

Animal charity appeal for information after hare caught in trap on Pentland Hills

The Scottish SPCA is appealing for information after being alerted to deceased animals caught in illegal snares and traps over the last month.

In one instance the Society's special investigations unit was alerted to a hare was discovered trapped in a spring trap in the Pentland Hills on 18 June.

The hare was caught in an outdated spring trap which became illegal for use on non-target animals in April 2020. Trap operators should be aware of the recent change in legislation that dictates which traps are legal and which traps are no longer approved. This particular trap was unapproved and was not legal in the circumstances in which it was used.



Scottish SPCA special investigations inspector, who cannot be named due to undercover operations, said: "Snare and trap operators must check on the device every 24-hours and this was not the case in these incidents.

"These animals were caused unimaginable physical and mental anguish being caught in these traps. The creatures will have experienced slow and agonising deaths. The level of suffering they would have felt is unimaginable.

"The hare was found in the Pentland Hills near Balerno trapped by its front leg. By the time we found it, the leg had almost been severed due to the amount of struggle and fight put up by

the animal.

“These areas are popular with dog walkers so we would ask that anyone with pets in the areas are vigilant. Snares and traps are indiscriminate and domestic animals such as dogs and cats can also be caught in them. It is illegal for anyone to tamper with a legally set snare or trap so we would ask the public not to attempt this. If someone suspects a device is set illegally then they should contact us immediately.

“We’ve been working closely with our partners at Police Scotland on these wildlife crimes and both agencies are keen to find those responsible.

“If anyone has any information on whoever may have set these snares or traps or if anyone finds what they believe to be an illegal item, we would urge them to phone our animal helpline immediately on 03000 999 999. All calls can be treated confidentially.”

From 2018 to 2019, the charity dealt with almost 60 incidents involving animals caught in snares and traps. The majority of these animals were dead on arrival.

Scotland’s animal welfare charity supports an outright ban on all snares due to the level of suffering an animal is caused.