

The Naturewatch and ANNUAL REVIEW

Naturewatch Foundation

2004



World Animal Day in the UK



Following the successful launch of World Animal Day (4 October) in the UK last year, more organisations joined in the celebrations this year, with events ranging from the launch of Naturewatch's new offices through shelter open days to school projects.



VIP visitors to Naturewatch. Top: (l to r) Perihan Agnelli of the Fethiye Society, Turkey; Naturewatch patron Princess Elizabeth de Cröy; Tamara Tamawska of SPA-SOS, Ukraine. Bottom: Naturewatch patron and wildlife artist Pollyanna Pickering (right) with her daughter, journalist and photographer Anna-Louise Pickering.

WAD at Naturewatch

Naturewatch celebrated WAD by launching our new offices, inviting all our supporters who live locally, our patrons, plus representatives from our partner organisations, to join us for a buffet supper. The Naturewatch team worked hard to produce exciting displays for our main campaign areas, including some samples of delicious home-made toiletries made from recipes featured in our *Compassionate Shopping Guide*, plus displays on World Animal Day and our fundraising eBay auction.

Once again, the eBay celebrity auction proved a great success, with over 270 donations from celebrities from all walks of life. Popular items included a signed Katie Melua CD, a seascape photograph taken by the Duchess of York, a poster signed by the cast of the surreal hospital comedy *Green Wing*, a glitzy pair of 'Pat Butcher' earrings donated by Pam St Clement from *Eastenders* and a signed t-shirt from Olympic medallist Steve Redgrave. Proceeds will go towards continuing the refurbishment of the SPA-SOS cattery in Kyiv (see page 8).

Other events

Many other organisations did something special for World Animal Day. Greyhounds in Need joined the Franciscan brothers of Chilworth Friary for a beautiful blessing service, where each dog was given a token of blessed food and a gift. Meanwhile in Essex, Tropical Wings wildlife park held a special day to heighten awareness of conservation issues and to raise funds to save the endangered monarch butterfly of Mexico.



Greyhounds in Need

Brother Korneliusz blesses one of the GiN greyhounds.

Various sanctuaries and shelters took the opportunity to show off their work. HULA Animal Rescue near Milton Keynes held an open day which included an animal blessing service, a fun dog show, bazaar, home-made refreshments and an opportunity to meet animals awaiting adoption; and Remus Memorial Horse Sanctuary in Essex held a fund-raising day featuring raffles, tombolas, merchandise stalls and a vegetarian barbecue; and the Donkey Sanctuary in Sidmouth held a memorial service.

Small-scale events took place in town centres up and down the country, including a number of information stalls. Plenty of individuals also got involved, for example by making gifts of food and equipment to animal shelters, putting up bird nesting boxes in their gardens or making or buying toys and other treats for their companion animals.

Following coverage in various educational journals, many schools undertook animal-related projects leading up to World Animal Day. These ranged from topics on pets for the younger children to investigations into conservation issues, farming methods and animal experiments for the older ones.

Pupils at Edward Francis Infant School in Rayleigh, Essex, learn about hedgehogs from a conservation volunteer.

There was wider media coverage of WAD this year. Highlights included a special feature in the children's magazine *Animals and You* and an excellent article in *The Guardian*. WAD 2005 will no doubt be even bigger and better; to find out how you can become involved, contact the Naturewatch office or visit www.worldanimalday.org.uk.



WAD around the world



People around the world joined in the WAD celebrations this year. Here's an overview of just some of the events that took place in other countries this year on October 4.



- Australia – RSPCA branches across Australia held special WAD events including a gala dinner in Melbourne and a stand-up comedy night in Adelaide. Meanwhile in Mount Lawley, Western Australia, PACAT held a fundraising film showing of *Vanity Fair*, with drinks and nibbles.
- Bhutan – the RSPCA of Bhutan held an awareness day to raise money for animal welfare in Bhutan.
- Cyprus – the Paphiakos and CCP (Cyprus Cat Protection) Animal Welfare of Paphos celebrated World Animal Day by providing underprivileged families with treatments for their animals free of charge, including spaying/neutering, microchipping and vaccination.
- Greece – following last year's success, Argos Animal Welfare Society of Thessaloniki held another Mixed-Breed Dog Show, with categories including 'Most beautiful eyes' and 'Happiest tail'. This was followed by an information stall in the town centre the following day.
- Nepal – there was plenty going on in Nepal for World Animal Day. The NSPCA had a week of special activities, including lectures, animal-related concerts given by school groups, educational programmes, and free veterinary treatment. Meanwhile Animals Nepal (ANPO) got together over 20 Nepali and expat recording artists to produce a rock CD entitled *Rock 'n' Bark*, which was premiered on World Animal Day to raise funds for animal welfare work in Nepal.
- New Zealand – Wairarapa SPCA held a fun day for children

- Singapore – the Singapore SPCA held a roadshow over the WAD weekend, with attractions including an exhibition about animal care and welfare, a 'Best Buddies' photo competition, and stalls selling t-shirts, cards, posters and badges.
- Syria – SPANA/Syria celebrated WAD on a grand scale, with national newspapers running features about the importance of animals. A Festival of Childhood, the Environment and Animals took place, during which children were able to meet a range of animals, including donkeys, camels, rabbits, chickens, birds and frogs, while musicians played music with an environmental theme. Syrian television



Animed Arad

Visitors from Romania's Animed Arad discussed animal care and welfare issues with school children.

covered the event and many Syrian leaders participated.

- USA – among the more unusual ideas for WAD in the USA were a 'Fall Kitten Shower' in Normal, Illinois, where a supermarket displayed cut-out pawprints on certain items that a local shelter needed for its rescued kittens so that shoppers could buy the items then leave them at a collection point near the checkout. Meanwhile in Easton, Pennsylvania, a local SPCA held a 'Paws for a Cause' sponsored walk for dogs and their humans to raise much-needed funds.

