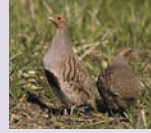


MARK DOWN pairs of crows and magpies when you see them, ready for a quick start with the Larsen traps.



WATCH OUT for any early grey partridge pairs and put a hopper of wheat into their territory.



TEACH AT least one person how to pluck and dress a pheasant, and then give them a few brace.



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Game management

# Creating the ultimate... *red grouse nirvana*



DID YOU KNOW?

The principle control of heather beetle is biological through a small parasitic wasp, *Asecodes mento*, which lays its eggs on the beetle larvae which hatch and then feeds on its host. Frustratingly, weather patterns in recent years may have favoured the beetle and less so the wasp.



Hugo Straker is our Scottish advisor who has an in-depth knowledge of the uplands and grouse moor management.

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Creating and maintaining the ideal environment for red grouse involves targeted investment. This kind of gamebirds requires well-managed heather, protection from predators and a disease-control strategy. Sadly, we cannot control the vagaries of weather and in recent years we have seen grouse suffer from the effects of snow, spring drought, summer rain, extreme heat, reduced insect abundance in places and the knock-on effects of heather beetle. Hens in poor nutritional condition will likely result in poor chicks which will struggle to survive.

- Manage heather by following the revised Muirburn Code to provide grouse with the necessary range of heather age classes for feeding, nesting, shelter and some protection from avian predators.
- Undertake legal predator control, focusing efforts on foxes, corvids, stoats, weasels and rats.
- Keep ravens on the move.
- Provide an even distribution of quality quartz grit, ensuring it is present in all grouse territories. Good dialogue with your local vet is essential when considering the need for medicated grit.
- Consider the provision of water on dry moorland either by introducing dew pans or create your own natural 'wells'.
- Monitor worm populations in your grouse population and undertake shoot-day health checks by contacting GWCT's Grouse Technical Services who will come and take blood samples from freshly shot birds to check for the presence of the tick borne Louping Ill virus (LIV).
- If shot grouse are not available, ask your vet to test for LIV in the sheep flock. If results are positive, implement a thorough acaricide programme.
- Conduct spring and summer grouse counts to support sustainable harvesting.
- Remember, red grouse are delicious on the plate. 🍴



MORE INFORMATION

For targeted advice please contact us on 01425 651013 (England/Wales) or 01738 551511 (Scotland) [www.gwct.org.uk/advisory](http://www.gwct.org.uk/advisory)

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