routes for trade in Ivory and derivatives is through eBay. eBay has now banned the sale of Ivory products which will result in offenders having to find other means to sell this commodity. Offenders are involved in the illegal trade of Ivory for personal financial gain and are located throughout the UK, Europe, USA and beyond. Offenders often have links to other criminality such as firearms offences. The illegal trade in Ivory occurs throughout the year.

Tortoises

There is an illegal trade in Annex A and Annex B Tortoises in the UK which are being smuggled into the UK from third countries, trans-shipped via another EU member state without the correct CITES documents, or as an internal movement from another EU member state. The route and method of the illegal importations is currently unclear however it is believed that Tortoises are being imported into the UK from countries such as Benin, Kenya, Madagascar and Morocco, and are moved into the UK from other EU countries such as France, Germany, Slovenia and Spain. It is illegal to trade in wild caught specimens of Annex A species. Only captive bred Tortoises are allowed in commercial trade, and only if they are accompanied by an Article 10 certificate. The commercial ban on specimens also applies to Annex B Tortoises unless it can be proved that they were legally introduced into the EU. If an individual sells a smuggled (Annex B) Tortoise, they are guilty not only of a smuggling offence under CEMA, but also a sales offence under COTES⁹.

Ramin

There are some 30 species of Ramin, all of which are native to the peat swamp forests of Southeast Asia. Ramin (*Gonystylus* spp. [*G. bancanus* is the species found most in trade]) is listed on Appendix II / EU Annex B. Ramin is a light coloured tropical hardwood tree species with a fine grain especially suited for products requiring some form of turning or moulding. The main countries of export are Indonesia and Malaysia. The main countries of import are the European Union, as is China, Japan, Singapore and the USA. Within the EU, Italy imports the largest portion of Ramin. Other major EU importers include the UK, the Netherlands, Germany, Belgium, and Spain¹⁰.

Seizures of Ramin within the EU, including the UK, and the USA have occurred and involved the use of alternative timber trade names to disguise the fact Ramin was being

⁸ Animal Health Agency, Defra

⁹ Animal Health Agency, Defra

¹⁰ From UK Enforcers Factfile information on Ramin provided by RBG (Kew)

imported or misuse of import quotas. Although individual items made of Ramin are of low value, the volume of trade in such goods is massive.

Traditional Medicines (TM's)

Many countries, cultures and health care systems use wild fauna and flora as medicine. In fact, plant and animal ingredients are common in traditional medicines. TM herbalism uses many different substances that derive from animals, plants and minerals. TM's use more than 7,000 different ingredients but those derived from animals make up less than 20% of these substances and approximately 1,000 plant species are in common use for TM's. The immense impact that the use of wild species in TM's may have on human health care as well as conservation of natural resources becomes evident when considering that more than one third of the world population uses TM's as their basic health care system. TM products are in great demand wherever Asian communities live. In addition, TM's have also gained popularity within non-Asian communities throughout the world.

There have clearly been efforts to conceal the ingredients of manufactured traditional medicines in trade. The reason for these changes must in part be due to the increasing attention to the practices of traditional practitioners by governments, customs officers and enforcement bodies which are attempting to thwart the illegal trade in endangered species.

Approximately half of all premises that stock TM products will have on sale medicines that claim to contain CITES listed species, both Annex A and B, at any given time¹¹. The majority will be patent medicines, though some CITES listed species are also available in a raw form, such as Costus Root (*Saussurea Costus* Annex A).

Future Issues

A review of the legal trade in CITES products in the UK between 1997 and 2007 has revealed that the UK is very much a consumer of CITES products as the number of applications for imports far outweighs the number of applications for exports. Where a demand for a product exists, there is often an illegal supply of the commodities fulfilling this demand. The intra EU movement of illegal wildlife is believed to be a threat, where criminals are exploiting the right to move goods freely. Increased partnership working is recommended to obtain and share additional information to further improve the capabilities of LEA's to target and crack down on illegal activity.

