

A guide to easily sabotaging the pheasant & partridge shooting season.

Partridges

Shooting season starts earlier on September 1st.

Much the same as pheasants, they like and are kept in cover crops, but they are also frequently kept in release pens they can't escape from without a little help..

Shooting partridges, like pheasants, doesn't take place on Sundays, making a Sunday afternoon walk an ideal time to pre beat, look for pegs in place in a field, these will be where guns are directed to stand for when the birds are beaten towards them.

Pheasants

What has the pheasant shooting industry got to do with the badger cull? Perhaps ask all the shooting estates in the cull zones, most of them don't have any cattle yet they are all signed up for killing badgers. Do pheasants get bTB?? well no, but game keepers are notorious for killing everything that predates on pheasant poults:

Gulls, Weasels, Stoats, Foxes, Buzzards, Magpies, Crows, Rooks and yes even Badgers

If this wiping out of British wildlife wasn't bad enough, the pheasants themselves spend their first few months in factory farmed conditions, have a look through our videos if you want to see some of our exposes of pheasant farms in the cull zones. Quite a large percentage of chicks are imported from france via ferry with many dying en route, we exposed Ian Botham earlier this year, showing how the cardboard carrying boxes contained dead chicks.

October the 1st is when the "sport" of shooting a slow moving bird out of the sky starts, many are wounded and die slow painful deaths. The shooting industry would like everyone to think that the birds after being shot are then all eaten, they are not. Most butchers and shops don't want to sell pheasants that has lead shot in it (lead is poisonous). This shocking Telegraph article from 2013 reveals that 10,000 tons of dead pheasant are just binned each year:

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/foodanddrink/10449126/Dont-bin-pheasant-its-worth-a-shot-in-the-kitchen-pot.html>



By **Xanthe Clay**

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 18 Comments

The top 100 foods we waste, according to the charity Love Food Hate Waste, are a pretty predictable lot. Bread, potatoes, cooked rice, cucumbers, lettuce and chicken drumsticks figure, which by virtue of the volume in which we consume them is unsurprising, if rather shaming. But sneaking in at 72 is a shocker: pheasant.

What? Pheasant is a niche food, a luxury, albeit a well-priced one at around a fiver a bird. It's available for only a few months in 12. How can we be throwing away more than 10,000 tons a year, more than twice the weight of whole chickens that hit the bin? And bear in mind that while 15million pheasants are shot a year, 2.2 million chickens (albeit not all as whole birds) are eaten every day in the United Kingdom.

The answer, in part, lies in the practice of shooting for fun, the corporate-type events where birds are mown down by eager amateurs, who have no interest in seeing their quarry make it to the table. And that relatively low price, and low demand, means that it's not worth the butcher's while to collect the dead pheasants, never mind pluck and gut them ready for sale. So the haul is buried or binned and that's the end of it.

So obviously we need to eat more pheasant, and persuade the sport shooters to bring back them back for the pot. But the reason, I suspect, that we aren't clamouring for the contents of their designer-label game bags is that cooked pheasant are too often tough, dried out or downright dull.

So we have compiled this guide for those of you interested in saving some birds this year, please share it.

The Hunt Saboteurs Association has this on their tactics page:
<http://www.huntsabs.org.uk/index.php/resources/tactics/103-tactics/tacticsarticles>

PHEASANT SHOOTS

Season: October 1st - February 1st

Wild pheasants are now almost a thing of the past and the shooters now breed and rear their own birds to satisfy their demands. Shooting syndicates are set up to ease the cost and in many woods can now be found the rearing pens. You will come across them as you pre-beat woods on fox hunts.

From incubation the chicks are kept in large sheds and as they get older they are placed in larger and larger pens until they are old and "ripe" enough to be released from their holding pens into the countryside. Feed is kept permanently for them in hanging containers, i.e. old plastic drums to ensure the pheasants remain in the area where they are to be shot. Also, an aniseed solution is put around coverts, the smell from this appeals to the pheasants and they stay in the vicinity.

The shoots take place regularly and will be advertised in shooting magazines and locally. Most shoots take place just before Christmas. A large shoot will generally take place with beaters and the shooters remaining stationary. Several beats will take place during the day. Smaller shoots may be of the walk-up fashion.

TACTICS

Action has to be taken early in an attempt to prevent birds from remaining in the area they are released into. The feed containers can easily be located and you should act accordingly.

