

GAME 2018 – Speaker Biographies



Dr Jonathan Reynolds

Head of Predation Control Studies, GWCT

Talk: *Traps and trapping; politics and practicality*

Jonathan Reynolds is a wildlife biologist with 35 years of post-doctoral experience. After a PhD on red and grey squirrels in the UK, and post-doctoral experience in Finland and Sweden, he returned to England in 1985 to work on foxes for GWCT, and has been here ever since. Here he is responsible for GWCT research on mammalian predators and pests, and how they are managed in the conservation of game and other wildlife.

This is a research area rich in controversy. To play a useful role in it, the scientist must produce evidence of a very high standard, maintain scrupulous objectivity, and build up a reputation for these things with government, potential funders, diverse interest groups and the wider public. Research by Jonathan and his team (two other scientists plus students) has typically ventured into uncharted territory where it has been necessary to develop new techniques and validate them convincingly. Jonathan has considerable experience of working close to government, as research contractor, scientific referee, expert witness, and in an advisory capacity.



Dr Mike Swan

Head of Education and Southern England and Wales Advisor, GWCT

Talk: *Code of Good Shooting Practice and GWCT Shoot Biodiversity Assessment*

Mike has been a member of the GWCT advisory team since 1982, having previously completed a PhD in Botany. He runs his own small shoot in Dorset, as well as enjoying wildfowling, fishing and woodland stalking.

Mike runs the GWCT's tertiary education programme, and provides advice on game management and conservation to gamekeepers, shoot managers, farmers and conservation organisations across southern England, the southwest, and throughout Wales.



Austin Weldon

Game & Wildlife Advisor, Central England, GWCT

Talk: *Living with protected predators*

Austin first started working for the GWCT in 2003 as a placement student, working on lowland gamebird research.

He later returned to the Trust after graduation to work in the predation department on the development of fox snaring hardware. Austin has worked in the field sports and conservation industries both in the UK and abroad, and now delivers advice and training to gamekeepers, wildlife managers and landowners throughout central England. In addition to his advisory role he also oversees the management of the GWCT's shoot at Loddington, which acts as a wonderful demonstration of GWCT best practice guidance in action.



Teresa Dent CBE, FRAgS

Chief Executive, GWCT

Talk: *Welcome and introduction to GWCT*

Teresa has lived and worked all her life in the countryside. Having completed a degree in Agriculture at Reading University, the initial part of her career was as a farming consultant with Strutt & Parker where she was a partner for 13 years. She joined the Game & Wildlife Conservation Trust as Chief Executive at the end of 2001. In this role, she has been able to combine her practical and business experience of farming and land management with the conservation prescriptions

and policy produced by the Trust scientists.

Teresa believes in practical, pragmatic conservation that finds space for wildlife alongside economic land uses. Teresa was awarded a CBE for services to conservation in June 2015, is a Fellow of the Royal Agricultural Society, England, a Board Member of Natural England and a Board Member of the Marlborough Downs Nature Improvement Partnership.



Professor Nick Sotherton BSc PhD

Director of Research, GWCT

Talk: *Game research at the GWCT - its relevance to the game management sector*

Professor Nick Sotherton BSc, PhD has worked at the Game & Wildlife Conservation Trust since 1976. He became Research Director in the Lowlands before becoming Director of Research in 1998. In 2005, he was awarded the RASE Research Medal for his contribution to agricultural science.

In 2010, he was appointed as an Honorary Visiting Professor in the Centre for Rural Policy Research at the School of Humanities and Social Sciences and the School of Biosciences at the University of Exeter. In 2015, he took on the additional role of Director of Advisory and Education. Research interests include farmland ecology, sub-lethal impacts of pesticides on non-target species and the mitigation of the impacts of intensive agriculture on the environment.



Dr Roger Draycott

Head of Advisory and Eastern and Northern England Advisor, GWCT

Talk: *Summing up and The GWCT Advisory Service*

From a farming background and with a PhD in pheasant ecology, Roger has worked at the GWCT since 1993. He spent many years undertaking applied research on pheasants (reared and wild) and grey partridges through Britain before joining the advisory team in 2012.

Roger provides advice on game management and wildlife conservation to farmers, shoot managers, conservation organisations and the agricultural supply chain across eastern and northern England in addition to heading up the Advisory team.



Dr Andrew Hoodless

Head of Wetland Research, GWCT

Talk: *Woodcock GWCT science and policy*

Andrew Hoodless is Head of Wetland Research at the Game & Wildlife Conservation Trust. His primary research interests are wader ecology and migration, wetland management and predation of ground-nesting birds.