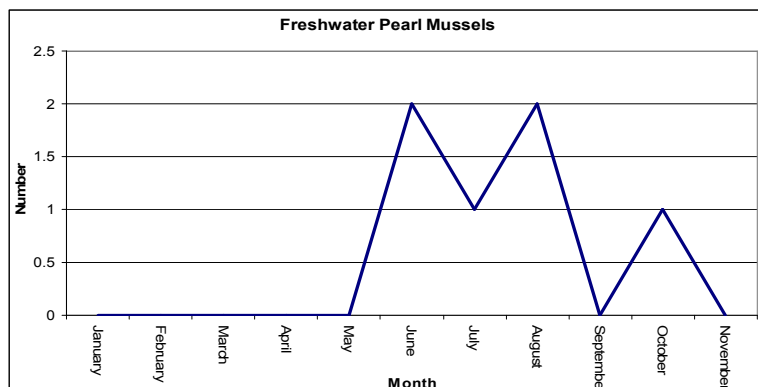
Freshwater Pearl Mussels Incidents

In 2008 there have been 7 *incidents* relating to Freshwater Pearl Mussels all of which occurred in Scottish forces.

¹¹ TRAFFIC International survey of traditional medicine retailers 2000

Seasonality

Figure 5: Depicts all Freshwater Pearl Mussel incident data submitted to the NWCUC in 2008 by UK Police Forces



The majority of the *incidents* occurred between June and August which has been charted on Figure 5.

Intelligence

There have been 19 (1%) *intelligence* logs relating to Freshwater Pearl Mussels submitted to the NWCUC between January 2007 and November 2008. There has been an increase in submissions in 2008 compared to 2007 (from eight to 11 logs received).

Hen Harrier Persecution

Incidents

There have been 3 *incidents* of Hen Harrier Persecution reported to the NWCUC in 2008.

Seasonality

The 3 Hen Harrier *incidents* occurred in January, May and July however this data is too limited to provide accurate seasonal trend information.

Intelligence

There have been 34 *intelligence* logs submitted to the NWCUC regarding Hen Harrier Persecution, the majority of which were submitted by Scottish forces and RSPB, however during the same time period there have been 297 *intelligence* logs relating to Raptor Persecution (encompassing all Raptors and including the Poisoning of Raptors).

Recommendation: Due to the limited *incident* and *intelligence* data relating to Hen Harrier Persecution, it is recommended that Hen Harrier Persecution is considered (in future) under the overarching issue of Raptor Persecution.

Poaching¹² **Incidents**

There have been 464 (23%) *incidents* of Poaching reported to the NWCU in 2008.

Seasonality

Figure 6: Depicts all Poaching incident data submitted to the NWCU in 2008 by UK Police Forces

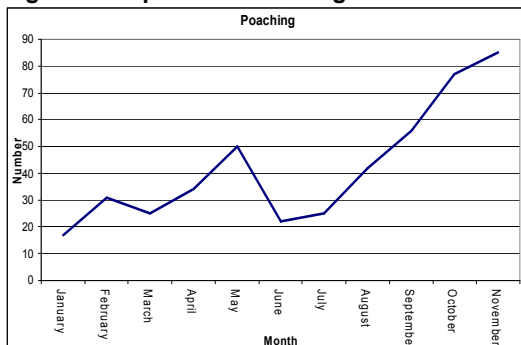


Figure 6 shows that there was an increase in the number of *incidents* of Poaching between September and November 2008. However, this can partly be attributed to the increase in data submission from Forces.

It is predicted that poaching will continue to increase as more forces are now submitting NSIR data.

