

ANNUAL REVIEW

Naturewatch Foundation

2003

Informing you about the activities and campaigns of Naturewatch and Naturewatch Foundation during 2003



World Animal Day 2003 - making history in the UK



This year Naturewatch took the unprecedented step of launching World Animal Day in the UK, giving everyone a chance to celebrate our unique relationship with the animal kingdom. We had no idea how it would be received in this country; here's what happened.

Naturewatch Foundation

Naturewatch organised an online celebrity auction that ran from October 4 until Christmas and raised over £4,000 for the work of Naturewatch Foundation. The proceeds were divided equally between the Lithuanian Society for the Protection of Animals (LiSPA) and SPA-SOS in the Ukraine. LiSPA intends to use its share to purchase a new trailer for wildlife rescue, while SPA-SOS is to build a new cattery, following the destruction of the old one in a horrific arson attack last year.

Celebrities of all kinds donated generously – athletes, pop singers, authors, politicians and actors. Among the top donations were four tickets to see a recording of *A Question of Sport*, which raised £156, an *Eastenders* script signed by Tamzin Outhwaite (£129), a pair of boxing gloves signed by Barry McGuigan (£82), a pair of signed LPs from Morrissey (£80), a signed seascape photograph taken by the Duchess of York (£73) and a CD from Phil Collins (£70).

Some of the bidders were familiar with the work of the Foundation, but most were not. They included autograph hunters, soap opera fans and animal-lovers. Most memorable were the gentleman who spent over £200 on signed books as an investment for his baby son and the lady racing driver who offered to advertise Naturewatch on her car! Many bidders, on finding out about the work of the Foundation, generously topped up their bids with additional donations.

Naturewatch

On October 4, the Naturewatch staff had a stall in Cheltenham, which was a great success, with young actors from the Everyman Theatre Youth Group dressing up in animal costumes and handing out balloons and stickers. Elsewhere in the UK,

Naturewatch supporters were also out in force in their local town centres. Some of these brave volunteers had never done anything like that before and we are really grateful for their support and their courage! Special thanks to Lynda Edwards of Chatteris, Marilyn Harrison of Marlborough, Harmony Gears and Jonathan Gibson of Sedgefield, Jean Murray and Judi Harvey of Wakefield, Nichola Low of Dundee, Elizabeth Shaw of Long Ditton, Pat Corr of Guildford, Anna Laprade of Eastbourne, Paul and Rachel Mitchell of Torquay, Susan Drake of Southwold, David Smailes of Wellingborough, June Craig of Glasgow, Mary Lynch of Newquay, and Heather Golding and friends of Bristol. A special honourable mention has to go to Mike Bird and Donna Hutton of Llandudno, who were the first Naturewatch supporters to volunteer for the day – however, on 4 October 40mph winds and torrential rains buffeted the North Wales coastline, making it impossible for Mike and Donna to set up their stall.



Richard, Fiona and Christine on the Naturewatch stall in Cheltenham while young actors hand out special WAD balloons to children.

WAD around the World

World Animal Day was celebrated in many ways in many countries. Here's a brief outline of just a few of the ways people around the world got involved.

- **Lithuania** – a Day of Compassion was proclaimed when animals were neither exported nor imported, hunting was banned, slaughterhouses closed and working animals given a day of rest. At a special ceremony, the Lithuanian Government honoured animal welfarists with St Francis medals. Meanwhile at Kaunas Zoo, a theatrical group involved children in a drama about loving animals.

Photo: Naturewatch Foundation



Lithuanian children performing at Kaunas Zoo.

- **Ukraine** – the SOS shelter in Kyiv held an open day where over 100 people visited the shelter. SPA-SOS President Tamara Tarnawska was presented with a special award in recognition of her services to animal welfare in Ukraine.
- **Morocco** – SPANA's (Society for the Protection of Animals Abroad) Animal Centres organised events for adults, children, teachers and local dignitaries. Films and talks on caring for animals were among the attractions on offer.

Photo: SPANA



Learning about horses in Morocco.

- **Jordan** – SPANA opened a new education centre to familiarise children with different kinds of animals and develop an understanding of animal welfare. The centre is home to chickens, rabbits, sheep and donkeys, while tortoises and frogs live semi-wild in the grounds.
- **Singapore** – as in previous years, welfare groups banded together for a big celebration, with a picnic, face painting,

balloon animals, bouncy castle – and, of course, animal sponsorship and educational events.

- **Africa** – WSPA's Kindness Clubs across the continent celebrated World Animal Day in Ethiopia, Ghana, Kenya, Mauritius, Namibia, Nigeria, the Seychelles, Sierra Leone, Swaziland, Tanzania, Uganda, Zambia, Zanzibar and Zimbabwe. Events included animal clinics, distribution of welfare literature and voluntary work at animal shelters.

- **Ireland** – the Dublin SPCA took the opportunity to raise funds by selling beautiful little animal badges in shops and businesses across the capital. On World Animal Day itself, they opened their new animal shelter.

- **Malta** – World Animal Day is celebrated in Malta as Animal Awareness Day and involves participation by schools across the island. Activities included performances of animal-related songs, mimes and poetry by the children, sponsoring of animals in shelters, and visits from experts to advise on pet care.

- **Belgium** – one of the most moving WAD events was the launch of animal welfare campaigning group GAIA's new website www.adieumonami.be where members of the public can place a memorial to pets that have died. The site was opened by two Belgian celebrities who dedicated pages to their dogs, Julie and Toots.