NSPCA



Treatment and vaccinations from the NSPCA vets were among the WAD events that took place in Nepal.

on the theme of Animal Kindness, followed by an animal blessing service.

- Romania – rescue organisation Animed Arad visited an Arad school to talk about animal care. Children were able to meet some of the rescued animals.
- Turkey – in Istanbul, SED held an event to celebrate Turkey's new animal welfare legislation. The day included lectures, veterinary treatment, competitions, adoptions, and even a cat psychologist!



SPANNA

Syrian children learn about rabbits with SPANA.

FDC fundraiser

This autumn Naturewatch embarked upon a new venture to raise valuable funds – a limited edition of First Day Covers featuring the Royal Mail's Woodland Animals stamps.

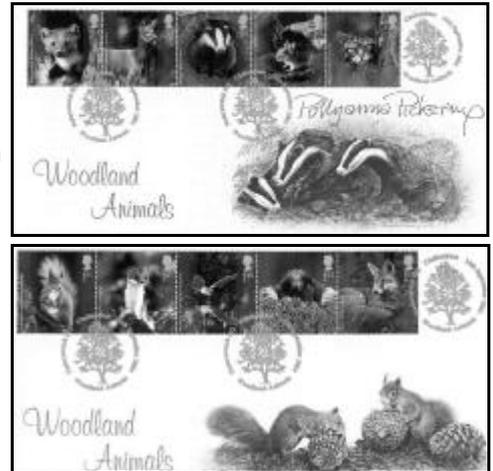
Naturewatch has received a tremendous response to its Woodland Animals Official First Day Cover, released to complement the Royal Mail's Woodland Animals stamps that were issued on 16 September 2004. The Royal Mail Woodland Animals stamps provide intimate photographic portraits of some of the elusive woodland mammals which inhabit woodlands, including the yellow-necked mouse, most commonly found in the western Cotswolds, Shropshire and Herefordshire.

The First Day Cover set is illustrated by celebrated wildlife artist, Pollyanna Pickering, and captures the exuberance of a group of badgers playing in a woodland glade and the elusive and endearing red squirrel as it forages among pine cones.

Pollyanna, who is a patron of Naturewatch, is one of Europe's foremost wildlife artists. Though her original paintings hang in corporate and private collections throughout the world, she is most pleased when her work can be used to support causes close to her heart, and her work has been commissioned and published by every major animal charity in the UK.

The Naturewatch Official First Day Cover is a limited edition of 750 sets, and has been welcomed with enthusiasm by stamp collectors nationwide. Appearing only for the one day on which the Woodland Animals stamps were released, the Naturewatch, Cheltenham, postmark is especially of interest to collectors. Sets

(comprising the two envelopes) are available from Naturewatch at £17.50 each. However, Pollyanna has signed 100 of the badger covers and these are available as a set with the squirrel cover for £27.50.



'The Compassionate Shopper'

Spring 2004 saw the launch of the first ever edition of our handy supplement to the Naturewatch *Compassionate Shopping Guide* – 'The Compassionate Shopper'.

Issued twice a year, each issue includes new endorsements, updates, homemade toiletry recipes and profiles of cruelty-free companies. Our first profile focused on Faith In Nature (FCOD 1988), while the winter 2004 edition highlights Liz Earle Naturally Active Skincare (FCOD 1998).

In 2004, we were delighted to announce a number of new endorsements. In the skincare sector these included Yaoh organic hemp seed oil body care products, which are suitable for vegans (FCOD 1985), Grandma Vines skin care which helps to ease eczema, dermatitis and dry skin (FCOD 1985), Jason Natural Organics (FCOD 1996) and Woods of Windsor (FCOD 1990). In the household products sector, Wizz Products (FCOD 1994) and Astonish cleaning products (FCOD 1995) have now been endorsed as cruelty-free.

In the *Compassionate Shopping Guide* ninth edition our name-and-shame spotlight fell on supermarkets who had quietly dropped their fixed cut-off dates. In response letters from supporters flooded into the named supermarkets. This huge effort has driven home the message that consumers do care, and as a result Netto has re-instated its fixed cut-off date of 1995, and can now be endorsed. Thank you to everyone who wrote to Netto; this is a great result! There is good news

also on Nisa Today's, which has provided confirmation of its fixed cut-off date (1991), and can now be endorsed as cruelty-free. Again, thanks to everyone who wrote to Nisa Today's.

Over recent months, Naturewatch has continued its dialogue with companies who have no ethical animal testing policy. In a recent discussion, Tesco indicated that it is still some way from re-instating its fixed cut-off date policy on cosmetics and toiletries. However, the volume of letters they have been receiving will be providing plenty of food for thought. Through sending letters to companies and making our point of view clear, together we can make a difference – every little helps!

In November 2004, we visited Marks and Spencer to discuss its position on animal testing. The meeting presented an opportunity to openly debate how Marks and Spencer can overcome present challenges in defining its animal testing policy, and hopefully provide pointers as to how the company can progress to become 100 per cent cruelty-free.

We are now compiling the next issue of 'The Compassionate Shopper', so if you have any tried and tested homemade remedies or handy tips for living cruelty-free we would love to hear from you. To obtain your copy of 'The Compassionate Shopper', please send an SAE or visit www.naturewatch.org.

Badgering the decision-makers pays off

In the autumn we stepped up our campaign to combat the cruel and barbaric practice of badger baiting in the light of evidence that suggests this vile activity is steadily increasing.