He currently manages projects evaluating the effectiveness of agri-environment schemes for breeding waders on wet grassland and for lapwings on arable land, developing solutions to reduce predator impacts on waders and assessing the effects of pheasant releasing on woodland flora and invertebrates. He has studied the woodcock for over 20 years, but his current work is focused on understanding population processes and ensuring sustainable hunting of this migratory species.



Andrew Gilruth

Director of Marketing, Membership & Communications, GWCT

Talk: *Communication and shooting – getting our message across in the right way*

Andrew is the Director of Communications, Membership & Marketing at the Game & Wildlife Conservation Trust. He took director responsibility for membership & marketing in 2008. Six years later his role was expanded to include communications.

Since taking part in a debate with Chris Packham, held at the Royal Society in 2014, he has remained engaged on social media and in the press with those doubting the scientific evidence behind the benefits game management can offer. The blogger Mark Avery (former RSPB Conservation Director) accused the BBC of bias in favour of shooting following a more recent debate on *BBC Farming Today* with Andrew. Mark has repeatedly refused to return to the programme. Prior to this Andrew worked for London agencies including: Smith Bundy, Bates Dorland and Publicis.



Richard Barnes

Sales Manager, Kings

Talk: *Progressive game cover management - How to deal with 'exotic' weeds (rogue millet, amaranth and thorn apple) and limit their spread across the Shoot*

Having completed a degree in Agriculture and Land Management at the Royal Agricultural University Richard spent two years working on a range of farms and estates across the UK including two stalking/fishing ghillie 'seasons' in Scotland.

This was followed by six years as a single-handed gamekeeper in Kent and the Cotswolds – the latter involving setting up a shoot from scratch over 1200 acres delivering 15 driven days. Key to the development of the shooting for partridges and pheasants was developing habitat across the farm including a range of game cover crops which totalled 50 acres which he established and managed himself.

Richard joined Kings in 2004 moving to the position of Sales Manager. He has since overseen the development of a team of 9 advisors across the UK who supply seed and advice to a wide range of land owners, farmers, conservation bodies and industry stakeholders. The Kings team have a strong emphasis on delivering innovation and look wherever possible to support and encourage the integration of sporting interests with agri-environment schemes/Ecological Focus Area requirements. Kings is a key partner at The Allerton Project and works closely with the Balgonie grey partridge and Auchnerran demonstration farm projects in Scotland.

Visit www.kingscrops.co.uk for more information.



David Steel

Head of Sporting Department, Savills

Talk: *Economics of game shoot management*

David is a Director in the rural division of Savills. Through his estate management responsibilities, he manages a variety of estates for both private and institutional owners, focussing on adding value through new and diversified income streams.

David also heads up the Savills sporting team – a network of experts on shooting, fishing and stalking, across all parts of the UK. The shoot benchmarking survey

run in partnership with the GWCT is a financial management tool for shoots for all types and scales. Now in the 8th season of data collection, it is unique in terms of its output, and widely regarded as industry leading for its content.

Visit www.savills.co.uk/services/property-management/rural-estates/sporting.aspx for more information.

Tim Woodward

Country Food Trust

Talk: *The Country Food Trust - helping those in need using game meat*

Born into an army family Tim went to school in the south west of England before attending the Royal Military Academy Sandhurst. He served with 1st The Queen's Dragoon Guards in Germany and Cyprus before leaving the army in 1988. He followed his time in the army by going to work in the city of London for the next 25 years working in commodity derivatives for Merrill Lynch and later running exchange traded commodity derivatives for UBS globally.

This involved spending much of his time on a plane visiting clients and staff around the world notably in the US and Asia. Tim left the city in 2015 and was asked to set up The Country Food Trust by the founding Trustees and has been running it since then. Tim has three children and divides his time between Somerset and London.

Visit www.thecountryfoodtrust.org for more information.

Mark Elliot BVSc MRCVS

South Downs Veterinary Consultancy

Talk: *Antibiotics and gamebirds*

Mark qualified from Bristol University in 1989, and went on to work in a number of practices covering many different species. Always an abiding ambition was to evolve more work with birds. Starting in a small way with Gamebirds in 2006 this project has expanded into the South Downs Veterinary Consultancy (SDVC) which now provides services to shoots, gamefarms and more over much of the South East of England.

Outside of Veterinary work Mark is well known in the sporting field, and having been part of the winning team at the 2008 Purdey Award for Conservation has a wider interest in the benefits to the countryside of that community. Mark is also involved in work with Deer and Fish, and works closely with the GWCT research team on a number of projects.

Visit www.southdownsvets.co.uk for more information.