



The three men pleaded guilty at Clonmel Circuit Court to illegally hunting and killing wild Irish deer, using dogs, and causing them unnecessary suffering, between September of 2014 and January of 2015.

The crimes were uncovered during the Garda's Operation Bambi investigation into deer poaching.

All three – Keith O'Dwyer (27) of 16 Glenview, Carrick-on-Suir; Dean Murphy (25) of Ballyrichard Court, Carrick-on-Suir; and Jamie Regan (28) of 25 Comeragh View, Carrick-on-Suir – received two-year suspended sentences.

Sergeant Barry Boland told the court that a report was made to the gardai in October of 2014 by Damien Hannigan of the Irish Wild Deer Association, that he had come across "disturbing footage on Facebook in relation to the hunting and killing of native wild Irish deer, using dogs".

Gardai saw one video clip on Facebook, filmed in a field near Clonmel, of a red stag being grabbed around the neck and other parts of his body by three dogs, before escaping across the river Suir.

An investigation included "trawling through social media," Sergeant Boland said, and they came across a number of other stills which showed either deer being hunted with dogs, or deer lying dead in front of people who were posing. All were taken at night-time. There were 12 deer involved in the video and images found on the internet.

The homes of all three defendants were searched and the men were arrested, separately, and admitted their role in what happened.

Judge Thomas Teehan said the crimes involved "inherent cruelty to animals through the pursuit of those animals by quite vicious dogs, bred for the purposes of hunting deer".

Both O'Dwyer and Murphy pleaded guilty to two counts of the offence while Regan admitted one count.

A charge against Regan of possession, for the purposes of sale or supply, of cocaine worth €5,675 was adjourned for a year to allow him collect €2,000 for a charity dealing with victims of drug crime. All three were told to pay €1,000 each to animal welfare organisations within the next nine months.

*Image: Stock File*

<http://www.beat102103.com/news/three-tipp-men-plead-guilty-illegally-hunting-killing-wild-deer/>