The RSPCA has 13 cases of badger cruelty due to go to court in the coming months – the largest number of cases they've had in progress for as long as they can remember. Sadly, that's only the tip of the iceberg, with countless baiters remaining undetected. Our campaign highlights the role of the farming community, which has an important role to play in alerting the police to any suspect or illegal activities in the countryside. The general public rarely sees or recognises baiters, but landowners are in a prime position to help stop badger baiting, either by refusing access or by contacting the police. However, the irresponsible comments in July by Tory MP Anthony Steen suggest that some farmers do view badgers as vermin, which begs the question whether some farmers invite baiters onto their land.

Following our meeting with the Home Office Minister, Hazel Blears, in 2003 to discuss our campaign to make badger crime a notifiable offence, Naturewatch met with DEFRA officials in February to discuss our proposals for amendments to the enforcement provisions of the Protection of Badgers Act. We also met with Chief Constable Richard Brunstrom – a particularly useful meeting as he holds the Wildlife Crime portfolio for ACPO (Association of Chief Police Officers) and is co-chair of PAW (Partnership for Action Against Wildlife Crime).

The official response from Ben Bradshaw MP, Minister for Nature Conservation and Fisheries at DEFRA, has been disappointing. For example: *'While there may well be scope for improvements in the law, I must stress that there is currently enormous pressure on the legislative programme and I don't foresee an early opportunity to revise the Protection of Badgers Act 1992.'* Does Mr Bradshaw expect 264 MPs, over 30 celebrities, police wildlife crime officers, animal welfare organisations and thousands of members of the public to accept that legislative bottleneck is sufficient reason to allow criminals to continue torturing badgers with little risk of prosecution? We think not!

Badger persecution is the most abhorrent of all wildlife crime. With over 10,000 badgers being illegally killed in this country each year, it is appalling that annual prosecutions are so disgracefully low (just nine in 2001 and 22 in 2000).

And now some good news!

In October, a report published by the Environmental Audit Committee on Wildlife Crime drew conclusions exactly in line with both our campaign and the two Early Day Motions tabled

on our behalf in recent sessions by Nigel Jones, MP for Cheltenham. In particular, we would like to highlight the following recommendations of the report:

- *Point 3.* The Government must re-state its commitment to tackling wildlife crime.
- *Point 4.* We see this refusal to accept wildlife crime as an issue deserving of committed police resources as especially short-sighted given the many links made between wildlife crime and serious and organised crime.
- *Point 5.* Wildlife crime must be classified as recordable by the Home Office so that police forces across England and Wales know that sufficient priority needs to be given to tackling wildlife crime and so that they can allocate the necessary resources to this work.
- *Point 26.* The absence of any clear, national view of the scale of wildlife crime has a direct impact on the ability of those charged with enforcing current legislation. If the scale and nature of the problem is not known it is unlikely that the correct level of resources can ever be allocated to deal with it.
- *Point 27.* We believe that there must be at least one full-time Wildlife Crime Officer for each Police force. These officers must be fully trained in intelligence gathering.
- *Point 29.* The apparent failure of the Police Service to take advantage of the NWCIUs (National Wildlife Crime Intelligence Unit) work must be addressed by the Home Office and DEFRA. It is nonsense to have the NWCIU expending time and resources on developing intelligence packages for police forces who have no intention of devoting any real resources to the crime themselves. This only serves to emphasise the need for wildlife crime to be reclassified as recordable so that police forces feel compelled to address these crimes.

Point 34. The role of the Home Office has been shown to be absolutely crucial in the fight against wildlife crime but their commitment has been sadly lacking. The Home Office must re-engage with wildlife crime.

This independent report strongly reinforces our position, and we wrote to Hazel Blears urging her to reconsider the Home Office stance and take action to address badger crime. At the time of writing, we await her reply.

Finally, an enormous thank you to all Naturewatch supporters who sent letters urging the Home Office to change the way in which badger cruelty is recorded. By October the Home Office had already received around nine thousand letters.



Primate campaign

In March 2004 we launched a campaign to call for a ban on all experiments which deliberately brain-damage monkeys. Thanks to the active response of Naturewatch supporters, 223 MPs had signed up by the end of the parliamentary session.

We decided to focus on experiments involving brain-damaging monkeys because, of all those that are performed, they are among the most ethically abhorrent. A disturbing description is provided by 'Kate', an investigator for BUAV who worked undercover at Cambridge University: 'Some monkeys (under anaesthetic) had their head clamped and the top of the skull removed with a surgical saw – one of the researchers described this like "taking a lid off a monkey". Others had holes drilled in their skull and toxins injected into parts of their brain. This induced artificial brain damage that was supposed to mimic symptoms of human disorders like Stroke or Parkinson's disease... Around me the researchers were laughing and joking about the whole thing...'

Furthermore, during the debate in the House of Lords on animal experiments, the Conservative peer Lord Lucas – a supporter of animal experimentation – observed that some of the procedures were 'unbelievably cruel' and later added: 'The practice which causes me the greatest distress is giving the symptoms of Parkinson's disease to monkeys... which visibly causes a great deal of suffering.'

Since it is widely recognised that monkeys have more highly developed cognitive skills than other animals, and thus an

enhanced ability to suffer, we believe that it is appropriate to single out primates from other families of species, in order to exempt them from these procedures. We therefore asked the Stroud MP David Drew to table an Early Day Motion calling for an immediate end to such experiments: *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.*

Within two months of the start of the campaign, over 200 MPs signed up. Then to our surprise the numbers signing stopped dead. This was contrary to our experience with the motion on the Lords' Report in 2002–3, where small numbers of MPs continued to sign throughout the session. We suspect that there was active counter-campaigning by one of the propaganda groups promoting animal experiments, such as the Coalition for Medical Progress. Nevertheless the 223 who signed by the end of the session represent about 45 per cent of those eligible to do so, and compares with only 131 who signed a motion to ban all primate experiments in 2002–3. This is a great platform from which to make further progress on this issue and we will continue to inform you as things develop.

