

Fowl play

- 1 A man who saw a heron pluck a duckling from the water in front of him and swallow it whole, decided to intervene and save the life of the duckling, by killing the heron and pulling the baby bird, still alive, from its stomach.
- 2 Witnesses called the police and the man was questioned by officers but released with a caution. The decision not to prosecute the heron killer has caused anger among some animal conservationists. All wild birds are protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act, with fines or prison sentences for anyone killing or attempting to kill one. So they questioned why the police had allowed the man to escape with just a caution.
- 3 The rural crime unit spokesperson tweeted: “These decisions are never taken lightly and a number of factors are addressed. This was a vulnerable elderly man, who confessed voluntarily to the action with no previous convictions.”
- 4 This answer did not hold water with some. Lee Dingain, active member of a charity supporting shorebird conservation, said: “Utterly ridiculous! The man was not too elderly to kill a protected bird. The heron is the vulnerable one. Decisions like this make clear wildlife crime 3.”



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