

Three men arrested for hare coursing



Police have arrested and charged three men for hare coursing crimes which took place in the North Berwick, Pathhead and East Fortune area of East Lothian and Duns in the Borders.

A 35-year-old, from Edinburgh, appeared at Edinburgh Sheriff Court on Wednesday 9 March in connection with five hare coursing offences committed between 21st October 2015 and 3rd February 2016.

Two men, aged 31 from Airdrie and 47 from Musselburgh, have also been charged and reported to the Procurator Fiscal under the Wildlife & Countryside Act (1981) in connection with the offences in Pathhead and Duns.

Officers are currently following positive lines of enquiry in the Falkirk and West Calder areas regarding further hare coursing incidents that took place in Pathhead and Gifford on the 11th and 23rd November 2015.

PC Jamie Hood, Divisional Wildlife Liaison Officer, said: "Hare coursing is a barbaric act and a terrifying death for an animal.

"It is currently the most prevalent form of wildlife crime in the Lothian's and Scottish Borders, and we are committed to pursuing offenders regardless of the times and distances involved.

"Perpetrators are willing to travel considerable distances to take part in hare coursing and may be involved in other forms of criminality, such as the theft of agricultural machinery or equipment.

“The presence of a number of dogs and off-road vehicles can also risk the safety of local livestock, as well as damaging the land.

“With the assistance of our communities and partners, we can bring offenders to justice. I’d urge the those who live, work or visit the countryside to continue to report any suspicious behavior to us as soon as possible.”

Anyone with information about hare coursing can contact Police Scotland on 101 or contact Crimestoppers anonymously on 0800 555 111.