National Centre for the 3Rs

We were delighted when the Government announced, at the end of May, that they would be creating a National Centre for the 3Rs (Replacement, Refinement and Reduction of Animals in Research).

In the summer of 2002, a committee of the House of Lords produced their report which included their flagship recommendation that a Centre for the 3Rs be set up. It was to be designed on a hub-and-spokes model: a small central hub with spokes embedded in existing research organisations. After a feeble early response from the Home Office, we started a campaign for the report's implementation. Thanks to the help of you, our supporters, 229 MPs from all parties signed up to it via an Early Day Motion.

In the early summer of 2003 Caroline Flint arrived as a new minister at the Home Office. When Naturewatch visited her at the Home Office in December, we were impressed by her intelligent interest, and we recognised that there was now a significant change in the department. An Interdepartmental Group had been set up to assess various ways to implement a Centre for the 3Rs, and their report in May 2004 paved the way for the Government's announcement later in the month.

We visited the new centre in November 2004 and we were impressed by the vision of those there. Their broad remit enables them to tackle issues such as implementation and

validation of alternatives, as well as funding and co-ordinating new research. We are concerned that they benchmark their progress because in the present climate it is vital that any progress is clearly visible. Nevertheless the existence of the new Centre is likely to provide a significant impetus for alternatives research. We look forward to seeing the progress.



Naturewatch's Richard Tweedy meets Dr Vicky Robinson, Chief Executive of the new Centre.

Discover hidden Australia – campaign up-

At the beginning of 2004, Naturewatch launched its campaign against the Australian live export trade. It's been a very busy year, with plenty happening on both sides of the world.

In 2003, the horrors of the Australian live export trade were brought to the world's attention when the *Cormo Express* and its cargo of 57,000 sheep were stranded at sea for nearly three months after being rejected by the veterinary authorities in Saudi Arabia because of the level of disease. More than 5,580 of the sheep died. It was this horrible tragedy that led us to collect a total of 57,000 petition signatures (one for each of the sheep), asking the Australian Government to ban the live export trade, as well as asking supporters to write letters of complaint to the Australian High Commission.

Perth and London – a tale of two cities

By early summer we had collected the necessary signatures, and chose to make our presentation to the Australian High Commission on 6 August, the first anniversary of the *Cormo* setting sail from Fremantle. We were delighted that so many Naturewatch supporters made the effort to join us outside the Australian High Commission building. A delegation from Naturewatch went into Australia House to hand over the petitions to Bill Tweddell, the Deputy High Commissioner. The petitions were presented in gift-wrapped boxes labelled with the words 'Unhappy birthday! 6 August 2003 – 57,000 sheep board the *Cormo Express* ship of death. 6 August 2004 – 57,000 people say BAN THE AUSTRALIAN LIVE EXPORT TRADE.' Mr Tweddell and his colleagues were courteous, but curiously ill-informed about the issues. This was surprising, since Mr Tweddell had met with representatives of PACAT and Compassion in World Farming only last October to discuss the matter. Moreover, we had been told that over 10,000 letters of protest from Naturewatch supporters had

been received at the High Commission, all of which had to be forwarded to the Government in Canberra! We were promised that the petition signatures would be passed on likewise.

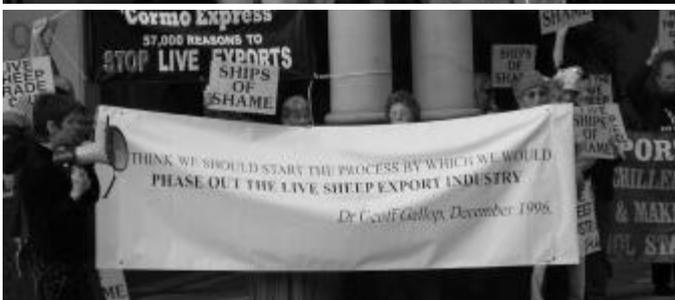
While we sweltered in the August sunshine, our friends at PACAT braved the winter chill to hold a demonstration outside the offices of the WA Premier in Perth. The focal point of the PACAT demonstration was a large banner bearing a quote from the Premier, Geoff Gallop, dating from 1996: 'I think we should start the process by which we would phase out the live sheep trade export industry.' As Dr Gallop had done nothing in the past eight years to bring the trade to an end, PACAT felt it was timely to remind him of his words! The response from passers-by was good and the event gained media coverage, so the Australian Government could be in no doubt about the damage being done to its reputation by its continued support of the live export trade.

Federal elections – and hope for the future?

On 9 October, Federal elections were held in Australia and John Howard's Liberal Government was returned to power. Welfarists expected little change in the Government's stance on live export. It was therefore with some surprise that, at the beginning of his second term as Agriculture Minister, Warren Truss was quoted in the Australian media as saying that he would like to see an end to the live export trade, although he felt that in reality this will be a long time in the future. Truss went on to say that he believed that 'mulesing' (cutting away parts of sheep's hindquarters, without anaesthetic, to prevent maggot infestation) would become obsolete in the next few years as alternatives are developed.

So is there a foreseeable end to Australian live export? The answer is almost certainly yes – but not just yet. Over the past few years, at least two live export companies have gone out of business, and in August 2004, the export industry body LiveCorp announced that it was encountering severe financial difficulties. Figures released by the industry show a marked decline. From 7 million animals being exported annually a few years ago, the total for 2003 was in the region of 4.25 million sheep and 700,000 cattle, while to last September, the figures for 2004 were 2.6 million sheep and 392,000 cattle.

There would appear to be a number of reasons for this decline. Political instability in the Middle East, increasingly sophisticated processing and refrigeration facilities in countries such as Saudi Arabia, extensive media coverage in Australia about the horrors of the trade, a change in public opinion in the wake of the *Cormo* disaster, international pressure, and of course continued lobbying from animal welfare groups have all played a part in this welcome trend. Yet the fact remains that animals are still crammed into ships to suffer thirst, starvation, disease and dehydration for weeks on end; until this is stopped, the campaigning will continue.