- **Greece** – animal welfare group Argos had an information stand in Thessaloniki town centre on WAD itself, followed by their 7th Mixed Breed Dog Show, where dog lovers could enter their pooches in categories such as most beautiful eyes, happiest tail, the Punk and the Lady!

- **Netherlands** – 98 animal shelters across Holland run by Dierenbescherming (a welfare organisation and network of shelters) held open days, where the general public could see the sort of work they undertake.

- **Nepal** – at the Karuna Shelter in Siphel, the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Nepal (SPCAN) organised a special day of celebration, the highlight of which was the visit of a Buddhist monk, Dhubthop Rinpoche, to bless the animals.



Photo: SPCAN

A Buddhist blessing at Karuna shelter in Nepal.

Testers beware!

This year Naturewatch launched the ninth edition of the Compassionate Shopping Guide. The new Guide is better than ever, giving the consumer the low-down on those manufacturers of cosmetics and household products that still support the use of animals in testing.

The ninth edition of the Naturewatch Compassionate Shopping Guide was launched in November 2003. The Guide is an essential directory of cruelty-free cosmetics, toiletries and household products that tells the consumer which companies can be trusted and which to avoid.

Over the last ten years the Guide has been a powerful weapon in the fight against animal cruelty, changing consumers' shopping habits and putting pressure on companies who use tested ingredients in their products.

Sadly, the future remains uncertain for laboratory animals. A small number of large companies now dominate the market, and their constant search for new products means that smaller, more ethical companies often get squeezed out or are forced to change their policy. This means the Guide is needed more than ever before.

The new Guide contains several new features. The 'Shame On You' section exposes those companies who have abandoned their fixed cut-off date policies, while on a lighter note our home-made beauty treatments section

contains recipes that have been tested, not on animals, but on Naturewatch staff! The Guide also has a brand new cover image with actress and animal welfare campaigner Jenny Seagrove (together with her spaniel Kizzie!). Jenny is very enthusiastic about the Guide: 'Naturewatch has put a huge amount of effort into compiling this guide. Now we can do our bit and put compassion into shopping.'

Naturewatch supporters have been invaluable in making the Guide a success in the past by contacting companies and sending us information. Over the coming year we will once again be asking supporters to focus on specific companies where we think we can make a difference.



Badger campaign update

After months of struggling to secure a meeting with the Home Office to discuss the poor legislation regarding badger cruelty, Naturewatch is at last able to report that progress has been made.

In mid-September, a delegation comprising Naturewatch representatives, an RSPCA Chief Inspector and a badger expert met with Home Office Minister Hazel Blears. We explained to Ms Blears that because badger crime is not a notifiable offence, it is considered a low priority by most police forces. Cases frequently go uninvestigated and culprits are not caught. This results in less efficiency in tackling other types of criminal activity as, more often than not, those responsible are also involved with other offences such as drugs, violence, theft and firearms.



Ms Blears clearly wished to address the serious concerns raised. She confirmed that she would meet with Richard Brunstrom, Chief Constable of North Wales (who holds the wildlife crime portfolio for the Association of Chief Police Officers) to discuss how matters might be taken forward.

This coming year Naturewatch will meet with DEFRA to discuss the weaknesses in the Protection of Badgers Act 1992 and our proposals to strengthen it, as laid out in the briefing document prepared for our meeting with the Home Office.

Support for this campaign is immense. Police wildlife officers, animal welfare organisations, badger experts, badger groups and thousands of members of the public have written to the Prime Minister, the Home Office, MPs, Chief Constables and newspapers. Parliamentary support is also solid with 214 MPs having signed an Early Day Motion, the aims of which are:

- for Badger Cruelty to be made a notifiable offence and thus be included in official crime statistics
- to strengthen the enforcement of the Protection of Badgers Act 1992, thereby ensuring that proactive measures can be taken by the police
- the appointment of a full-time police wildlife officer to all forces and for part-time WLOs to be given a specific time allocation and budget.

Grave concerns over welfare standards in Romania

In recent years Romania has become one of the biggest exporters of live animals into the European Union. However, investigations have revealed that the conditions under which animals are transported leave much to be desired.



Poor stabling holdings facilities in Romania where the horses await transportation to Italian slaughterhouses.

In 2002, Romania exported around 900,000 lambs, 60,000 cattle and 40,000 horses and donkeys. Following concerns about the welfare and the condition of animals undergoing export, undercover trailings were conducted by German welfarists Animals' Angels. These trailings have exposed a catalogue of misery and severe suffering, particularly with respect to the transportation of horses from Romania to Italy.

The Italian hunger for horses

As has been witnessed over the past ten years, Italy, in its unremitting desire for horsemeat, has scoured Europe looking for cheap horses. Originally taking thousands of horses each year from France and Belgium, the Italian horse dealers were quick to discover that prices were substantially lower in Eastern Europe and found Poland to be the cheapest source of live horses. However, prices soon started to rise there and consequently dealers turned to some of the former Soviet States, such as Lithuania. This desire for cheap horses led to increasingly longer and more arduous journeys, with little regard for the welfare of the animals. But it wasn't long before the Lithuanians introduced strict animal protection rules, followed up by implementation of EU directives on livestock transport.

