

Animal Groups React with Anger, Disgust to Millionaire Club's Cruel Live Pigeon Shoot

SHARK, Animal Wellness Action demand authorities act against staged shoots

OKEECHOBEE, FLORIDA, USA, February 29, 2024 /EINPresswire.com/ -- According to sources, there were about 15,000 pigeons shot at a "Swamp Shoot-Out" at the Quail Creek Hunting Ranch in Okeechobee, Fla., this past weekend, in an event using live animals in a competitive event. The shooting site is owned by Troy Link, the CEO of Jack Link's Meat Snacks and the scion of this global beef jerky company. Mr. Link's net worth is in the hundreds of millions.

“

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*Steve Hindi, president of
SHARK*

These live pigeon shoots are outlawed in many states. Showing Animals Respect and Kindness (SHARK) and Animal Wellness Action believe this conduct violates Florida's anti-cruelty laws, and should subject those involved to felony offenses. There are other potential

violations of law related to jeopardy for bald eagles who feast on wounded pigeons with lead ammunition embedded in their bodies.

The organizations have obtained secretly recorded drone footage of the mass killing of the animals. In the video, live pigeons are launched into the air from spring-loaded boxes and shot after fluttering out of the contraption. The majority of the birds barely rise a few feet before they are blasted and typically fall onto the shooting field, where runners then wring the necks of the birds. Some of the wounded birds manage to fly outside the boundary of the shooting area, going down some distance away. These victims are not retrieved. This amounts to the mass abandonment of wounded animals.

Birds of prey, including a family of bald eagles inhabiting the area, as well as other native wildlife, consume the unretrieved pigeons. These animals will be poisoned by the lead shot in use by the shooters.

The [video can be viewed here](#). Available [here is a promotional flier for the Swamp Shoot Out](#).

“Target shooters have skeet and clay targets for recreational target shooting. To choose instead to slaughter live animals is just pathological,” said Steve Hindi, president of SHARK, who

famously campaigned to help stop a notorious live pigeon shoot in Hegins, Penn.

“This debasing activity bears no resemblance to hunting, which involves obtaining a license, honoring ‘fair chase’ principles, and consuming the meat of the animals,” said Wayne Pacelle, president of Animal Wellness Action, who also has campaigned against pigeon shoots in Pennsylvania and other states. “If this isn’t staged animal cruelty, I don’t know what is.”

“Florida animal cruelty laws contain several provisions that would seemingly apply to this kind of inhumane conduct,” said Scott Edwards, general counsel for the Center for a Humane Economy. “We believe this kind of activity demands an investigation by state officials and should not be allowed to continue.”

Animals Left to Die—Poisoning Native Wildlife in the Process

Shooting events of this type typically feature pigeons captured in urban areas and transported in stressful, overcrowded conditions, often without food or water, to the site of the shooting spectacle. Kept in boxes until shooters are poised for the kill, the birds are spring-ejected and perhaps also administered an electric shock to put them into the air. Shooters stand about 30 yards away and fire at the birds struggling to gain flight.

The enterprise of live pigeon shooting, banned in a number of states across the nation, amounts to animal cruelty and wanton waste, with a readily available and satisfying alternative in the form of shooting sports.

Because shooters commonly use lead-based ammunition, raptors and other animals that feed on the carcasses are highly vulnerable to lead poisoning. Such birds—hawks and bald eagles—were spotted circling the Quail Creek event on Friday, February 24, the first day of the three-day event. A 2022 study in *Science* examined 1,210 bald and golden eagles across 38 states and found that nearly half of them had “bone lead concentrations above thresholds for chronic poisoning.” More than 500 scientific studies published since 1898 have documented that worldwide, 134 species of wildlife are negatively affected by lead ammunition.

A Multi-Millionaire’s Pastime

Troy Link is the owner and president of the Quail Creek Hunting Ranch. He also is president and CEO of Jack Link’s Meat Snacks, one of world’s largest manufacturers of “protein snacks” and a leader in the broader snack industry. Founded in 1985 in Minong, Wis., Jack Link’s operates multiple production sites throughout the Midwest and has facilities in Brazil, Germany, and New Zealand. The company’s portfolio of brands includes Jack Link’s, Lorissa’s Kitchen, MATADOR, SQUATCH, World Kitchens, Grass Run Farms Meat Snacks, Bifi, and Pepperami.

SHARK and Animal Wellness Action have created a petition calling out Mr. Link and asking him to discontinue any future pigeon-shooting events. Mr. Link engages in other pigeon shooting

escapades in other states and in Mexico, according to sources.

ABOUT

Animal Wellness Action is a Washington, D.C.-based 501(c)(4) whose mission is to help animals by promoting laws and regulations at federal, state and local levels that forbid cruelty to all animals. The group also works to enforce existing anti-cruelty and wildlife protection laws. Animal Wellness Action believes helping animals helps us all. X: @AWAction_News.

SHARK is a non-profit organization with supporters around the U.S. and beyond. SHARK receives no government funding and completely relies on donations and grants to work on issues ranging in scope from local to worldwide. With a small core of volunteers, and a staff of five, SHARK battles tirelessly against rodeos, bullfighting, pigeon shoots, turkey shoots, canned hunts and more. President Steve Hindi has an open invitation to debate "the opposition." Because of his domination of past debates with animal abusers, however, it has been years since the opposition has taken him on.

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