

Two men convicted of illegally hunting hares in case brought by National Parks and Wildlife Service

Both men were convicted but sentencing was reserved for a later date as the men were not present in the court.

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TWO MEN HAVE been convicted for illegally hunting hares with lurcher dogs in Offaly , in a case brought by the National Parks and Wildlife Service.

The Department of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht's National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS) brought a case before Tullamore District Court on Wednesday.

Two men were summoned for hunting hares, an exempted wild mammal under the Wildlife Acts, with lurcher type dogs, and for interfering with the breeding and resting place of a protected wild animal.

Both men were convicted by Judge Catherine Staines, but sentencing was reserved for a future date as the men were not present in the court.

The incident occurred in Clongawny and Clonlyon Glebe in North Offaly on 23 March 2018.

District conservation officer Noel Bugler outlined to the court that, following a response to public complaints, they observed a number of men with lurchers walking in formation across private farmland and cutaway Bord Na Mona bog.

They said this is an area that has experienced chronic problems with illegal hare coursing with lurchers.

Officers outlined to the court that illegal hunting of hares is a huge issue for the NPWS in parts of the country and can lead to declines in hare populations locally.

A statement from the Department said the NPWS is continuing to work with An Garda Síochana in tackling the issue in problematic areas.

Hare hunting sparked renewed controversy recently following an [RTÉ Investigates programme](#) which highlighted the prevalence of the illegal activity, as well exposing issues in the Irish greyhound industry.

https://www.thejournal.ie/npws-take-court-case-against-hare-hunters-4731588-Jul2019/?utm_source=shortlink&fbclid=IwAR19h51yDGjaVmt76qwgoYZmd7_Dmc294QH3ZGVnG38CWBcv3dB2ZUJtvB0