Scenes from 6 August – top: the Naturewatch delegation hands over 57,000 signatures to the Australian High Commission in London; bottom: PACAT supporters in Perth remind the WA Premier of his words.

Naturewatch in Romania

With accession to the EU firmly on its agenda, Romania is very keen to improve its animal welfare standards. Earlier this year Naturewatch representatives visited Romania to find out how we could help.

In March, following an invitation from the Romanian authorities, a Naturewatch delegation undertook a four-day field trip to gain an understanding of the animal welfare situation in Romania. We were particularly concerned with the conditions in which horses are transported to Italy for slaughter, especially as Romania, in recent years, has become one of the largest exporting countries of live animals into the European Union.

Agriculture plays a major role in employment in Romania (37 per cent of the national labour force and 67 per cent of the rural workforce are employed in the agricultural sector) and accounts for over 13 per cent of its economy. As an accession country hoping to join the EU in 2007, Romania is obliged to transpose all EU laws into its national law. With respect to farm animal welfare directives, we were informed that all EU laws had already been incorporated into national legislation. While welcoming progress on the adoption of EU welfare standards, both Naturewatch and the Romanian authorities acknowledged the enormous task of enforcing the new regulations. In a country where over 30 per cent of the population is officially below the poverty line, it will be difficult to ensure adequate funding to inform farmers about the new laws and animal welfare requirements.

A traditional way of life

Most Romanian farms are run in centuries-old traditional fashion, with the horse playing the main role in transport and ploughing – there are still very few tractors in Romania. Pigs, chickens, turkeys and sheep enjoy a 'free-range' lifestyle and are able to roam and forage freely. However, when the time

comes to bring the animals to market, there are very many cruel and gruesome practices; bad handling methods, and lack of water and food are commonplace, while rough slaughter is often carried out on-site with no pre-stunning and employing only brute force and a knife. These are, of course, the traditional methods, which have been used for centuries and will take a long time to change. One of the major challenges will be to make sure that the free-range lifestyle of the animals remains whilst incorporating more modern and humane transport and slaughter methods. Currently animals going to market travel only a short distance – however, the advent of new EU-approved slaughterhouses could intensify farming methods and result in long internal journey times. Care must be taken that large production facilities do not give rise to serious welfare abuses with the animals unable to have the freedom to express normal behaviour. Development of greater care and veterinary attention for working animals is also a major problem. In general, most working horses are in quite poor condition, with some malnutrition noticed and badly fitted harnesses causing skin abrasions.

Looking to the future

The Romanian State Veterinary Service (SVS) expressed its desire to ensure that the transportation of live animals leaving Romania complies with EU standards, but admitted that there were a number of obstacles to overcome. More intensive training and better pay for border inspectors would help alleviate any potential for offering bribes to allow overloaded or sick animals to cross the borders. Naturewatch hopes that continued EU funding will allow the SVS to develop best practice techniques and promote education and training to everyone involved with farm animals.

During our time in Romania, we concluded that there is a genuine desire by the authorities to reach EU standards and to meet the target date of 2007 for accession. Nevertheless, Romania is both one of the largest and one of the poorest European countries and only in the last ten years has it released itself from the shackles of dictatorship. It would be remiss of us not to acknowledge that both animals and people are in need and we must be aware of the hard lives endured by many Romanians. The future prospects and challenges are exciting and we would like to see the establishment of a national animal welfare society. This will be one of the main priorities for Naturewatch and we hope that European animal welfare colleagues may be able to assist the development of such a society. We believe the establishment of a national society that can work with both the SVS and the farming community will be very important for the practical improvement of animal welfare standards in Romania.



The Naturewatch delegation meets veterinary officials in Bucharest. Left to right: John Ruane, Naturewatch director; Eve-Marie Lewin, equine specialist from the Swedish Veterinary Association; Christine Lee, Naturewatch Project Manager; Daniela Dragan, Romanian Veterinary and Food Safety Agency; Christine Hafner, Animals' Angels; Dr Christian Duicu, Animal Health Director, Romanian Veterinary and Food Safety Agency.

Ukraine 2004 – a year to remember

For Ukraine's animals it's been an eventful year with progress being made in many areas to improve welfare standards.

Tamara Tarnawska, president of the Kyiv Society for the Protection of Animals-SOS, at last feels the society is raising awareness of animal welfare issues and encouraging the recognition of animals as 'sentient beings', capable of suffering and feeling pain. In science education, professors are becoming increasingly interested in replacing animals with alternative teaching methods.

Once again two groups of about 45 dogs were taken to Germany for rehoming during the course of 2004 and we expect this arrangement to continue in 2005. The pioneering work of SOS has also attracted several VIP visitors to its shelter, including ex-President of the Ukraine, Leonid Kravchuk, and others from throughout Ukraine who are keen to see the work of SOS replicated in their own cities.

New cattery for SOS cats

Naturewatch Foundation is delighted to be sponsoring the construction of a new cattery for SOS. Funds for this project were raised via our 2003 and 2004 World Animal Day celebrity online auctions. Construction of the new cattery commenced with the spring thaw of 2004. If all goes to plan, the cats should have moved into their new, comfortable and warm surroundings by the time you read this article. The brick-built, well-insulated and electrically heated cattery will have double-glazed windows and doors to ensure a minimal loss of heat during the severe winter months when the temperature can drop to minus 35°C.

