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THINK ABOUT IT – (Amendment 15th Jan)

NOTE: The figure of 670,00 pellets (below) should read 67,000. The comma was wrongly placed. The number is based upon 200 No. 6 cartridges containing 291 pellets each = 58,200 plus a 15% margin allowing for the possibility of some pellets from the previous month, remaining accessible. Apologies for any confusion.

THE CHAPKIS CONJECTURE.

The surface area of 1 square foot will contain up to 17,500 lead pellets 1 layer deep, of No. 6 shot (2.6mm dia.) – fact.

It is a fact to be kept in the forefront of everybody's mind. For example, take a field that is shot for pigeons. Say it is shot over once a month. Say it is around 20 acres (to allow for containing the range (300yds) of shotgun pellets. Say around 200 cartridges (670,00 pellets) are shot each time it is shot, and say that each time the shooting area is around 70% of the 20 acres available.

That will give you a pellet distribution of around 1 pellet per square foot on the ground, or give a pigeon a 1 in 17,500 chance to happen upon a Lead pellet. 1:17,500 is 0.0057%, which is 57 birds per Million. The WWT and the RSPB claim up to 100,000 (per million?) ducks die from eating Lead pellets in the UK each year. They, (not the ducks) are mad, bad, and dangerous to know.

Even if a pigeon or duck came across a rare lead pellet, hanging around, it does not mean it would actually eat it. The probability of that is likely to be zero. We are left with the fact that the imbibing of a lead pellet is accidental, if at all, a one in 17,500 chance. You live those odds on a daily basis, like falling off your bike, and, as you all know, it might never happen, despite the odds. What is more, you do not deliberately want to fall off your bike anymore than the duck or pigeon wants to eat a lead pellet, they don't like lead pellets.

Furthermore, that pellet, in that square foot patch of ground, will not be available for accidental consumption by a pigeon, for very long. Wind, worms, rain, frost, flood, gravity, tilling, ploughing, and livestock, all take their toil. That pellet will sink into the ground at around 2.5mm per week, over the year it may have sunk to a depth of at least 130mm, or 5.5 inches.

Now, that all takes place on dry land. Think how much more difficult it all is, under water. For a start, add the force of the tides, and river flow, to the mix. How on earth does a duck get to find a Lead pellet even if it is desperate for one, given the odds again it. Thankfully, ducks do not like the taste of lead (galvanic action in the beak is not a pleasant sensation) and do not actively seek out Lead pellets. They can detect the difference between 'grit' and lead pellets. They like food and an occasional pinch grit.

The edifice of 'studies' in deception, constructed over decades by the anti-shooting industry is creaking under its own weight of hyperbole and ideology. It is time for it to be toppled.

2016 is the time to bring the many absurdities of NGO's like the RSPB, WWT, and the AEWA, to heel. Driven to create bad news, and construct bad news scenarios, their self-serving elliptical worldview is

fantastical in its conclusions. Without a constant 'bad news' agenda they wither on the vine lacking purpose, meaning, and funding. They are media constructs, nothing more.

We need to start afresh in 2016 with a clean slate and real science.

In 2015, the forces ranged against English shooting converged and threw their entire might against the use of Lead Ammunition.

A stalwart English shooting public resisted. It is the English Shooting public who castigated, and urged supine 'shooting' organisations (over the preceding 5 years) that have emerged as the real heroes of the day, not the shooting organisations.

The shooting public were betrayed for 30 years by the BASC on the matter. The other organisations were no better, largely ineffective, in complete disarray, in a word, useless. We would not be in the mess we are now if it were not so.

The instigation of the Lead Ammunition Group brought about by the BASC, WWT, and the RSPB finally galvanised the English Shooting Public. At first, disbelieving of the breach of trust over the decades, followed by recognition, and then embarrassment, for allowing their own interests to be betrayed by their own complacency, created a pent up wall of frustrated anger and outrage. It was all their own fault.

It was only at that point of realisation did English shooters finally awake to put a degree of backbone into their representative organisations. Three cheers, keep it up for 2016. What is jaw dropping is that the organisations and their pundits are castigating the shooting public for being critical. Something must be wrong. But then, as mentioned in a previous newsletter the BASC does not consider 'non-members' to be part of shooting; "lost to shooting" were the words of one of its officials.

So when Shooting's representatives drone on against their own members, about their 'campaign', for 'compliance' with the Lead regulations in England, the 85% who are not members look on, perplexed. Who are they talking to? *We don't shoot wildfowl, and ducks don't like to eat Lead pellets, even if they could find one.* The ignorance of the normal shooter can be forgiven; only around 2% of the Shooting public go out with the express purpose to shoot wildfowl. All of the rest of the noise is pure hearsay and anecdote. Wisely, the Representatives have now scaled back their blanket accusation, to 'the few'. That being the case please produce the evidence and prosecute, like any other crime. But please do stop threatening to ban *all* lead ammunition over this; we do not live in North Korea. Who on earth made this stupid threat, the Minister? Or was it that agile director of communications at the BASC, Christopher Grafius? Or, worse still, the BASC council?

Compliance is not science it is law. A law may be introduced based on false science, prejudice, subjective opinion and political agenda. The Law may be unjust, illogical, or plain stupid, but once introduced, must be observed. The English 'regulations' regarding the use of Lead Shot is all of the aforementioned. The English Shooting Public is law abiding, and will stand on its head if so instructed. But it is unwise to abuse power and trust in these matters, ask the hunters.

Arnold Chapkis ©2016

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