Pheasants have been known to follow a trail of the feed for some distance and remain if enough food is left. They will particularly follow an aniseed trail which can be sprayed from a garden spray. The aniseed fluid, bought from chemists, should be mixed with vegetable oil then mixed in with the grain

Beating

Much the same as grouse shoots, when their beaters and shooters are in position, beat away towards their beaters. If there are enough of you, stand in front of their guns and prevent them from shooting.

On a walk-up shoot, position yourself ahead of the shooters and beat away at the same speed as the shooters walk, always watching to see if they change direction.

And this is what people in the shooting industry have to say about pheasants and aniseed:
<http://www.falconryforum.co.uk/archive/index.php/t-34131.html>

Ben C
Just bought some Aniseed concentrate to go into my feeders and it stinks. However what quantites do I use, how do I apply it and can it be wiped or doused onto nearby trees?
Thanks in advance.

Hawkmaster
Ben if it is the oil it is 10ml per litre of veg oil and then that gets mixed to 1 ton of feed.
You can also use the mixed oil solution on rags in trees and bushes too;)

Ben C
Paul.....short and sweet mate....THANKS

Mr_Colin
ah that explains the rags hanging from trees near one of my permissions. Is this to attract your quarry birds to the feeders?

Hawkmaster
Yes keeps them coming from all over!
I once had some pheasants come from a shoot over 2 miles away and form a begging queue outside my stable door to get at the feed bins inside because it had the above solu

Aniseed can be bought as a concentrate, this company gives directions on how to use it with regards to pheasants:
<https://www.solwayfeeders.com/gamekeeping-accessories/game-bird-attractants/aniseed-oil-concentrate-100ml-p2169-c343/>

This post from a shoot organiser sums up the lengths they will go to try and keep the pheasants in one place:
<http://forums.pigeonwatch.co.uk/forums/topic/73805-aniseed-and-other-products-to-hold-pheasants/>

Posted 19 December 2008 - 07:14 PM

I've just posted on another thread about the use of aniseed oil and wandering birds yes it does work.
The truth of the matter though is you need to get the habitat right for the birds to stay they need to be able to find everything they want within the confines of the shoot. This doesn't mean just putting out a few feeders and drinkers, but getting the habitat right try sowing some cover crops yourself right at the edges of the fields (the thin where the harvester cannot get to) of course you should ask permission first though.
Then you need to get to work at making them feel safe by excluding outsiders such as dog walkers etc, controlling predators and vermin and so-on.
You give em a place where their needs are met and they feel happy safe and secure and they'll not stray in the first place.
Mike...
As a postscript though one of the best ways I've found of excluding dog walkers and the like is to have some signs made up saying WARNING LOOSE BULL, PROCEED AT OWN RISK, YOU HAVE BEEN WARNED!! I have used this sign on gates to fields sown with crops where there aint ever going to be a bull and it still works.
Mike...

If you want to understand more about the pheasant shooting industry, we highly recommend "common decency" (not to be confused with the Brian May political group)
<http://www.commondecency.co.uk/home.html>

The basics to sabbing a pheasant shoot BEFORE any shoot takes place, is locate feeders as that is the area where birds are trying to be kept so they can be "beaten" into the air for some idiot to then shoot them, empty them and/or help yourself to some of the grain to lay a trail away from the area or alternatively put down dog or fox faeces near the feeders as this will keep pheasants away.

So get the pheasants away from where they are being encouraged to stay and then if you can; direct them into a "safe" area, a nearby woodland might not be ideal but it will be harder to "beat" than a cover crop. You can direct them by putting piles of the grain from the feeders into those safe areas, you can also soak rags in aniseed and tie those rags up in woodland away from shoots, keep that woodland topped up with grain that you've salvaged from the shoots own feeders if you can as regularly as possible.

The cover crops mentioned before are often strips of maize or brassicas or sometimes even sunflowers, they are left to provide cover for the birds and the beaters then walk amongst that crop to get them up in the air, if you can get them away from that cover crop you will have saved many lives so don't worry too much about finding a "safe" area if there doesn't seem to be one.

JUST MOVE THEM ON

Good luck

this web article has since been published on the importance of keeping pheasants in one area to be killed and how to do that: <http://www.shootinguk.co.uk/news/drawing-birds-into-drives-and-keeping-them-there-49519>

to make your own DIY feeder you need to hang up a container, cut the top so that you can open it up as a flap or cut it off completely then cover the grain with a bag. In the bottom of the container cut a hole big enough for the spring to fit in, then fill it up with some aniseed flavoured corn.



you can buy the springs OR you can find them in the bottom of feeders on shoots!!



If you use one that you found, you save a bit of money and you also cause the shoot a bit of a headache :) keep on sabbing