Working together

Naturewatch works with partners in several countries which, from time to time, has a knock-on effect that further helps the animals. For example, in May Animals' Angels, a German organisation with which we have regular contact, discovered that a lorry-load of horses had been detained at the border between Ukraine and Hungary. The horses had been on the lorry for days without food or water and one had already died. Animals' Angels were obstructed by the language barrier and the lack of visas to enter Ukraine. Tamara was contacted and

her intervention meant the horses were taken to the nearest farm where they were unloaded, watered, fed and rested before continuing their journey.

Animal protection legislation

Working towards the adoption of a long overdue Animal Protection Bill has remained a priority throughout the year. The Draft Bill was prepared and submitted to MPs in 2002 and in 2003 was filed in Parliament where it received positive feedback from the legal committee. Disappointingly, however, progress has been very slow due to the unstable political situation in Ukraine. Throughout this time SOS has worked tirelessly organising press conferences, conducting interviews for TV and radio, and arranging a demonstration outside Parliament when they handed in a petition urging for the Draft Bill to be passed without further delay.

At the end of September, Ukraine's first Animal Protection Bill finally passed its first hearing with 242 MPs voting in favour (58 abstained and none opposed it). Not wanting to delay the process any longer than absolutely necessary, Naturewatch Foundation employed specialist lawyers to amend the Bill to include protection for birds in time for its second reading which will take place after the Presidential election. We expect this to be closely followed by the third and final hearing after which the Bill will be passed into law.

The Presidential election on 31 October resulted in a tie between Prime Minister Viktor Yanukovich and opposition leader Viktor Yushchenko, so a run-off vote was set for 21 November. The outcome could decide whether Ukraine will continue to cultivate ties with the West, if Yushchenko wins, or strengthen relations with Russia, if Yanukovich wins. However, observers say the vote on 31 October fell short of democratic standards, citing media bias in favour of Yanukovich and obstruction of opposition activities!

As we go to print, the political situation in Ukraine is in turmoil. Claims of ballot-rigging and fraud should come as no surprise to those who have followed our work in Kyiv these past seven years. The pro-western presidential candidate, Viktor Yushchenko, was, we believe, the winner and we hope that he will quickly assume his rightful position as the new President. Mr Yushchenko's wife Kateryna has taken a keen interest in the work of SPA-SOS and we hope that the future will be good for both the Ukrainian people and the animals.

When the Bill is passed it will be an historic achievement, not only for animal welfare in the Ukraine but also for SPA-SOS and Tamara, who has been lobbying the Ukrainian Parliament for the past four years. At this point, after cracking open a bottle or two of Ukrainian champagne, the equally important implementation process can begin.

SPA-SOS



Tamara with some of the lucky dogs off to a new home in Germany.

The bigger the box, the smaller the critter

Ben Noreikis, President of LiSPA, provides an insight into the work of the society's wildlife rehabilitation unit and an overview of the highlights in Lithuania during 2004.

LiSPA



Watching the world go by – this tiny goldcrest was cared for by the LiSPA wildlife rehab staff until it was well enough to be released.

While reviewing LiSPA's monthly activity logs and selecting 'major accomplishments' to include in this annual report, I noticed an entry in the wildlife rehab log that I wanted to share. There's a saying among wildlife rehabilitators in regards to people delivering their 'find' to a rehab clinic – 'the bigger the box, the smaller the critter.' Strangely enough, this saying is not without foundation.

Two children and their father presented 'some kind of injured bird' in a cardboard box to our Rehab Department. It was a large box, large enough for a swan, but inside the box was Europe's tiniest wild bird. The bird had flown into a window, and had fallen unconscious to the ground, all 5 grams of it (that's the same weight as a twenty pence coin). Wrens weigh about 10 grams, while hummingbirds weigh 3–6 grams – it turned out that our patient weighed less than a fat hummingbird! LiSPA's Wildlife Rehab Dept had received its smallest patient ever – a goldcrest – meaning that our staff veterinarians had to examine the patient as a watch repairer would analyze a wristwatch or jeweler a gemstone.

Our tiny patient was examined under a magnifying glass and was diagnosed as having a cerebral concussion. Not much could be done apart keeping the tiny bird warm and allowing it a quiet rest. As it was unconscious, no oral medication could be used. Injections were also ruled out, as our smallest needles are as thick as the bird's toes. I'm sure you can imagine being jabbed with a needle proportionately that size – definitely more harm than good!

By the next day our patient was fully recovered. Seemingly unafraid of humans, this friendly and now quite hungry character immediately accepted offerings of mealworms for breakfast, flew about the room hummingbird-style with utmost precision and perched on a windowsill houseplant as if saying, 'I'm ready to go!' Soon after the window was opened, we lost sight of this Europe's smallest bird. We wished him no more 'glass encounters' of any kind and recorded his medical history amongst the 245 others in our 2004 patient log.

Joining the EU

Lithuania's accession to the European Union last May brought marked benefits to all sorts of animals. Dogs can now keep their entire ears and tails and cats can keep their claws, after the Lithuanian Government ratified the European Convention for the Protection of Pet Animals. This law prohibits ear-cropping, tail-docking and declawing – all painful procedures.

The European Zoo Directive was also transposed into Lithuanian law in 2004, forging the way to improve the quality of life for captive exotic animals. LiSPA has continued to keep a close working relationship with our National Zoo, knowing that there are no limits to bettering the conditions for these unfortunate animals merely being displayed in a collection.

During 2004, certain experiments using laboratory animals were denied by the Lithuanian Laboratory Animal Ethics Commission of which LiSPA is a member. This Commission works towards ensuring that alternative methods are investigated and if none are found that all ethical obligations are satisfactorily met prior to issuing experimentation licences.

Humane education

Farmers and livestock haulers in Lithuania are now required to be licensed, which involves completing a concise course in animal welfare. These courses are organised jointly by the Lithuanian Veterinary Continuing Education Centre and LiSPA. It is sometimes remarkable to see how much can be accomplished simply by explaining the Five Freedoms.