EU aspirations

As transport costs have increased, the Italians have become increasingly aware of the potential of the poorest emerging post-Communist states as trading partners, and in particular of the plentiful supply of horses in Romania. Although

Romania hopes to join the EU in 2007, it appears to fail to comply with EU animal transport protection laws. In respect of Romanian horse exports to Italy, it also appears that the Italian authorities pay little regard to welfare rules. The export market for horses is driven by Italy (there are no Romanian authorised transporters) and Italian dealers supply the relevant transport and veterinary export documents for completion by the Romanian veterinaries. Unbelievably these documents are printed in Italian, and Romanian border post personnel admit that, as most of them do not understand Italian, they might be signing certificates without understanding them!

Last year European Commission officials made two inspections in Romania and highlighted grave concerns in both welfare and hygiene standards of the animals. In relation to export of live animals to the EU, the Commission concluded that the Romanian authorities were unable to guarantee that certification is properly carried out. In regard to importing member states (and here in particular Italy), the Commission wants to see assurances that checks on live animals at border inspection posts comply fully with the requirements of EU directives and that documentary and identification checks are diligently monitored. Naturewatch feels that Italy, as the only European country importing horses for slaughter, must do far more and must accept that it has a duty to ensure that transporters arriving at its borders with live animals have complied with European Union laws and that the animals ought to be in good health with acceptable welfare safeguards. Although we accept that the Italian border inspectors have made many improvements in the last few years, the governing authorities in Rome still fail to give adequate support and facilities to the border inspectors. We believe this is because the Italians still do not accept that they have any responsibility for these animals and that as far as they are concerned EU laws only apply once the animals arrive on Italian soil.

Following a campaign late last year by Naturewatch highlighting the plight of the animals being exported and urging action by the EU to ban all live exports from Romania, we were invited to send a delegation to Romania where the authorities now express confidence that adequate measures are in place to offer welfare protection to the animals. In early 2004, we will undertake such a visit and will report back on conditions and our findings.

Animal experiments

2003 has been an interesting year for our animal experiments campaign with significant response to an EDM on the Lords' Report and the appointment of an interested and enlightened new Home Office Minister.

By the end of the parliamentary session, 229 MPs had signed up to the Early Day Motion, tabled by David Drew MP at the beginning of the year at the request of Naturewatch, calling for the implementation of the Lords' Report on Animals in Scientific Procedures. That such a large number of MPs signed up in a comparatively short space of time was largely due to the efforts of Naturewatch supporters in lobbying their MPs. Indeed, this was mentioned by Lord Smith of Clifton (the chairman of the panel) at the conclusion of his opening remarks to the debate in the Lords at the end of October.

When the House of Lords debated the Report on 17 October 2003, there was 'near unanimity of the relative feebleness of the Government's initial response' [Lord Smith, concluding remarks]: words used in the debate to describe the Government's stance were 'complacent, timid and... conservative' [Baroness Warnock]; 'patronising and complacent' [Lord Lucas]; 'negative and complacent' [Lord Smith, opening remarks].

The recommendation for a Centre for the 3Rs received considerable attention, described by Lord Smith as 'one of our most important recommendations'. Baroness Eccles emphasised the benefits of a hub-and-spokes model, with the spokes embedded in existing institutions and an 'almost virtual hub', requiring only a 'small secretariat'. Lord Hodgson regretted that the Government's preference seems to be for a purely toxicology-based centre; in reply Lord Sainsbury tried to explain that there is a difference between toxicity testing and general biology, which is much wider and more varied in scope. He added that an initial progress report went to the Home Office in September and that another is due in the new year.

Meeting at the Home Office

In early December, Naturewatch had a very successful meeting with Caroline Flint, Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State at the Home Office, who has prime responsibility for animal experiments. Ms Flint clearly takes a great personal interest in this particular issue which made sure that the visit was not just a formality. We were joined by three MPs – David Drew, Norman Baker and David Amess. Ms Flint was supported by her four top civil servants, including Jon Richmond, the former Chief Inspector and head of the new Animals (Scientific Procedures) Divisions at the Home Office, and his successor as Chief Inspector, Derek Fry.

Ms Flint believes that a major issue is a lack of communication on all sides, and is pushing to ensure that all licence applications include lay summaries which would then be made publicly available – within the limitations of commercial confidentiality and individual security. This would be a major improvement in the transparency of animal experimentation.

We talked about the Centre for the 3Rs. Naturewatch stressed that this is a vitally important recommendation from the Lords' Report, but that there is a danger of its becoming too restricted in its scope. It should not therefore be limited just to being an IT data-sharing centre, nor just a toxicology programme, but should have a role in spotting trends in fundamental biology which have implications for the 3Rs. Ms Flint expressed her desire that the centre be something more than a 'bricks-and-mortar' project but should have an active programme. She also remarked that the Government currently provides about £10m to alternatives research, but that this needs to be brought together so that it is more obvious and less scattered about. Although little in the way of details emerged, it appears that Ms Flint's interest in it will ensure that it will be significant and not just the rather minimal project that has been discussed in some quarters.

A couple of unexpected topics emerged during the meeting which aroused considerable interest. Norman Baker asked how many licence applications are rejected, and was told by the Chief Inspector, Derek Fry, that although few are refused outright, about 80-90% fail to meet Home Office requirements and are sent back for later refinement. Mr Baker said that he would



Left to right: Richard Tweedy of Naturewatch, Norman Baker, Caroline Flint, David Drew and David Amess.

request more details through a Parliamentary Question. We also mentioned that Naturewatch was aware of British scientists who fail to get a licence for research in Britain and then go abroad to do research in other countries where the standards are less stringent. We pointed out that German law now states that scientists may only perform experiments abroad that would be permitted in Germany, thus closing this loophole.