Intelligence

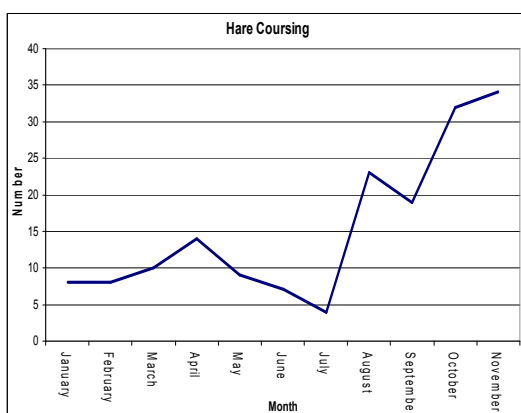
Between January 2007 and November 2008 there have been 753 (23%) *intelligence* reports submitted to the NWCU making Poaching the most prolific Wildlife crime issue occurring during the two year period.

Hare Coursing **Incidents**

There have been 168 *incidents*¹³ (36% of all incidents of Poaching) of Hare Coursing reported to the NWCU in 2008.

Seasonality

Figure 7: Depicts all Hare Coursing incident data submitted to the NWCU in 2008 by UK Police Forces



Incident data indicates an increase in Hare Coursing between August and November. However this could be partly attributed to the increase in NSIR submission during these months. This has been depicted on Figure 7.

Numbers of Brown hares have decreased significantly in recent years and they are now scarce in some parts of the UK.

Intelligence

267 (35% of all intelligence relating to Poaching) *intelligence* reports were

specifically relating to Hare Coursing.

¹² Specific analysis of Hare Coursing, Deer Poaching and Fish Poaching is included here. There were also 108 (24%) reports of 'other' *incidents* of Poaching and 172 (23%) submissions of *intelligence* regarding 'other' types of Poaching (e.g. Rabbits or unspecified species). The 'other' types of Poaching incidents have not been specifically analysed but are included here in the main summary of Poaching.

¹³ Included under the 464 total incidents of Poaching

NWCU Hare Coursing Assessment

This assessment was produced using *intelligence* submitted between February 2007 and Sept 2008 and *incident* data submitted between April 2007 and September 2008. The key findings of this report are:

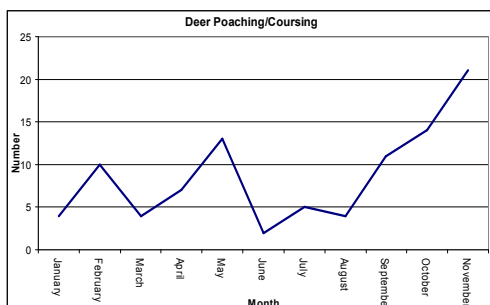
- Hare Coursing is occurring throughout the UK
- Hare Coursing appears to be an increasing trend across the whole of the UK
- Hare Coursing is being committed by two types of criminals;
 - Those that appear to commit the crime on a small scale, for the purpose of personal gratification
 - The larger organised groups of individual who commit the crime for personal gratification but also for financial gains through gambling
- There appears to be a link between Hare Coursing and the travelling fraternity
- The majority of individuals involved in Hare Coursing are also involved in other crimes ranging from metal theft to drug dealing

Deer Poaching/Coursing Incidents

In 2008 there have been 95 *incidents* (20% of all *incidents* of Poaching) of Deer Poaching/Coursing.

Seasonality

Figure 8: Depicts all Deer Poaching/Coursing incident data submitted to the NWCU in 2008 by UK Police Forces



Incident data indicated a peak month in May and an increase in Deer Poaching between September and November however this could be partly attributed to the increase in NSIR submission during these months. This has been depicted on Figure 8.

Intelligence

There have been 158 (21% of all *intelligence* relating to Poaching) *intelligence* reports relating

to Deer Poaching/Coursing. Of these, 31 were coursing deer using dogs and 28 were regarding illegal shooting of deer.

