

Robert Gray
Shooting Gazette
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Stamford PE9 1RB

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Dear Sir

DIRECT DOSING OF GROUSE

Mr. Osborne's article on the validity of directly dosing Grouse and medicated grit attempts to bring these important techniques into doubt, particularly in the minds of many traditional managers of our moorland heritage.

I believe that Cornish quartz grit, Scottish quartz grit and indeed imported quartz grit have been introduced as standard practice on most managed moors for driven grouse shooting for at least the past 50 years to improve the chances of red grouse survival in the habitat given those birds with ready access to quartz grit do thrive better than birds that have no such grit.

I believe that dosing grouse will in time be seen to be as much a part of normal management practice as that of introducing imported grit onto the moorland areas.

The red grouse is a sub arctic bird and specifically adapted to live in harsher climates. Global warming is resulting in a loss of the natural control of the parasite strongylosis ie: we are now seeing high worm burdens in very low populations of grouse which means that the ground is not being cleaned of worms by nature given the mild winters and wet summers. It is inevitable that if driven grouse shooting is to continue we will have to help the grouse overcome its natural parasite which is thriving as a result of the man made effects of global warming, ie: if the current weather patterns continue.

No doubt this debate will evolve further as neighbouring moors which have shot the last two years whilst their non-medicated, non-dosed neighbours have had no significant shooting.

Yours faithfully

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