The EDM has successfully demonstrated substantial cross-party support for the Lords' Report. This should encourage the Government to turn its earlier vacuous assurances into substantive policy. With Caroline Flint's personal interest in the subject we are optimistic that this will happen, and in particular that the Centre for the 3Rs will become a significant project.

Australia's ships of shame

In 2003 people around the world followed the story of the *Cormo Express* with increasing horror as its cruelties were exposed. Naturewatch has joined the fight to campaign for an end to these 'ships of shame'.

In 2003 Naturewatch agreed to sponsor the work of Fremantle-based Maggie Mann of PACAT (People Against Cruelty in Animal Transport). PACAT has long been campaigning against the cruelties of the Australian live export trade, but being made up entirely of volunteers, has had limited resources for its work. Now, however, Maggie is already starting to make a difference by organising information stalls, producing literature, giving presentations and lobbying State and Federal Government. This year we will be taking the campaign a step further.

The background

Last summer, 57,000 Australian sheep were stranded on board the *Cormo Express* for nearly three months after being rejected by Saudi Arabia because of disease. The animals were kept in appalling conditions, being left to wallow in their own filth in temperatures of up to 45°C/113°F, before the Australian Government cynically offered them as a 'gift' to drought-stricken and starving Eritrea, after the shipment had been refused by around 30 countries. More than 5,580 sheep died on board.

This on its own is bad enough, but the truth is that this situation has been allowed to continue for years, with shipload after shipload of animals suffering. Sheep, cattle and other animals are regularly exported to the Far and Middle East, and disease, drowning, asphyxiation and ship-board fires are routine occurrences. These are just some of the incidents that have been recorded over the years:

- 1980: 40,605 sheep perish in a fire aboard the *Farid Fares*; disease kills 2,713 sheep on the *Kahleej Express*.
- 1981: 635 sheep die being transferred from one ship to another; 8,764 sheep die on the *Persia* because of ventilation breakdown.
- 1983: in Portland some 15,000 sheep die of exposure while waiting to be loaded.

- 1984: 70 sheep die each day because of ventilation breakdown on the *Mukairish Althaleth*.
- 1985: 15,000 sheep die of heat exhaustion on the *Fernanda F*.
- 1989: almost 10,000 sheep die en route for the Middle East on the *Cormo Express* due to starvation, heat stroke and disease.
- 1991: 30,000 Australian sheep die of heat-stroke and dehydration due to poor feedlot facilities in Kuwait.
- 1996: 1,592 cattle drown on board the *Guernsey Express*; 67,488 sheep die in a fire on the *Uniceb*.
- 1998: the *Anomis* is unable to unload in Malaysia for over two weeks due to a financial dispute, during which time 283 goats and 154 cattle die. 346 cattle die due to poor ventilation on the *Charolais Express* en route for Jordan, a further 50 die in a Jordanian port and 174 more are rejected both by Jordan and Yemen and are dumped at sea.
- 1999: 829 cattle suffocate on the *Temburong*; 300 cattle die of injuries on the *Kalymnian Express*
- 2001: 880 cattle and 1,400 sheep die on the *Becrux* due to excessive heat.
- 2002: 99 cattle die on the *Norvantes* en route to Jakarta. Mortalities among sheep reach a record high with 1,064 on the *Cormo Express*, 6,119 on the *Corriedale Express*, 5,800 on the *Al Shuwaikh*, and 2,173 on the *Al Messilah*.
(Source: *Animals Australia*)

Last year two broadcasts of the Australian current affairs programme *60 Minutes* exposed the horrors of this trade. An Australian vet told how he was forced to falsify papers about the sheeps' health; a stockman described how animals that are unfit for sale are disposed of at sea by being dropped, often still alive, into giant mincing machines; a vet in Egypt described how animals may be stabbed in the eyes to stop them struggling once they are unloaded. Predictably viewers were outraged, and campaigning groups were inundated with letters of support. There has also been support from the Australian Meatworkers' Union whose members have lost over 12,000 jobs to the live export trade.

The campaign

This year Naturewatch launches its Australian live export campaign in the UK, not as a criticism of the Australian people, but rather of the Australian Government, which is letting its people down by reducing their country to Third World status in humanitarian terms. We will be asking supporters to lobby the Australian High Commission in London and to compile petitions, which will in due course be sent to the Australian Prime Minister and the Australian Agriculture Minister. This emphasis on Australia's tarnished image will hopefully bring about change for its animals.

Photo: PACAT



Australian sheep beginning a voyage of suffering.

Angels in Quebec

Last year the German-based Animals' Angels sent us undercover footage of an investigation into livestock markets in Quebec, Canada. The ensuing publicity resulted in embarrassment for Quebec but a better future for its animals.

