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## Profiling in wildlife crime: recovery of human DNA deposited outside

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### *Highlights*

- Scoping experiments were run to assess the persistence of human touch-DNA outside
- From traps, full DNA profiles could be recovered after at least 10 days
- From carcasses, human DNA profiles could be recovered after at least 1 day
- DNA profiling should be attempted on illegally set traps
- DNA profiling should be attempted on fresh carcasses in wildlife crimes

### **Abstract**

Incidents of bird of prey persecution receive a lot of media coverage in the UK, with investigations rarely recovering sufficient evidence to proceed to prosecution. One of the main challenges is to identify a suspect, as these offences are carried out in remote locations without witnesses, and crime scenes may not be found for days. However, traps, poisoned baits and bird of prey carcasses can be recovered from these crime scenes. This study aimed to determine whether reportable human DNA profiles could be recovered from any of these substrates after periods of time outside.

Experiments depositing human touch DNA on duplicate substrates (traps, rabbit baits and corvid carcasses) set for 0, 1, 2, 4, 7 and 10 days outside were carried out,

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