

Hare Coursing Bill

[AS INTRODUCED]

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TO

Make provision about hare coursing offences; to increase penalties for such offences; and for connected purposes.

BE IT ENACTED by the Queen’s most Excellent Majesty, by and with the advice and consent of the Lords Spiritual and Temporal, and Commons, in this present Parliament assembled, and by the authority of the same, as follows:—

1 Amendment of the Game Laws (Amendment) Act 1960

- (1) The Game Laws (Amendment) Act 1960 is amended as follows.
- (2) In section 2(1) (power of police to enter land), after “committing” insert—
“or, in the case of a person trespassing in search of hares, has committed”.
- (3) After section 4(2) (further provisions as to seizure and forfeiture) insert— 5
 “(2A) Where a person, P, is apprehended, in accordance with section 24 of the Police and Criminal Evidence Act 1984, for an offence relating to hares under section one or section nine of the Night Poaching Act 1828, or under section thirty or section thirty-two of the Game Act 1831, a police constable by or in whose presence P was apprehended may search P and may seize and detain any animal or vehicle or any other article belonging to P, or in P’s possession or under P’s control at the relevant time. 10
 (2B) Where P is convicted of an offence under either of the said Acts the court by or before whom P is convicted may, if it thinks fit, direct 15
 (a) an animal duly seized under this section which was in P’s possession shall be forfeited, and
 (b) P must reimburse any expenses incurred by the police in connection with the keeping of any animal so seized.” 20
- (4) In section 4A(1) (forfeiture of vehicles), after “that section” insert—
 “or, in the case of an offence relating to hares, an offence under section one or section nine of the Night Poaching Act 1828, or under section thirty or section thirty-two of the Game Act 1831”.

- (5) At the end of section 30 (penalty on persons trespassing in the day-time upon lands in search of game), insert—
- “(2) Notwithstanding any maximum penalty in subsection(1) a person convicted of an offence of trespass in search or pursuit of hares is liable to on summary conviction to imprisonment for a term not exceeding 6 months, to a fine or to both.” 5
- (6) At the end of section 32 (penalty on persons found armed using violence, &c.), insert—
- “(2) In the case of an offence under this section involving the search or pursuit of hares— 10
- (a) the requirement for five or more persons to be acting together does not apply, and
- (b) notwithstanding any maximum penalty in subsection(1) a person convicted of an offence under this section is liable to 15
- A person guilty of an offence under subsection (1) is liable on summary conviction to imprisonment for a term not exceeding 6 months, to a fine or to both.”

2 Offence of going equipped for hare coursing

- (1) A person commits an offence if that person—
- (a) is not at his or her place of abode, and 20
- (b) has in his or her possession any animal or article for use in the course of or in connection with hare coursing.
- (2) A person guilty of an offence under this section is liable on summary conviction to imprisonment for a term not exceeding six months, to a fine or to both. 25

3 Seizure and detention of dogs and recovery of costs

- (1) Subsection (2) applies if a constable has reasonable grounds to believe that a dog has been used or is intended to be used in hare coursing.
- (2) The constable may seize the dog and detain it—
- (a) until an investigation has been carried out into whether a relevant offence has been committed involving the dog, or 30
- (b) if proceedings are brought in respect of such an offence, until those proceedings have been determined or withdrawn.
- (3) If the owner of a dog detained under subsection (2) is convicted of a relevant offence in relation to that dog, the owner is liable to pay all the expenses incurred by reason of its seizure and detention. 35
- (4) In this section, a “relevant offence” means—
- (a) an offence relating to hares under section one or section nine of the Night Poaching Act 1828,
- (b) an offence relating to hares under section thirty or section thirty-two of the Game Act 1831, 40

- (c) an offence under section 5 of the Hunting Act 2004 (hare coursing),
or
- (d) an offence under section 2 of this Act.

4 Interpretation

In this Act, “hare coursing” means the pursuit of hares with sight hounds. 5

5 Extent, commencement and short title

- (1) This Act extends to England and Wales only.
- (2) This Act comes into force at the end of the period of three months beginning on the day on which this Act is passed.
- (3) This Act may be cited as the Hare Coursing Act 2022. 10

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Presented by Richard Fuller

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