Several markets were investigated, and all had animals that were clearly unfit for market. Moreover the cruelty shown by the market employees was appalling. The Animals' Angels team filmed sheep being lifted up by the fleece and young pigs being lifted up by a hind leg and thrown into pens. Lame pigs were forced to move by being kicked and beaten, and even by being dragged by their ears and their tails. The footage showed horrific overcrowding in a pen of pigs, where animals had to climb over each other in order to move, only to be beaten by the market staff in an attempt to make them keep still. The pigs shared just one tiny water trough, but because of over-crowding few of them were able to drink, leading to animals collapsing with dehydration. Sheep and cows fared no better, with animals collapsing and foaming at the mouth with dehydration. The Animals' Angels team were able to give water to some of these animals; and one of the most poignant images of the film was of a cow desperately licking spilt water from the ground.

Via our website we asked Naturewatch supporters to write letters of protest to the market directors and the Quebec Minister for Agriculture in Canada and the Canadian High Commission in London. Animals' Angels also contacted the Canadian media and were interviewed by the press and had live discussions with officials on television and radio. This led on to meetings with the Canadian Food Inspection Agency who promised animal welfare inspections in markets, training in animal handling for market staff, improvements to water and ventilation facilities. By summer 2003, Animals' Angels were able to report that market employees who maltreated animals had been fired, market pens had been fitted with automatic watering systems, lame animals were no longer allowed at market, electric prods were no longer permitted and that the Quebec Government intended to introduce strict animal protection legislation by the end of 2004.

Sometimes animal welfare work can be disheartening and disillusioning. So it is good to know that hard work does pay off and that letters of protest do have an effect. In this case the future looks a lot better for livestock in Quebec.



Photo: Animals' Angels

Images of abuse such as this are to become a thing of the past in Quebec's markets.

Victoria – a Lithuanian vet student in France

For the second year running, Lithuanian veterinary student Victoria Kizinievic spent her summer vacation in France at the Refuge de Thiernay animal shelter, helping Princess Elizabeth de Cröy and her staff care for stray cats and dogs. Victoria, a member of the Lithuanian Society for the Protection of Animals, speaks fluent French (as well as English, Polish, and Russian!) and impressed the Princess by her dedication and hard work. She assisted with many surgical procedures at the shelter and received glowing references from visiting vets who cited her aptitude and sensible approach to international animal welfare issues.

For the rest of this academic year, Victoria is continuing her veterinary studies in Paris before returning to finish her degree at the Lithuanian Veterinary Academy. We thank Victoria for her dedication to animals; we are sure that she will enjoy a very worthwhile future in animal welfare.



Photo: Naturewatch Foundation

Victoria Kizinievic

Maggie Mann – crusading for humanity in Australia

This summer Naturewatch and Compassion in World Farming joined forces to sponsor the work of Maggie Mann, co-ordinator for the Australian group PACAT (People Against Cruelty in Animal Transport) to combat the barbaric live export trade (see page 6). English-born Maggie has been living in Australia since 1987, and is a passionate advocate of animal welfare. Maggie regularly sees the transporters laden with sheep heading for the port of Fremantle, where their hellish sea voyage begins.

Maggie and the PACAT team are determined that this vile trade will stop. PACAT has organised extensive coverage of these abuses in the Australian media, where public opinion is slowly starting to change as more horrors are revealed. Naturewatch is with Maggie and her colleagues all the way.



Photo: PACAT

Maggie Mann and friend

A good year for Ukraine animals

For the animals in the Ukraine, progress has always been very slow, but during the second half of 2003 several pleasant surprises occurred. Tamara Tarnawska, President of SPA-SOS, wrote to tell us the good news.

For the past six years it's been an uphill battle for the Kyiv Society for the Protection of Animals (SOS). But now it seems the top of the hill may have been reached, making the road ahead a little easier to travel along.

World Animal Day

The Kyiv Society for the Protection of Animals (SPA-SOS) has been marking World Animal Day since 1997, but this year for the first time the Mayor of Kyiv was persuaded to celebrate it officially. Hopefully this event will in time come to symbolise the development of the animal welfare movement throughout the Ukraine.

On 4 October, World Animal Day, Tamara Tarnawska, president of SPA-SOS, was presented with a medal, a watch and a certificate of appreciation by the Mayor of Kyiv in recognition of her contribution to raising animal welfare standards in the Ukraine. As a direct result of the award, the society is now regularly approached by magazines, newspapers, radio and TV stations. The increased publicity has also prompted two experienced vets to volunteer some of their time to SOS.

The same day, SPA-SOS invited 100 guests to its animal shelter in Pyrohovo, which is situated on the outskirts of Kyiv. Guests included city officials, embassy staff, University students, senior school pupils, interested Kyivites and numerous journalists. They spent three hours at the shelter, during which time the president was interviewed, SOS employees spoke about their work and refreshments were enjoyed. The media coverage created renewed interest from the public and from organisations wanting to help the society. Naturewatch Foundation was delighted to sponsor this event for SOS.

Following Naturewatch Foundation's online celebrity auction for World Animal Day, funds are now available to build and equip a new cattery at the 'SOS' shelter. The auction ran from World Animal Day until mid-December and raised over £4,000 for animal welfare projects in Lithuania and the Ukraine.

'Animals in the City'

After many years of struggle to change the management and criminal structure of the 'Animals in the City' (AIC) organisation and humanise its stray control methods, a much-deserved victory has finally been won. The television and radio programmes, newspaper interviews, numerous letters to the President of Ukraine, MPs and the City Mayor, and protests outside the City Administration building have at last brought positive results. On September 8, Nina Samofalova, Director of AIC, was dismissed, as were her husband who was her deputy, her daughter and son, and many other staff. An investigation is now underway to examine the financial activities of the Samofalova clan, who were protected by high-ranking city officials in the city administration – in return for payment of course.

