



For Excellence in Deer Management

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The JDS Live Capture Training Course

Introduction

There are many reasons why there is a need for the live capture, immobilisation and restraint of both wild and captive animals, especially deer and animals enclosed in wildlife parks. However, in cases of an emergency, there are precious few live capture operators able to respond quickly enough to prevent unnecessary suffering, and even fewer possess the specialist knowledge and skills to be able to deliver the professional service needed.

The live capture of any animal has significant implications in so far as both animal welfare and human health and safety are concerned. Therefore specialised training in the correct, safe and humane capture techniques is vital if animal welfare and operator safety is not to be compromised.

The treatment of animals both before and after darting is crucial to avoid causing unnecessary stress, injury and death.

It is with this in mind that the JDS Live Capture & Immobilisation Course was born, originally set up in recognition of a severe deficiency of qualified staff and suitable training in the UK. The JDS training program has served to fill the void in this particular field of UK wildlife management and animal handling.

The Training Course

This LANTRA Approved Course is the only Nationally Recognised course of it's kind being run in the UK. It has been developed and improved over several years by Mike Allison, one of the UK's most experienced live capture operators.

Upon completion of the course, candidates leave with highly important knowledge of safety awareness whilst using immobilising equipment, dart projectors (rifles and pistols as well as blow-pipes) and associated darts.

They are taught vital skills in equipment use, underpinned with a solid basis of understanding in the way immobilising agents affect animals, as well as how to implement safety precautions and essential accident procedures.

These courses are generally two days in length with a balanced fusion of theoretical lecture, and practical hands-on field exercises, including animal capture (where necessary).

We aim to plan courses for peak times of 'live capture activity', usually in March for re-location of stags, and September for routine de-antlering work.

Theoretical Instruction

Lectures cover the following:

1. The fundamental principles of live capture.
2. Legal implications.
3. Drug laws and COSSH regulations.
4. Basic Pharmacology of commonly used immobilising drugs.
5. Animal behaviour in response to live capture operations.
6. Drug dose calculation.
7. Planning immobilisation operations.
8. Pre-delivery planning.
9. Drug delivery equipment.
10. Post-delivery procedure.
11. Monitoring the immobilised animal.
12. Data recording procedure.
13. Human and animal safety, and emergency procedures.

Practical Training/Demonstration

Practical instruction covers the following:

1. Preparation and development of an immobilisation plan.
2. Safe loading of darts, syringes, including safety precautions.
3. Dart rifle/pistol handling, safety features and precautions.
4. Marksmanship techniques.
5. Dart trajectory and in-flight effects of climate & weather conditions.
6. Live deer handling, treatment and moving (where possible).
7. Revival of the immobilised animal.
8. Cleaning of equipment and the safe disposal of PPC & used materials.

On-going Training & Field Experience

Once the candidate has acquired the necessary equipment, then JDS will endeavour to provide the candidate with the opportunity to engage in field exercises, under supervision and instruction in the live capture of animals as part of a live capture management plan.

Summary

We strongly believe that, in the interests of animal welfare and human safety, non-veterinarian individuals should be granted authority to possess and use darting/tranquillising equipment only after specialist training in the subject has been given, and a suitable examination process has been completed.

The training delivered by JDS provides all the necessary theoretical knowledge and practical skills training to ensure that candidates can provide this valuable service efficiently, humanely and safely.

Animal welfare – it's not a choice. It's a duty!

Live Capture Training Course Syllabus

Live Capture, Immobilisation & Live Deer Handling.

Many deer parks & farms rely on live sales to generate additional revenue, and in many cases deer need to be captured in a purpose built catch system, or by using specialist immobilisation techniques using tranquillising equipment & drugs. The elements of this course deals with the use of dart rifles, associated safety issues, accident procedure, legal obligations, transport of animals and the pre-and post-operative care of deer that have been immobilised.

The course is a two-part modular system beginning with classroom based instruction and lectures in the principles of live capture of animals, and culminating in practical field-based training under professional supervision.

As part of the assessment element of this course, we would expect candidates to demonstrate theoretical knowledge and field-based skills in the following areas:

Performance Criteria

- Understand the principles of live capture using tranquillising equipment, with regard to safety precautions & accident procedure.
- Develop knowledge of basic drug pharmacology in respect of wildlife immobilisation, and to be competent in calculating drug dosage rates for a variety of animals, but primarily cervids.
- To formulate and implement a live capture plan from start to finish, ensuring safe operational procedure, effective staff management, acceptable animal welfare and human safety.
- Demonstrate the ability to carry out pre-darting assessment of the 'target' animal, and to demonstrate ability to care for the darted animal during anaesthesia, during recovery, and exercise post-operative care during transport.
- Understand the planning requirements for the planning development & construction of temporary and semi-permanent catch-up systems.

Upon successful completion of the written assessments and practical field exercises, a Lantra Award certificate will be granted to the candidate, and their name entered on our national register of qualified live capture operators.