



Lancashire,
Manchester &
N Merseyside

The scent of squirrels

Using conservation dogs to detect disease outbreaks in red squirrel populations

LIFE14 NAT/UK/000467



Dogs in Conservation



- Carcass detection
- Live animal detection
- Scat detection
- Product of animal origin detection
- Plant detection
- Disease detection

Conservation detection dogs are up to 40 times more efficient than human searchers at developing population and habitat data.

Why dogs?

- *Dogs have up to 300 million scent receptors in their noses*
- *Ability to cover large areas and over rough or inaccessible terrain*
- *Search quickly with minimal disturbance to wildlife*
- *High drive and energy means always eager to work and do not give up*



Live animal detection



Wildlife detection dogs can be used to detect hidden hedgehog nests.

The dogs can work during the day in both summer and winter. As the hedgehogs stay in their nests at these times, a systematic search is possible.

Marine surveys



- Large whales are logistically difficult to live capture for sampling.
- Faecal based analysis is a useful tool but this was previously limited by the low number of samples collected.
- Collection rates improved by up to 4x with the use of detection dogs.



Dogs and Red Squirrels



Lancashire Wildlife Trust

- Testing to confirm disease
- Biosecurity
- Knowing when outbreak has run its course

RSU team



The Kryus team



Training Day



Lancashire Wildlife Trust



Lancashire Wildlife Trust

Rummage search

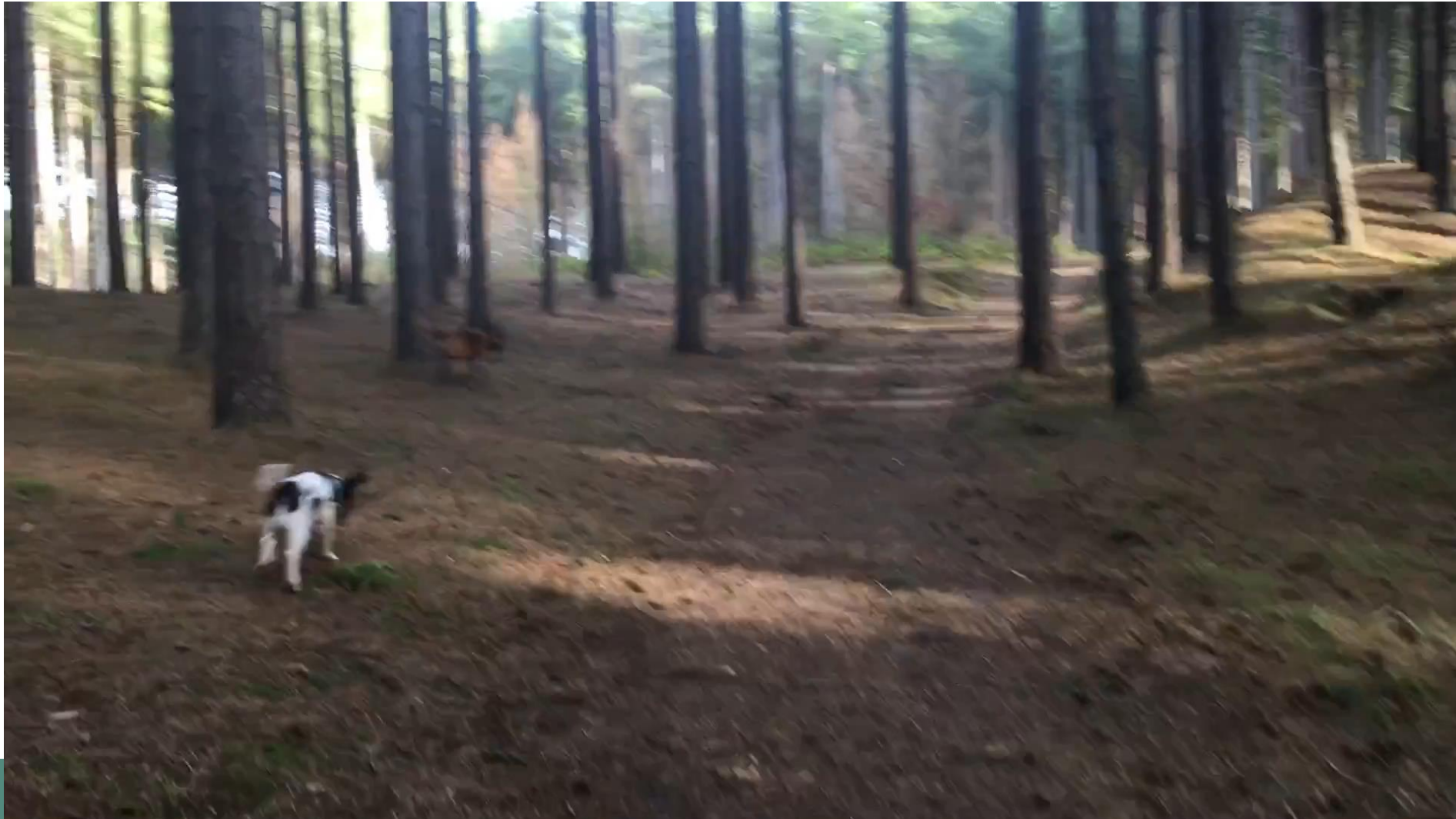
Training Day



Finally we tried quartering

Quartering

Max in action.....



One of Max's finds....



Training continues.....



Benefits of using dogs



- Found squirrels that would have been impossible for us to find
- Saved hundreds of man hours
- Confirmed pox outbreak still ongoing after public reports ceased





Max's nose knows!