'Animals in the City' has now been reformed into two organisations. One organisation registers and microchips animals and the other is engaged in catching the dogs and keeping them at Borodianka. The newly appointed Director of AIC is in regular contact with SPA-SOS and is running the organisation in accordance with European standards. SPA-SOS is working closely with Deputy Mayor Bidny, who has been charged with reforming AIC, and has made recommendations that will ensure a large-scale programme of neutering, vaccination and adoption is approved shortly and implemented as soon as possible.

Some dogs have all the luck!

During the year a German animal welfare organisation (ETN) offered to take 45 dogs to Germany for rehoming. In September ETN representatives arrived in Kyiv to help SOS vets microchip the dogs. Customs documents were organised to enable the dogs to be taken from Ukraine, through Poland, and into Germany. ETN even took some dogs that required specialist treatment. For example, the first group of dogs included a five-month-old cocker spaniel with a broken jaw that needed to be reset. The operation was carried out as soon as the spaniel arrived in Bonn and the lucky dog has already found a new home.

A second group of dogs will be collected in the spring. In early December we heard that as a result of publicity following the arrival of the dogs in Bonn, ETN managed to identify new homes for five large dogs. This was good news for SOS as it is hard to rehome large animals in Kyiv as so many people live in flats.

Animal protection legislation

Throughout 2003, SOS has worked tirelessly for the introduction of an Animal Protection Bill. Progress continues to be slow. While there is tremendous support for the Bill from many quarters, including the Ministry of Justice, there are opponents within the Ministries of Health and Environment who are keen to reduce the scope of the Bill. These individuals are hoping to introduce more repressive methods in addressing the problem of stray animals by using scare tactics such as the threat of rabies and other diseases.

During the year, Tamara attended three sittings of the Cabinet of Ministers to consider the proposed Animal Protection Bill. It is clear that this is not going to be resolved quickly. In the light of recent political events and the beginning of the presidential election campaign, it is difficult to foresee when the Bill will pass screening by the Verkhovna Rada. Nevertheless, SOS is taking every opportunity to push it forward.

Alternatives to animal experimentation

In September, at the start of the new academic year, the SOS office once again sent information about alternative teaching methods to university professors throughout the Ukraine. The SOS Alternatives Library is visited regularly by academics from Kyiv, Ternopil, Dnipropetrovsk and Bila Tserkva. The Society continues to maintain close contact with Professors Makarchuk (Kyiv) and Shandra (Odessa). These two professors have been supportive from the outset and are delighted at the successful introduction of alternative teaching methods at their institutes.

Humane Management of Dogs and Cats Conference

Naturewatch Foundation was delighted to sponsor the SOS President to attend this conference in Athens in November. The aim of the conference was to present a holistic welfare message relevant to the management of stray animals. Guided by the WSPA Pet Respect programme and its key principles, based on World Health Organisation research, the importance of governments, veterinary associations and animal protection groups working together to address the problem of stray and/or unwanted dogs and cats was highlighted. The main message being that it is essential for all parties to recognise that the issue is a problem for society as a whole – not simply an animal welfare issue.

Targets for 2004

- Close collaboration with all relevant governmental bodies to ensure the adoption of the Animal Protection Bill by the Verkhovna Rada in the shortest possible time.
- Expansion of the Society's existing humane education programme.
- Continued use of every media opportunity to increase public awareness of the need for a humane attitude towards animals and the environment.
- Continued promotion of alternative teaching methods in higher education institutes.

Hunting the hunters

This summer Naturewatch hosted Lithuanian television personality Henry Vaitiekunas during his visit to the UK to make a documentary about fox-hunting.

The League against Cruel Sports was the first port of call, where Mike Hobday explained the cruel methods employed by hunts, and supplied graphic footage that more than backed up his claims. We then went onto Westminster to meet Tony Banks MP, who did not hold back when it came to the issue of hunting with hounds. Here there were two added bonuses for the Lithuanians. First, rare permission was granted to film in the central lobby of Westminster. And second, Mr Banks surprised everyone by explaining that he knew Lithuania and had spent time there in 1992-3. Next it was onto the RSPCA where the team met with Director General Jackie Ballard. In 1997 Jackie entered Parliament, having snatched the Tory stronghold of Taunton for the Liberal Democrats. Now having taken over the biggest job in animal welfare, Jackie was taking no prisoners when it came to hunting with hounds. Henry had some controversial observations and questions on the issue but unsurprisingly Jackie gave elegant and first class responses.



Left to right: Henry Vaitiekunas, Tony Banks and John Ruane

An interview with Darren Hughes, Spokesman for the Countryside Alliance, had been scheduled for the next day, together with a visit to a hunt kennels and an interview with a Master of Hounds. However, although arrangements had been made with the Alliance's press officer, Mr Hughes consistently failed to return our calls and the interview never took place. But by now Henry had masses of archival video footage and more than enough material, so returned home to Lithuania with an insight into the murky world of fox-hunting where the hunters, once they realise they are the quarry, flee as fast as they can.

Henry's documentary was shown on Lithuanian television not long after his return. Needless to say the Lithuanian people were shocked and wondered how such a barbaric and sadistic pastime could still be allowed to continue in an ostensibly 'civilised' country.