NWCU Deer Poaching/Coursing Assessment

This assessment was produced using *intelligence* submitted between April 2007 and 30th October 2008 and *incident* data submitted between April 2007 and October 2008. The key findings of this report are:

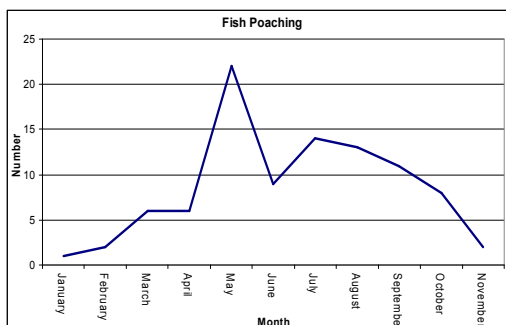
- Deer Poaching/Coursing appears to be an increasing trend across the whole of the UK
- Deer Poaching/Coursing is mainly occurring by shooting or is being identified when remains are found
- Although the *intelligence* and *incident* data have highlighted a number of hot spot areas there has been no indication of organised criminal activity as experienced with Hare Coursing

Fish Poaching Incidents

There have been 93 (20% of all *incidents* of Poaching) Fish Poaching *incidents* reported to the NWCU in 2008.

Seasonality

Figure 9: Depicts all Fish Poaching incident data submitted to the NWCU in 2008 by UK Police Forces



As Figure 9 indicates, there was a large peak in *incidents* of Fish Poaching occurring in May 2008. July also shows a fairly large peak in numbers of *incidents* reported.

Intelligence

There have been 156 (21%) *intelligence* reports relating to Fish Poaching submitted between January 2007 and November 2008.

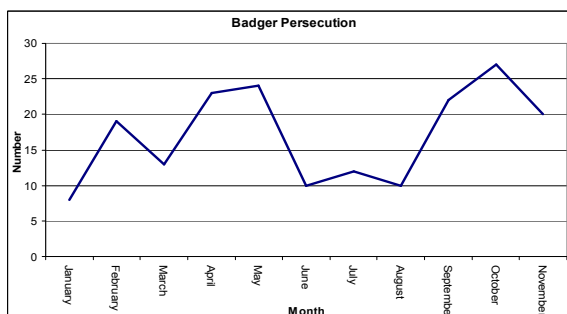
2007/ 2008 INTELLIGENCE REQUIREMENTS

Badger Persecution Incidents

There have been 188 (9%) Badger Persecution *incidents* reported to the NWCU in 2008.

Seasonality

Figure 10: Depicts all Badger Persecution incident data submitted to the NWCU in 2008 by UK Police Forces



As Figure 10 shows, there was an increase in *incidents* in April, and in May and between September and November.

Intelligence

Between January 2007 and November 2008 there have been 198 (6%) *intelligence* reports submitted to the NWCU regarding Badger Persecution, with the most prevalent MO being Badger

Baiting (83 (42%) *intelligence* logs over the two years) and illegal sett damaging or destruction (44 (22%) *intelligence* logs submitted).

NWCU Badger Persecution Assessment

The assessment was produced using *intelligence* submitted between November 2006 and July 2008, *incident* data submitted between March 2007 and June 2008 and questionnaire responses from a number of key individuals/ organisations. The key findings of the report were:

- Persecution is occurring in a number of forms including the destruction of setts by developers and baiting using dogs
- Seasonal trends are unclear at the present time although this criminality is occurring consistently throughout the year

- Badger crime is being committed both by individuals and by larger groups of suspects with their motivation believed to be for personal gratification (enjoyment).
- Financial benefits are also believed to be a major factor relating to persecution by developers and contractors
- This criminal behaviour is thought to be likely to increase due to the perceived threat to livestock from Bovine TB and its supposed link with badgers

Finch Trapping

Incidents

There have been five *incidents* of Finch Trapping in 2008.

Seasonality

The five *incidents* of Finch Trapping occurred during May, June and October however the data is too limited at this time to provide accurate seasonality.

