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Contributors

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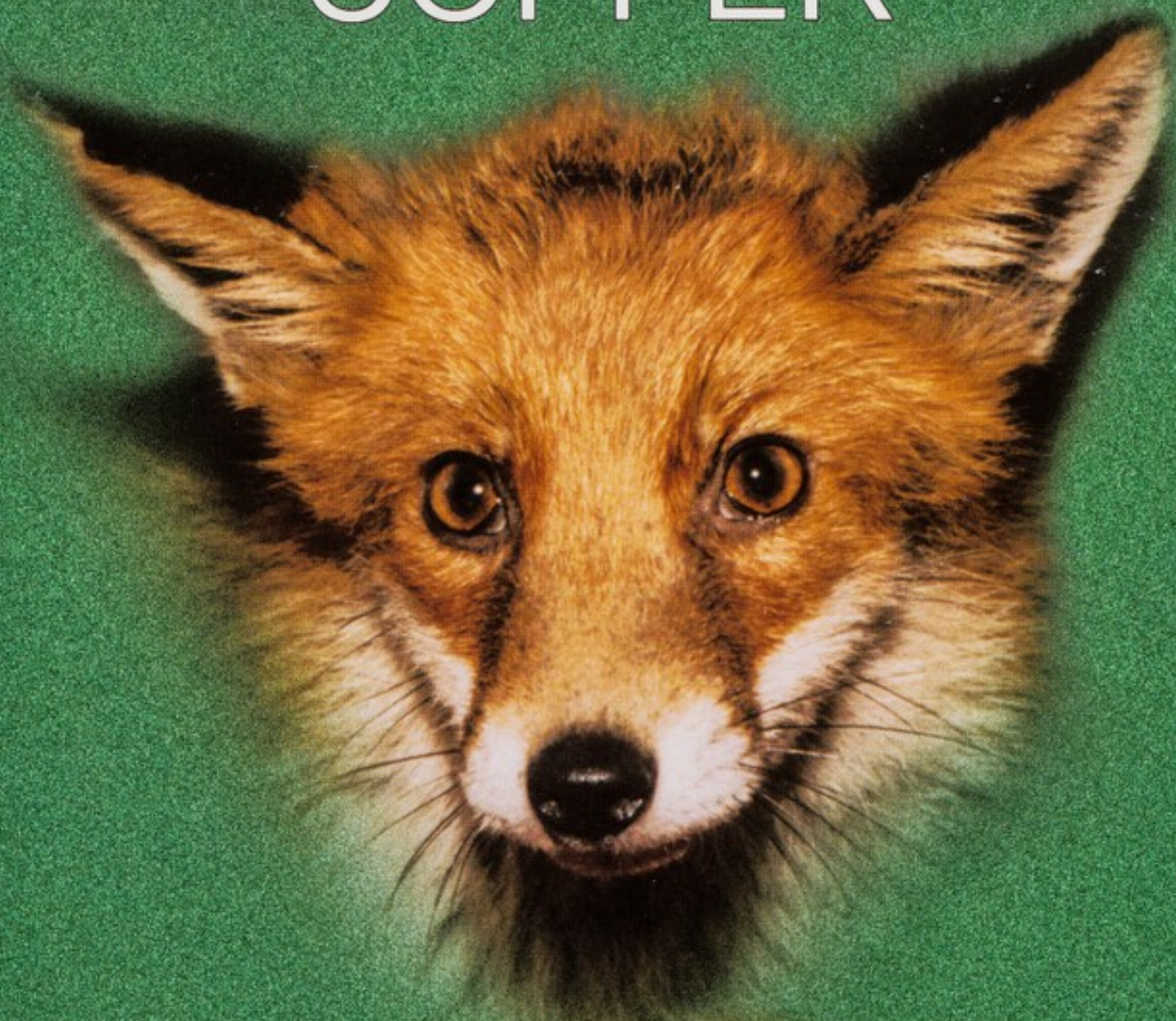
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Wellcome Collection
183 Euston Road
London NW1 2BE UK
T +44 (0)20 7611 8722
E library@wellcomecollection.org
<https://wellcomecollection.org>

'COPPER'



LIVING PROOF

THAT
HUNT SABOTEURS
SAVE LIVES

LIVING PROOF THAT HUNT SABOTEURS SAVE LIVES

West Sussex. Saturday, 6th February 1999. Around 1pm the hounds of the Chiddingfold, Leconfield & Cowdray Foxhunt scent a fox and give chase. When they finally bear down on the exhausted animal, only eighteen months old and the size of a ferret, it is no match for the hounds. Luckily, Andy, a local hunt saboteur is also there...

"When I saw the hounds bite into the fox's backside, I knew I had to do something and the only thing left was to jump in and rescue the fox myself. Grabbing the fox distracted the hounds enough for them to let it go, but the terrified fox bit me and I lost my hold... the fox saw its chance and bolted down a rabbit burrow. Its tail was still poking out, so I sat on the hole to stop the hounds from snapping at it. To my amazement, a policeman lent me his helmet to plug the hole, and refused to let the hunt dig out the fox and kill it. Even the police must have been affected by the plight of this pathetic little creature! Eventually, once the hunt had left, we got the fox into a travelling cage and raced it to the vet's."

"Copper", named after the policeman who helped in the rescue, was examined by wildlife vet, Richard Edwards, who said the fox would have died without prompt treatment. However, its life-threatening condition was not caused by the bites Copper had received, but by extreme stress - caused by the prolonged chase of the hunt. (He had even begun to bleed from his penis, evidence of kidney damage due to trauma and extreme physical exhaustion.) After medical treatment Copper spent some weeks recovering and recuperating in a wildlife hospital. He was released, fit and well, into a non-hunting area in March 1999.



LIVING PROOF THAT HUNTING IS CRUEL

Copper's case explodes the myth that a hunted fox is either killed "by a quick nip to the back of the neck" or gets away. The bite marks to Copper's hind legs - and Andy's eye-witness account - show that hounds will snap at any part of a hunted fox to bring it down. His general condition is proof that, as in the case of hunted stags (highlighted in the 1997 Bateson Report), hunted foxes suffer intolerable levels of stress as a direct result of the chase itself. The hunting fraternity have always known this. In 1960, Lord Paget wrote: "Pain and suffering is inflicted on animals in the name of sport. Nobody who has seen a beaten fox dragging his stiff limbs into the ditch in which he knows he will soon die, can doubt this proposition."

That's why, although Copper's rescue was successful, Andy doesn't consider February 6th a good day's sabbing. "For us a good day is one where the hunt don't get to chase an animal at all," he explains. Covering scent with a mixture of water and citronella oil, or using horn calls to draw the hounds away from a hunted animal are both tactics used by saboteurs to stop a chase before it even begins! Until hunting is banned, the only chance animals like Copper have to evade a cruel and terrifying death, is people like Andy.

HELP SAVE LIVES - JOIN THE HUNT SABOTEURS ASSOCIATION

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