New publications

Naturewatch Guide to Animal Experiments

This book is essential reading for anyone keen to become familiar with the major issues in this field. It includes a basic guide to Biotechnology and a detailed look at the use of primates.

Biotechnology – the biotechnology revolution presents challenges to all concerned – not just to scientists. It is a highly technical field whose jargon not only obscures the real issues but adds to the perception of a growing Frankenscience: knockout mice, clones and transgenics are all part of the new biotechnology revolution. In this section, we aim to lift the veil by explaining some of the terminology and identifying some of the key welfare issues.

Primates – research involving primates has always been the most contentious aspect of animal usage in scientific experiments. This section presents some facts and figures about the use of primates in research, before going on to discuss the arguments about the suitability (or otherwise) of doing so. We consider issues such as the intelligence and social skills of great apes and other primates, and whether an individual ape is a person. Finally we look at some active campaign issues.

ActNow!

This is Naturewatch's new guide to becoming an active animal welfare campaigner. It is based on two of the fact sheets, on Political Lobbying and Fundraising, which have been updated and re-designed into a handy booklet format. If you would like to become more effective in promoting animal welfare, this guide could be for you!



The *Naturewatch Guide to Animal Experiments* and *ActNow!* are available from Naturewatch at £2 each, including postage and packing. You can also order online at www.naturewatch.org.

International Animal Protection Conference – Moscow

The Humane Society of the United States (HSUS) sponsored a conference in Moscow in May. Delegates discussed workable strategies to tackle the problem of stray animals in the former Soviet states.

Colleagues from Russia, Belarus, Ukraine, Lithuania and Azerbaijan explained the problems that they encounter on a daily basis. Executive director Neil Trent headed the HSUS team, together with speakers Betsy McFarland and Dave Pauli who are experts in animal sheltering and population control techniques. We were particularly delighted to welcome Dr Algis Dranseika, the Head of Animal Health for the Lithuanian State Veterinary Service, who has done much to improve animal welfare in Lithuania, where Naturewatch Foundation has been active for the past ten years.

The conference emphasised that all municipalities are responsible for stray animals, but they often try to get the local welfare groups to take over the job without giving them an adequate funding allocation. This leads the local society to be forever desperately short of funds, with facilities that are frequently unsuitable for sheltering animals. The conference heard that accurate budgetary figures must be available and groups must be prepared to lobby hard and persuade their municipality to undertake humane programmes in conjunction with the local animal welfare organisation.



Delegates at the International Animal Protection Conference in Moscow.

Not only is there a huge lack of interest in stray animal control from local and national authorities throughout virtually all the former Soviet Union, but few welfarists are experienced in negotiating with official bodies. Consequently they end up accepting whatever local officials decide. Neuter and release, sheltering policies, education and registration schemes all play important roles in tackling the plight of the stray animals.

All the delegates took back from this important conference lots of proven techniques and ideas – now the hard part will be to put into practice their newly acquired knowledge.

The year in review – Lithuania

Naturewatch Foundation representative Dr Ben Noreikis and the team at the Lithuanian Society for the Protection of Animals (LiSPA) enjoyed an exciting and fruitful year in 2003. As in previous years, the Foundation was happy to be able to support the funding of LiSPA operations and staffing.

Lithuania has only one zoo, which was created in Soviet times. Conditions at the zoo are poor, not only for the animals but for the staff too. The appointment of a new and proactive director in mid 2002 has led to some improvements. In spring 2003 we sponsored Dr Dumcius to attend a two day conference at Edinburgh Zoo on the topic of 'the future direction of zoos'. This gave Dr Dumcius a good overview of modern welfare standards and the need to restrict certain species, such as primates, bears and cats, that should no longer be kept in zoo environments. Zoo funding comes directly from the Lithuanian government and later in the year Dr Dumcius persuaded the leading newspaper in Lithuania to reveal the plight of the animals and the lack of funding – this made front page headlines and forced the government to announce a £600,000 rebuilding grant. (These funds are expected to be handed over in the 2004 zoo budget.) LiSPA and Naturewatch also welcomed advisors from the European Association of Zoos and Aquaria (EAZA) who arrived in Lithuania to offer valuable advice and support for new initiatives. In 2004 we look forward to continuing improvements at the national zoo.

The LiSPA wildlife rehabilitation centre headed by LiSPA employee Dr Aivaras Paukste received many hundreds of interesting patients during the year, including a rare golden eagle, beavers, deer, foxes and a wide variety of birds of prey. A number of planned projects were developed during the year and will be finalised in 2004 to allow the rehab centre to expand and accept larger animals.

In educational matters the LiSPA humane education book was finished with a print run of 20,000 to be distributed to



Naturewatch Foundation Director John Ruane meets former President of Lithuania Valdas Adamkus (right) and Rector Professor Zilinskas.

every schoolteacher in Lithuania. (This was a project of the International Division of the RSPCA whereby Naturewatch Foundation funded the employment of staff to undertake the translation and teacher liaison work.)

Good progress was made during the year at the Kaunas animal shelter following a refurbishment programme funded by the Foundation, although rehoming remains very difficult. Many dogs that arrive at the shelter are unsuitable for rehoming because they were originally bred as guard dogs and have become too aggressive. Sadly, there are also difficulties with kittens – there are just so many and not enough people willing to adopt them. Work continued with proposals for a national registration scheme which, together with the Humane Education programme, will assist greatly in reducing the stray animal population.

