

Hunting ban not helping foxes in Britain

November 2 2007

A controversial hunting ban in Britain apparently has failed to accomplish its purpose of extending the lifespan of foxes.

The country's leading expert on the animals, Professor Stephen Harris of Bristol University, said motorists remain the No. 1 killers of foxes in Britain with some 100,000 dying under the wheels of cars and trucks each year, The Independent reported Friday.

Harris said his studies show that more than 75 percent of foxes are dead by their second year of life with 1.5 percent living as long as six years.

"Only one in every thousand makes it to a decade," Harris told The Independent.

Supporters of the fox hunting ban now entering its third year had hoped it would extend the lifespan of the average fox.

"A fox is lucky to get passed its first birthday and even luckier to pass its second," wildlife expert John Bryant told The Independent. "It is a combination of factors, chiefly motor vehicles. They are also being shot by farmers, caught in snares and still hunted, despite the ban."

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Citation: Hunting ban not helping foxes in Britain (2007, November 2) retrieved 23 April 2024

from <https://phys.org/news/2007-11-foxes-britain.html>

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