



# Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981

## 1981 CHAPTER 69

### PART I

#### WILDLIFE

##### *Supplemental*

#### 20 [F<sup>1</sup>Proceedings for summary offences]. **E+W**

F<sup>2</sup>(1) .....

(2) [F<sup>3</sup>Proceedings for a summary offence under this Part] may be brought within a period of six months from the date on which evidence sufficient in the opinion of the prosecutor to warrant the proceedings came to his knowledge; but no such proceedings shall be brought by virtue of this section more than two years after the commission of the offence.

(3) For the purpose of this section a certificate signed by or on behalf of the prosecutor and stating the date on which such evidence as aforesaid came to his knowledge shall be conclusive evidence of that fact; and a certificate stating that matter and purporting to be so signed shall be deemed to be so signed unless the contrary is proved.

#### **Extent Information**

**E1** This version of this provision extends to England and Wales only; a separate version has been created for Scotland only

#### **Textual Amendments**

**F1** S. 20 heading substituted (E.W.) (31.5.2006) by [Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006 \(c. 16\)](#), ss. 53, 107, [Sch. 6 para. 3\(3\)](#); S.I. 2006/1382, [art. 2](#)

**F2** S. 20(1) repealed (E.W.) (30.1.2001) by [2000 c. 37](#), ss. 81(1), 102, 103(2), [Sch. 12 para. 9\(1\)\(a\)](#), [Sch. 16 Pt. IV](#) (with [Sch. 12 para. 9\(2\)](#))

*Status: There are multiple versions of this provision on screen. These apply to different geographical extents. Skip to: E+W - England and Wales extent S - Scotland extent*

*Changes to legislation: Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981, Section 20 is up to date with all changes known to be in force on or before 21 May 2024. There are changes that may be brought into force at a future date. Changes that have been made appear in the content and are referenced with annotations. (See end of Document for details) View outstanding changes*

**F3** Words in s. 20(2) substituted (E.W.) (31.5.2006) by [Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006 \(c. 16\), ss. 53, 107, Sch. 6 para. 3\(2\); S.I. 2006/1382, art. 2](#)

## 20 **[<sup>F4</sup>Proceedings for summary offences]** **S**

- (1) <sup>F5</sup> .....
- (2) [<sup>F6</sup>Proceedings for an offence under this Part which is triable only summarily] may be brought within a period of six months from the date on which evidence sufficient in the opinion of the prosecutor to warrant the proceedings came to his knowledge; but no such proceedings shall be brought by virtue of this section more than [<sup>F7</sup>three] years after the commission of the offence [<sup>F8</sup>or, in the case of a continuous contravention, after the last date on which the offence was committed].
- (3) For the purpose of this section a certificate signed by or on behalf of the prosecutor and stating the date on which such evidence as aforesaid came to his knowledge shall be conclusive evidence of that fact; and a certificate stating that matter and purporting to be so signed shall be deemed to be so signed unless the contrary is proved.

### Extent Information

**E2** This version of this provision extends to Scotland only; a separate version has been created for England and Wales only

### Textual Amendments

- F4** S. 20 title substituted (30.11.2020) by [Animals and Wildlife \(Penalties, Protections and Powers\) \(Scotland\) Act 2020 \(asp 14\), ss. 7\(5\), 22\(2\); S.S.I. 2020/379, reg. 2\(1\), sch. \(with reg. 3\)](#)
- F5** S. 20(1) repealed (S.) (26.3.2003) by [Criminal Justice \(Scotland\) Act 2003 \(asp 7\), ss. 77, 89\(2\)\(b\), Sch. 3 para. 5\(a\)](#)
- F6** Words in s. 20(2) substituted (S.) (30.11.2020) by [Animals and Wildlife \(Penalties, Protections and Powers\) \(Scotland\) Act 2020 \(asp 14\), ss. 7\(4\), 22\(2\); S.S.I. 2020/379, reg. 2\(1\), sch. \(with reg. 3\)](#)
- F7** Word in s. 20(2) substituted (S.) (1.10.2004) by [Nature Conservation \(Scotland\) Act 2004 \(asp 6\), ss. 50, 59, Sch. 6 para. 18\(a\); S.S.I. 2004/407, art. 2](#)
- F8** Word in s. 20(2) inserted (S.) (1.10.2004) by [Nature Conservation \(Scotland\) Act 2004 \(asp 6\), ss. 50, 59, Sch. 6 para. 18\(b\); S.S.I. 2004/407, art. 2](#)

**Status:**

There are multiple versions of this provision on screen. These apply to different geographical extents.

