

What is PAW NI?

The Partnership for Action Against Wildlife Crime NI (PAW NI) brings together statutory agencies, non-statutory agencies and interested parties with the common goal of combating wildlife crime through publicity, education and campaigning. PAW NI partners include key government Departments, PSNI and other enforcement agencies, environmental organisations, animal welfare groups and country sports associations.



Incorporating The Irish Game Protection Association



Reporting a wildlife crime



Any information about wildlife crime should be passed immediately to the PSNI* Tel: 101.

Describe your call as a Wildlife Crime report

- Location and time
- Description of the person(s) involved.
- Vehicle registration number(s), make and colour if possible.
- Use of firearms, dogs etc.
- Give details of the (potential) crime
- Ask for an incident reference number
- Retain incident number and date

*Information can also be given anonymously via Crimestoppers



Images by Northeastwildlife.co.uk

www.wildlifecrimeni.org



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DEER POACHING



PARTNERSHIP FOR ACTION AGAINST
wildlife crime
NORTHERN IRELAND

Legal deer management

As deer have no natural predators in Northern Ireland, selective deer culling is necessary to:

- **Control herd numbers**
- **Promote deer welfare**
- **Reduce environmental damage**
- **Reduce deer related road traffic collisions**

Culling should always be carried out by trained deer stalkers who are authorised to cull with deer welfare, public safety and food hygiene as their main priorities.

What is deer poaching?

Deer poaching is the illegal or unauthorised hunting of deer. It is carried out in a variety of ways including shooting at night under spotlight (lamping) and illegal hunting with dogs. The methods used by poachers to hunt deer are cruel and inhumane. Lamping and the use of night vision equipment is considered to be the most common method of poaching deer in Northern Ireland.

Why does it matter?

Poaching of deer is usually carried out for financial gain. Selling of venison (deer meat) without due concern for public health or animal welfare.

Today's poacher is likely to be involved not only in wildlife crime but other forms of crime as well.

Animal welfare

Deer poachers are unlikely to have any training or experience of deer hunting. Poachers may use inappropriate firearms or ammunition potentially increasing the risk of injury to deer.



They may not take due care when taking a shot and are more likely to wound the animal rather than obtaining a humane kill. If a deer is injured it could bleed or starve to death causing unnecessary suffering. If a female is shot which has dependent young then the young deer may also starve to death.

Public safety

Poor firearms safety increases the risk to the public. Poachers are also unlikely to follow good carcass handling and hygiene practices or conduct an examination of the carcass for notifiable diseases (eg TB). If this venison enters the food chain public health could be put at risk. As this constitutes an illegal and potentially unsafe supply of food, any information about the sale of poached venison should be reported to Food Crime Confidential on 02072768787.

What does the law say?

Wild deer are protected under the Wildlife (Northern Ireland) Order 1985 (as amended). Deer have a closed season (females 1st April – 31st October and males 1st May – 31st July) and it is illegal to take deer during this period unless by special authority or under licence issued by the Northern Ireland Environment Agency.

It is also an offence to enter land without the consent of the owner or occupier or other lawful authority in search or pursuit with the intention to kill, injure or take any deer. Deer hunting at night is illegal.

How to spot deer poaching

It may be difficult to tell whether those seen shooting deer are doing so legally. The majority of cases deer culling in daylight and outside the closed seasons is being carried out by competent hunters acting within the law.

Poaching should be immediately suspected if a full or partial carcass, deer heads, legs or grallochs (stomach and intestines) are discovered.

NEVER approach suspects yourself. If you are aware of anyone who is involved in poaching or who is buying illegally taken deer please notify your local police on 101 or call Crimestoppers on 0800 555 111.