Intelligence

There have been 39 (1%) Finch Trapping *intelligence* logs submitted between January 2007 and November 2008.

NWCU Finch Trapping Assessment

This assessment was produced using *intelligence* submitted between December 2006 and August 2008 and *incident* data submitted between April 2007 and August 2008. The key findings of the report were:

- There have been a small number of *incidents* and *intelligence* reported to the unit during the time period analysed
- From analysis of the *intelligence* submitted, these crimes are committed predominately by individuals on a small scale however some of these individuals are believed to travel to other Force areas to sell these birds.

Illegal Taking of Wild Birds Eggs

Incidents

During 2008 there have been 9 *incidents* of Illegal Taking of Wild Birds Eggs.

Seasonality

The majority of the incidents involving Egg Theft occurred between March and August, however the data is too limited at this time to provide accurate seasonal trend information.

Intelligence

There have been 127 (4%) *intelligence* logs received relating to the Illegal Taking of Wild Birds Eggs between January 2007 and November 2008. There has been quite a large decrease in *intelligence* received in 2008 when 42 logs were received compared to 85 in 2007.

Poisoning Incidents

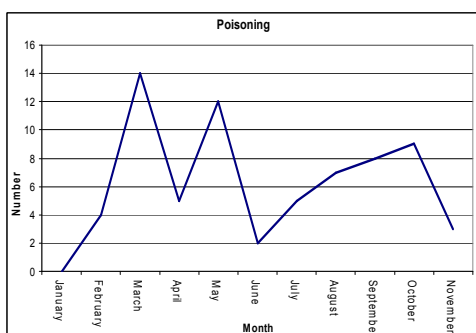
There have been 69 Poisoning *incidents*¹⁴ in 2008. 39 (57%) of these were related to Poisoning of *Raptors*.

Intelligence

There have been 166 (5%) *intelligence*¹⁵ reports submitted between January 2007 and November 2008. Of these reports, 100 (60%) were relating to Poisoning of *Raptors* with the majority (64%) of the victims being Buzzards and Red Kites. The main poisons that are being used are Alphachloralose, Cymag, Strychnine, Mevinphos and Carbofuran¹⁶.

Seasonality

Figure 11: Depicts all Poisoning incident data submitted to the NWCUC in 2008 by UK Police Forces



These *incidents* occurred throughout the year with an increase in frequency in March, May and between August and October which has been depicted on Figure 11.

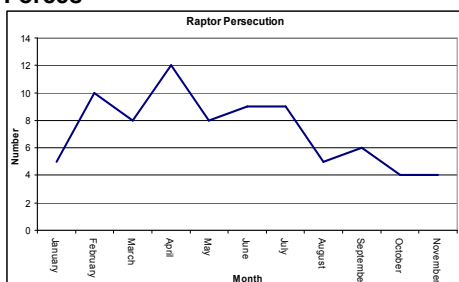
Recommendation: Due to 60% of Poisoning *intelligence* being poisoning of *Raptors*, it is recommended that, in future, Poisoning is looked at under the overarching issue of Raptor Persecution¹⁷.

Raptor Persecution Incidents

There have been 80 (4%) *incidents* of Raptor Persecution (not including Poisoning) in 2008 with the majority (66%) of birds persecuted being Buzzards, Peregrine Falcons or Red Kites.

Seasonality

Figure 12: Depicts all Raptor Persecution incident data submitted to the NWCUC in 2008 by UK Police Forces



As Figure 12 shows, these *incidents* were reported in every month in 2009 with an overall increase in frequency between February and July. This is consistent with the breeding season for the majority of *Raptors*.

Intelligence

¹⁴ Including *Raptors*, Non-*Raptors* and Baits

¹⁵ Including *Raptors*, Non-*Raptors* and other Poisoning intelligence

¹⁶ From The NWCUC Raptor Persecution Assessment

¹⁷ All other instances of Poisoning (non-*Raptors*) will be Policed, as per normal procedures, by Police Wildlife crime Officers across the UK

There have been 197 (6%) *intelligence* reports (not including Poisoning) submitted to the NWCU in the last two years relating to Raptor Persecution.