**Skip to:**

- E+W - England and Wales extent
- S - Scotland extent

**Changes to legislation:**

Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981, Section 20 is up to date with all changes known to be in force on or before 21 May 2024. There are changes that may be brought into force at a future date. Changes that have been made appear in the content and are referenced with annotations.

View outstanding changes

**Changes and effects yet to be applied to the whole Act associated Parts and Chapters:**

Whole provisions yet to be inserted into this Act (including any effects on those provisions):

- s. 2(1A)-(1D) substituted for s. 2(1A) by 2024 asp 4 s. 9(2)(a)
- s. 2(3A)(a)(ii) word repealed by 2024 asp 4 s. 9(2)(b)(i)
- s. 2(3C)(c) and word inserted by 2024 asp 4 s. 9(2)(b)(ii)
- s. 11(1)(ab)-(ad) substituted for s. 11(1)(a)(aa) by 2024 asp 4 s. 6(2)(a)
- s. 11(2)(aa)(ab) inserted by 2024 asp 4 s. 6(2)(c)(ii)
- s. 11(2A) inserted by 2024 asp 4 s. 1(6)(b)
- s. 11(3CA) inserted by 2024 asp 4 s. 6(2)(e)
- s. 12A-12G and cross-heading inserted by 2024 asp 4 s. 7(2)
- s. 16(1A)(c)(d) inserted by 2024 asp 4 s. 6(4)(a)(ii)
- s. 16A(ab) inserted by 2024 asp 4 s. 7(4)(b)
- s. 16A(1A) inserted by 2024 asp 4 s. 7(4)(a)
- s. 16A(1B) inserted by 2024 asp 4 s. 10(3)(a)
- s. 16A(5)(aa) inserted by 2024 asp 4 s. 10(3)(c)
- s. 16A(5A) inserted by 2024 asp 4 s. 10(3)(d)
- s. 16A(5B) inserted by 2024 asp 4 s. 7(4)(c)
- s. 16AA-16AF inserted by 2024 asp 4 s. 10(2)
- s. 21(ga)(gb) inserted by 2024 asp 4 s. 7(6)
- s. 26(2)(c) inserted by 2024 asp 4 s. 7(7)(a)(ii)
- s. 26(2)(d) inserted by 2024 asp 4 s. 9(3)(a)
- s. 26(2)(d)(e) inserted by 2024 asp 4 s. 10(5)(a)
- s. 26(2)(f) and word inserted by 2024 asp 4 s. 6(7)(a)
- s. 26(3)(c) inserted by 2024 asp 4 s. 7(7)(b)(ii)
- s. 26(3)(d) inserted by 2024 asp 4 s. 9(3)(b)
- s. 26(3)(d)(e) inserted by 2024 asp 4 s. 10(5)(b)
- s. 26(3)(f) and word inserted by 2024 asp 4 s. 6(7)(b)
- s. 53(3)(c)(ia) inserted by 2015 c. 20 Sch. 7 para. 2(b)
- s. 53B(4A)(4B) inserted by 2015 c. 20 Sch. 7 para. 4
- s. 53ZA inserted by 2015 c. 20 Sch. 7 para. 3
- s. 54B54C inserted by 2015 c. 20 Sch. 7 para. 5
- Sch. 2 Pt. 1B inserted by 2024 asp 4 s. 9(5)
- Sch. 13A inserted by 2015 c. 20 Sch. 7 para. 6
- Sch. 14A inserted by 2015 c. 20 Sch. 7 para. 7