

# A POLICE OFFICER'S QUICK GUIDE TO POACHING OFFENCES

## **Night time poaching:**

1 hour after sunset to 1 hour before sunrise.

## **Offences:**

Unlawfully, without permission, at night, take or destroy game or rabbits. **Arrest/va/summons**

**or**

Unlawfully enter or be on land with any gun, net, snare, lamp for purpose of taking game (rabbits not included in this offence if this excuse is used check the Hunting Act 2004). **Arrest/va/summons**

## **Daytime poaching:**

1 hour before sunrise to one hour after sunset.

## **Offence:**

Trespassing on any land in daytime or being on land in search or pursuit of game, woodcock, snipe or rabbits. **Arrest/va/summons**

**Game:** Hare, pheasant, partridge, and grouse.

## **Deer poaching offences:**

Enter land, without lawful authority, in search or pursuit of deer with intention of taking, killing or injuring. **Arrest/va/summons**

To kill, injure any deer or attempt to do so. Search for or pursue, with such intent, or, without authority, remove any deer carcass.

**Arrest/va/summons**

**Hunting Act 2004:** Offence to hunt fox, hare or deer with dog. Can hunt for rabbits or rats with dogs but must have landowners permission, if not an offence is committed. **Arrest/va/summons**

**Fish poaching:** Offence to take or destroy or attempt to do so, any fish from private waters or private right of fishery both game and course fish (Sec 32 Theft Act). **Arrest/va/summons**

**Poaching Prevention Act 1862:** a police officer may stop and search any person or vehicle on any highway, street or public place if there is reasonable cause to suspect poaching. Any game, article, dog or vehicle if used in offence may be seized and detained.

**Deer:** a police officer may stop and search any person or vehicle they reasonably suspect has committed any offence relating to deer poaching and seize deer, venison, animal, weapon or vehicle related to that offence.

**Other offences:**

Trespass on land with firearm (no age limits apply). **Arrest/va/summons**

Have firearm in public place without reasonable excuse (no age limits apply). **Arrest/va/summons**

**Firearm:** lethal barrelled weapon of any description from which any shot, bullet or other missile can be discharged.

It is illegal to use crossbows/bows to kill any bird or animal. If in possession of crossbow/bow in public, think offensive weapon.

**Arrest/va/summons**

Possession of a knife blade/sharp pointed article in public place without legitimate reason is an offence (poachers will nearly always carry a knife of some sort).

Anyone fishing aged 12yrs or over requires Environment Agency rod licence. Pass any details on to Environment Agency who will prosecute if no licence. Remember to seize fishing tackle.

Sec 34 RTA offence to drive, without lawful authority, any motor vehicle on common land, moorland, other land of any description not being part of road or public footpath/bridleway.

Give Sec 59 warning.