NWCU Raptor Persecution Assessment

This assessment was produced in February 2008 and it was based upon *intelligence* submitted between November 2006 and December 2007, *incident* data submitted between January 2007 and December 2007 and responses from a number of key individuals in the field of Raptor study. The key findings of this report were:

- This persecution takes place in many forms including poisoning, shooting, trapping, habitat destruction and nest destruction/disturbance.
- Shooting/sporting estates feature in this persecution and the main motivation for these crimes is related to the perceived threat to game birds from Raptors, and the resulting financial implications this has for game-keeping staff and their employers.
- This criminality will inevitably result in not only the loss of rare birds and damage to the surrounding ecosystem but carries a severe risk to other animals and passers-by from the methods being used to carry out these crimes.

PESTELO issues:

(Political, Economic, Social, Technological, Environmental, Legislation, Organisational)

European Eel

The European Eel will be listed on CITES from 13th March 2009 and is now listed as critically endangered on the IUCN red list. This species is in demand in trade, especially for live glass eels shipped to East Asia for aquaculture – the UK is a major exporter (along with France and Spain) mostly from fisheries on the Severn.

Recommendation: Poaching of the European Eel is adopted as a new UK Wildlife Intelligence Requirement for 2009/2010.

Annex A Orchid species

Over the last five years inspections carried out by Animal Health Wildlife Inspectors/UK Border Agency have shown a steady trend of newly described Annex A orchid species (or those species where doubt over the legal origin of the species exists) have been presented in UK CITES permit applications, sold or displayed at UK horticultural shows, were present in UK nurseries or were actually smuggled into the UK. When asked, traders have not always been able to provide adequate information on the legal origin of these species or state that many of the specimens were sourced from other EU countries. This demonstrates the importance of intra-EU trade in ascertaining orchids for the UK market and the flow of potentially illegal sourced wild material being passed as artificially propagated material or accompanied by little or no legal source information.

Recommendation: Annex A orchid species are adopted as a new UK Wildlife Intelligence Requirement for 2009/2010.

APPENDIX A**Full breakdown of the 'other' incident category from NSIR data (Jan - Nov 2008)**

Other' incident Category	Total	%			
Road Related	149	30%			
Fox Hunting	64	13%			
Swans	39	8%			
Concern for wildlife	33	7%			
Cruelty	23	5%			
Livestock/Farming	23	5%			
Snakes	18	4%			
Lost and Found	13	3%			
Dangerous Dogs/Animals	12	2%			
Injuries	11	2%			
Big Cat Sightings	10	2%			
Seals	10	2%			
Dead animals	9	2%			
Otters	8	2%			
Killing Animals/Birds	8	2%			
Marine Species	7	1%			
Pigeons	7	1%			
Operational Information	6	1%			
Shooting	5	1%			
Dead bird found	4	1%			
Foxes (not hunting)	5	1%			
Insects	4	1%			
Suspicious Incident	4	1%			
Cockle Picking	3	1%			
Domestic pets	3	1%			
			Other' incident Category (cont)	Total	%
			Hunting (not fox)	2	0%
			Badger Persecution	2	0%
			Beavers	2	0%
			Game birds/estates	2	0%
			Plants/Trees	2	0%
			Raptor Persecution	2	0%
			Release of non-native species	2	0%
			Theft	2	0%
			Wild Taken Birds	2	0%
			Deer (not poaching)	1	0%
			Falconry	1	0%
			Nest Destruction/Disturbance	1	0%
			Newts	1	0%
			No Crime	1	0%
			Pet Shops	1	0%
			Suspect Information	1	0%
			Threats/Harassment	1	0%
			TOTAL	504	