



## Wildlife Crime Awareness

---

Essex Police are proud to support World Animal Protection but what is meant by Wildlife crime? Wildlife crime can take many forms, from people shooting at birds with air guns in the local park to the more organised crimes of hare coursing and the trade in endangered species. It includes offences like poaching, killing or disturbing protected species, or damaging their breeding and resting places. These extreme pressures can push animals and plant species closer to extinction and cause animals' unnecessary pain and suffering. The responsibility for the enforcement of the laws protecting our wildlife rests with the police service.

### **Type of wildlife crime:**

- Badger persecution (digging or baiting);
- Bat persecution (bat roost disturbance/destruction);
- Illegal trade in CITES species (live wild animals, their products & parts such as illegal ivory, rhino horn, skins or traditional medicines);
- Freshwater pearl mussels;
- Poaching/coursing (deer, fish & hare);
- Raptor persecution;
- Theft/ disturbance of wild birds, eggs &/or nests;
- Theft/ disturbance of wild animals, plants or habitat;
- Animal cruelty;
- Invasive species;
- Hunting with dogs;
- European Protected Species.

For more information go to [www.worldanimalprotection.org.uk/wildlife-crime-toolkit](http://www.worldanimalprotection.org.uk/wildlife-crime-toolkit)

### **If you suspect a crime has occurred:**

- Do not disturb the scene by moving items or by walking about unnecessarily;
- Do not touch dead animals or birds if you suspect they may be poisoned baits or victims as most of the substances used are extremely dangerous and you may put yourself at risk;
- If possible, video or photograph the scene, or make a rough sketch;
- Write down any vehicle registration numbers. Don't trust them to memory;
- Remember that some animals and birds can be legally shot or controlled. Do not interfere with any set traps or snares or damage hides, high seats or shooting butts in case they are there legally;
- Do not put yourself at risk: contact the police as soon as possible. If possible try to record as many details as you can about the event:
  - Date;
  - Time;
  - Location (GPS grid reference is the most accurate);
  - Weather Conditions;
  - Details about the suspect: gender, age, appearance, etc;
  - Details of any vehicles: model, colour, registration number plate, etc;
  - Details of the crime in a chronological order.

Have you seen any suspicious activity or the presence of unknown vehicles in your area?

Have you found any animals that may have been killed in suspicious circumstances, or do you know any that may have been taken?

Do you have information that would assist in bringing offenders to justice?

If there is a wildlife crime in progress call 999 or for a non-emergency call 101.

If you want to give information regarding a crime anonymously, call **CRIMESTOPPERS** on 0800 555 111.