At the Lithuanian Veterinary Academy (LVA) the inauguration of Professor Henrikas Zilinskas as the new Rector took place in September. Henrikas has been a good friend of Naturewatch and LiSPA for many years and has helped in so many ways to assist the promotion of animal welfare in Lithuania.

Much preparatory work, including implementing EU animal protection laws and training of veterinary inspectors, was conducted during the year so that LiSPA will be able to undertake a meaningful role in Europe as Lithuania joins the European Union in May 2004. In closing, Naturewatch Foundation would like to thank all the staff and volunteers who have worked throughout the year in Lithuania to ensure that when a call about an injured or distressed animal is received, LiSPA is always there to give veterinary aid and assistance.



President Adamkus (centre) with (l. to r.) Dr Albina Aniuliene (LiSPA President), Dr Ben Noreikis, John Ruane and outgoing Rector Professor Vidmantas Bizokas.

NEWS IN BRIEF

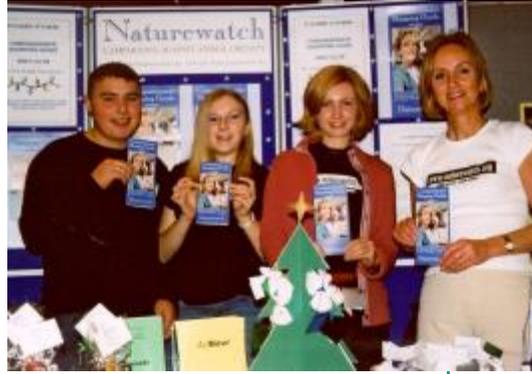
Can you help the badgers?

Badger groups throughout the UK are in need of assistance to help monitor badger activity. Could you offer a few hours each week to make regular visits to a badger sett? You will be greatly rewarded knowing your commitment is affording greater protection to badgers. The best course of action seems to be for volunteers to adopt their own areas and badger setts in order to combat the growing problem of badger cruelty. This might include: keeping a diary, making notes, getting to know the local landowner, visiting the sett at least once a week and perhaps taking water to the sett during particularly dry spells.

If you'd like to get involved then please contact Naturewatch and we'll be happy to put you in contact with your nearest badger group.

EDM on brain-damaging primates for research

At the request of Naturewatch, Labour MP for Stroud David Drew has tabled an Early Day Motion (no. 234) calling for a ban on experiments involving brain-damaging primates. The motion states: 'This house believes that any scientific procedure which causes brain damage to monkeys or any other primate is ethically abhorrent, and calls on the Government to ban such procedures forthwith.' We are hoping that Naturewatch supporters will write to their MPs asking them to sign this motion. We will be mailing supporters requesting their help in this later in 2004.



Dan, Katie, Fiona and Caroline proudly showed off the new Compassionate Shopping Guide at the Animal Aid 'Christmas Without Cruelty Fayre' in London at the end of November. The Naturewatch stall raised a total of £1,410.53 selling Christmas cards, Clearly Compassionate toiletries and other goodies.

Kyiv bears

Naturewatch Foundation and Naturewatch have been supporting the the Kyiv Society for the Protection of Animals 'SOS' at every opportunity in its call for improvements to welfare standards for the animals at Kyiv Zoo.

We have been focusing in particular on the appalling bear accommodation – tiny, dark, dirty and damp cells dating back to 1912. Supporters and VIPs have written letters to EAZA (European Association of Zoos and Aquaria) and to the Zoo Director calling for improvements. After constant bombardment over a period of several months, the Zoo Director's replies became more encouraging, promising brand new quarters for the bears.

In 2003 the new enclosure was completed. However, the Zoo Director failed to take professional advice on the project, resulting in gross overspending on an enclosure that provides new accommodation for only a few bears.

Naturewatch successfully instigated an official inspection of the Zoo by EAZA in autumn 2003. Many serious issues

of great concern were discussed, including the welfare of the bears that remain in the old enclosure, the small mammal block, the primates' accommodation and the elephant housing. EAZA suggested how the current accommodation could be improved at very little cost. The Director hopes that the work will be carried out by summer 2004.

Looking to 2004

This year Naturewatch Foundation is part-funding the work of a neuter and release programme for Turkish strays by the town of Fethiye's Friends of Animals Association. The Foundation will also be sponsoring a new brick-built cattery in Kyiv in the Ukraine, following the arson attack on the old wooden building, while in Lithuania, the new rescue vehicle is to be fully kitted out and an additional vet sponsored to work on it.

Meanwhile Naturewatch is sponsoring some Baltic delegates at a conference on Higher Education in Animal Welfare, to be held in the Czech Republic in the Spring.

Naturewatch

Campaigning against animal cruelty

Formed in 1991, Naturewatch is a non-profit animal welfare organisation. Naturewatch campaigns for vital changes in the law to help stop animal abuses and, in common with other campaigning groups, cannot be granted charitable status because charity law does not allow political, pressure group or campaigning activities. Naturewatch is non-violent and all campaigns are conducted within the constraints of the law.

Naturewatch Foundation

For the advancement of animal welfare

In 1995, Naturewatch Foundation was formed and granted charitable status. Its role is to support the improvement and development of animal welfare standards in Eastern Europe. Naturewatch Foundation undertakes specific projects covering veterinary aid, training and educational issues, in close partnership with the local authorities and the newly formed animal protection societies in these countries.

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