Humane education is the key to improving standards and enhancing the lives of all animals whether they be wild, companion, captive exotics, laboratory or farm animals. During 2004, as any other year, LiSPA has maintained focus on education.

Under the coordination of LiSPA, children are learning about animal welfare in schools and at the National Zoo. Humane education is now a part of the curriculum for third-year veterinary students at the Lithuanian Veterinary Academy. Farmers, livestock haulers, State Food and Veterinary Service Animal Welfare Inspectors, Environmental Inspectors and others are all learning about the essential good practice codes of animal husbandry and welfare.

As everywhere, the general public continually needs humane education. Reaching them is a difficult task and public awareness campaigns are a preferred route of LiSPA. World Animal Day is increasing in popularity annually and this is a prime opportunity to get a message across, no matter how small. Just make sure the box is large enough!

On behalf of all of us at LiSPA, thank you for your support and we wish you and your loved ones a safe and happy 2005.

World Organisation for Animal Health addresses animal welfare

In February Naturewatch representatives attended the World Organisation for Animal Health global conference in Paris. We are glad to report that animal welfare is now firmly on the agenda.



Left to right: Dr Ben Noreikis, Naturewatch representative Eastern Europe; John Ruane, Director Naturewatch; Commissioner David Byrne, European Union; Dr Kazimieras Lukauskas, vice president regional Commission for Europe.

Over 400 experts on animal welfare from around the world attended the first Global Conference on Animal Welfare held by the OIE at its Paris headquarters. Commissioner David Byrne, Head of the European Union for Health and Consumer Protection, was one of the guests of honour who spoke enthusiastically about the need for international standards for animal welfare. Currently there are no internationally agreed laws on animal welfare. It is the aim of the OIE to develop guidelines for use by all countries to enhance the welfare of farm animals. Consumers want to know more about the food they eat: they want labels that provide details of the product's origin, but they also want to know how the animals were cared for, what they ate, how they were bred, etc. And they want to know that certain standards of animal welfare were in place.

Applying science to animal welfare

Although a great deal of scientific information is already known about negative emotions, i.e. pain fear and distress, delegates heard that little research has been carried out on positive emotions, i.e. pleasure factors. To ensure animal welfare, these positive emotions must be considered – additionally science cannot yet determine actual pain levels but careful observations of animals and simple tests can

allow the animal to let you know what it likes and what it dislikes. For example, extremely simple 'reward' methods can enable a chicken to indicate the optimum size of space that it feels comfortable with. (A test was developed whereby chickens were taught that pecking at a certain part of a cage would expand its cage – once an optimum size was reached the chicken stopped pecking.) These simple tests can show scientists and welfarists the needs of the animals without resorting to complicated scientific methods.

Religious and ethical issues associated with animal welfare were discussed and speakers outlined that no religion advocates cruelty to animals – indeed it is strictly prohibited. Yet although certain faiths tend to stick rigidly to religious slaughter methods, they do not address the issue of cruelty in the handling of the slaughter animals. Our ethical and moral attitudes to animals have been eroded over the years from the family farms based on compassion to animals to the industrial farming methods based on productivity and profitability. Ways in which we slaughter, farm and transport animals often conflict with our cultural and religious values.

The way forward

Welfare issues identified during the conference were put to syndicate groups who were formed to produce proposed guidelines on the topic of land transport, sea transport and humane slaughter, together with formulating a briefing for welfare research and communication methods. Naturewatch partook in the 14-man sea transport group and its proposals will now go to the Council of the IOE and a mandate is expected this May with a reference standard for all member countries expected to be in place by May 2005.

Naturewatch warmly welcomes the IOE decision to place animal welfare at the forefront of its work. With its strong collaboration of the veterinary services of all member countries and its established infrastructure and international recognition, the IOE is well placed to play a major role in emphasising that animals are sentient beings and seeking transparency and compassion in worldwide farming.

28 member countries created the World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE – Office International des Epizooties) in 1924. Its role is to work for transparency in the worldwide animal health situation and is a reference organisation for guaranteeing the sanitary safety of world trade in animals and animal products. Today the OIE has 166 member countries with a regional base on every continent. Each member country has to report occurrences of animal diseases to the OIE, which then disseminates the information to all other countries to enable them to take appropriate measures to protect themselves. In addition, the OIE collects, analyses and publishes the latest scientific information on disease control methods. The OIE enjoys strong collaboration with the veterinary services of all its member countries and its standards are recognised by the World Trade Organisation. Today the OIE has been mandated by its member countries to become an international reference point in the field of animal protection and to prepare a basis for an international guide to good practice for animal welfare. The first Global Conference on this issue was held in February 2004.

ICAWC report – Warsaw, May 2004

The sixth International Companion Animal Welfare Conference (ICAWC) was held in Poland this May and attracted over 250 delegates from 40 countries.

ICAWC was developed by its organisers (Dogs Trust and North Shore Animal League) with the belief in working towards a world where no healthy companion animal is destroyed for want of a caring home with responsible owners.

The speakers and their topics

This year Dr Ben Noreikis, the Naturewatch representative in Eastern Europe, was invited to give a presentation on World Animal Day (4 October). Ben has used World Animal Day in Lithuania to stunning effect with the entire country partaking in activities to celebrate our love and respect for all animals. It's both a day of compassion as well as an ideal opportunity for animal welfare groups to promote their work. The ability to gain valuable publicity for welfare work was the prime topic of Ben's speech. He explained how groups could both spread the message about their activities and raise funds at the same time. Following the presentation, we were delighted to have over 45 groups from around the world sign up to partake in this year's World Animal Day activities. (Naturewatch sponsors the website www.worldanimalday.org.uk.)

