

Poacher's Moon

Fight crime
Stop poaching in its tracks



Lead partners



Poachers' Moon

The demand for game, venison and fish for the table has never been higher in the UK.

From the full moon in November, also known as the Poacher's Moon, until late December, poaching reaches a peak with organised criminal gangs targeting deer and salmon for the Christmas market.

The image of the poacher as a wily countryman picking off a landowner's game to feed his family is pure nostalgia. The 21st century poacher will typically be operating in a ruthless fashion, attempting to kill as much as possible to provide cash profits, and will often be involved in organised crime.

The modern poacher's activities range from the criminal offence of theft of deer and salmon to encompass the illegal use of dogs, animal cruelty, and opportunist theft of farm and household equipment. They pay no regard to food safety and damage to wildlife. In short; poaching is a damaging crime and must be stopped.



The Poacher's Moon campaign is aimed at spotting, reporting and dealing with poachers and denying them a market for illegally obtained game and fish over Christmas 2009 and into 2010.



Rural Net

The Poacher's Moon campaign is an initiative of Rural Net, a partnership of organisations working to tackle poaching under the police National Wildlife Crime Unit and spearheaded by England and Wales' first Anti Poaching Priority Project Officer, Gareth Cole.

Rural Net's members include: the police, Environment Agency, British Association for Shooting and Conservation, Deer Initiative Partnership, Angling Trust, Food Standards Agency and the Centre for Environment, Fisheries and Aquaculture science.

Signs of poaching

On land, poachers are often indiscriminate about the damage they do to wildlife and the remains they leave behind. Animals are crudely butchered. Valuable meat carcasses are taken away, while by-products and waste are simply dumped.

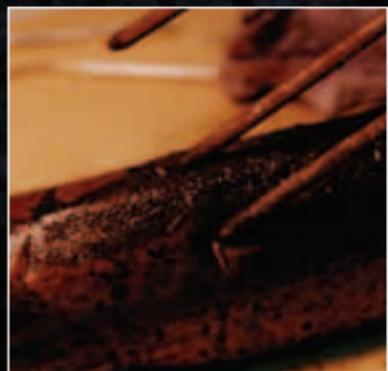


On rivers, poachers work by torchlight at night with forks, sharpened steel hooks, gaffs and nets to catch

salmon and sea trout; both threatened species. If poachers are disturbed, their instruments will often be left on the river banks and any other species of fish caught by accident will be killed and dumped, or left to die entangled in nets.

Make sure your food is safe and legal

Meat and fish are sometimes sold cheaply through unauthorised channels to avoid the food safety standards and regulations that are in place to ensure that they are safe and traceable. It is now illegal to sell, barter or exchange any rod caught salmon. Whole fish should carry an Environment Agency tag through their mouth and gill cover. Only buy meat and fish from reputable suppliers.



Venison can be bought directly from a primary producer such as a deer farm, or from a hunter. Both primary producers and hunters can supply small quantities locally direct to the final consumer. Additionally, the hunter can also supply small quantities of game meat locally directly to the final consumer. Anyone selling small quantities of venison direct to the final consumer is required to keep traceability records. They should, therefore, be able to provide this information on request. They should also be registered as a food business with their local authority. Wild game can also be purchased from butchers, food retailers or from approved Game Handling Establishments.

Buying unauthorised game could harm not only other wildlife and fish stocks, but you and your family as well.

Poaching is a crime

Do you have information on salmon poaching? Call the police or the Environment Agency Hotline **0800 807 060**

Do you have information on deer poaching? Call the Police or call Crime stoppers **0800 555 111**

Supported by



THE VOICE OF ANGLING



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