Welfare experts from the United States gave talks and led discussions on the importance of using neutering techniques to reduce stray animal populations, together with valuable information on shelters, giving the delegates a good understanding on best practice methods. Very useful information on animal welfare legislation around the world was provided, together with advice on how to lobby government and municipality officials to enhance existing laws or create new laws in line with modern-day humane standards.

Apart from countries such as the UK and USA, the issue of fundraising is a relatively new concept in many parts of the world, especially in the former Soviet Union States. There are enormous difficulties in asking citizens in these countries to donate to charitable causes because it was unknown in the Communist system. In those times the government looked after everything – however, this often meant brutal and archaic methods, especially in dealing with stray animal populations. The conference organisers brought in leading fundraising experts who were able to guide groups through marketing and public relations techniques.

One such expert was our friend Peter Kiraly from Hungary, founder of the Rex Foundation, which now is one of the top five fundraising organisations in Budapest. With the funds raised, Peter has created a Nature and Animal Protection Centre in Budapest. This comprises an adoption centre for 100 cats, 50 dogs and 50 puppies, together with an educational and training facility for animal welfarists, children



Rex Foundation

This billboard in Budapest is advertising the Rex Foundation's appeal for its animal welfare activities: '1% is not a game. It means life.' The poster shows two dogs, one of which is a toy (the real dog belongs to Peter!). The Rex Foundation is among the top five organisations in Hungary that receive the highest amounts of 1% transfers – this is a Hungarian law whereby people can give 1% of their nett tax to charity.

and government inspectors. In addition Peter has created a 'farmyard' where visitors can become acquainted with indigenous domestic livestock. The conference could not fail to be inspired by Peter and his wonderful enthusiasm.

The conference was rounded off with a series of speakeasy sessions. Here all the presenters and delegates split into groups to discuss in detail any queries or questions generated by the topics covered during the conference.

About ICAWC

This very valuable educational conference was an original concept devised by Clarissa Baldwin, chief executive of the Dogs Trust, and Roger Weeks, director of the North Shore Animal League. Both had come to realise that working in animal welfare can be a very isolated and lonely experience, especially if you come from a country where animal welfare is not a priority for the government. So the idea developed for a conference where like-minded people could meet, network, make invaluable contacts and gain the advice and support needed.

The first International Companion Animal Welfare Conference was held in Budapest, Hungary, in October 1996, with the theme of 'Challenge, Change, Commitment'. As a result of this conference, many alliances were formed. It was soon clear that very successful results were being achieved by the conference delegates and today Clarissa and Roger must be very proud of what they have achieved in inspiring so many small groups since 1996 to have the confidence to 'make things happen' for the animals in their own countries.

NEWS IN BRIEF



Endangered Species – a new booklet from Naturewatch

What causes a species to come under threat of extinction? Who decides whether a species is endangered? What is being done about these problems? These and other issues are covered in our new booklet on endangered species. In so doing we introduce you to species like the golden-rumped elephant-shrew, the Sumatran rabbit, and the Comoro Island flying fox, which is shown gazing out, upside-down, from the cover – which are as much in need of attention as well-known glamour species like lions and elephants, if not more so.

To secure your copy, call the Naturewatch office. Each one costs only £2 including p&p.

A facelift for Clearly Compassionate

The Clearly Compassionate range of toiletries was launched by Naturewatch in 1997 to help fund our campaigning activities. After being in production for seven years, the labels are now a little dated and in need of a facelift, so we

approached the University of Gloucestershire to see if the Graphic Design department would be interested in becoming involved. Senior Lecturer Mike Abbey swiftly composed a brief to meet the objectives of the computer-based information design module involving 28 second-year students.

The students were very enthusiastic about this project, due to it being 'real' rather than theoretical, with the possibility of the winning design going into production. This will be a wonderful addition to the winner's portfolio and a great achievement for a student yet to join the work force. To make it more 'interesting' for the students, we are offering a cash prize to the winner and runners-up, together with certificates.

Local Naturewatch supporters were invited to come in to the office to comment on the designs and a clear favourite soon emerged. Full details of the winning design will shortly appear on the Naturewatch website.

Avon calling!

Avon makes money out of animals that undergo testing for cosmetics. Moreover, Avon seeks to mislead consumers with ambiguous language to suggest that it only uses cruelty-free ingredients. For example: *'Avon do not test ingredients on animals nor do we ask others to test on our behalf'* may be true, but EU legislation demands that new ingredients are tested on animals, and Avon actively encourages its suppliers to develop new ingredients, rather than relying on existing ingredients for new products.

Despite contact from Naturewatch, Avon refuses point blank to change its misleading statements. For this reason we are asking our supporters to boycott Avon cosmetics. Using animals in laboratories to test vanity products simply cannot be justified and is even opposed by most scientists.

So if Avon comes calling at your front door, please take a minute or two to explain to the salesperson the true reality of Avon's animal testing policy. And if you know anyone who sells Avon, ask them to complain to Avon that the company is the subject of a consumer boycott because of their testing policy. If enough agents complain to their head office, Avon might just take this matter seriously.

Pioneering stray animal control scheme in Turkey

Naturewatch Foundation was pleased to help sponsor a new concept in stray animal control based in Turkey. The idea is very simple – forget animal shelters; just neuter and release the strays back into their neighbourhoods. It's not a concept that could work in many countries, but it certainly works in Turkey as the strays are seen as communal animals that live side by side with the residents. The scheme is run by the Fethiye Animal Welfare Society using mobile neutering clinics funded by the Marchig Trust. Naturewatch Foundation funds veterinary medicines to the tune of €6,000 per annum and the scheme is now expanding throughout Turkey. We expect that in 2005 the Turkish Government will begin to commit funds to support the work of the Fethiye Society and consign all cruel capture methods to the history books.

Creature comforts

The SPA-SOS cats of Kyiv are having a treat this winter thanks to the kindness of Mark Deely of Cell-Tex Fabrications of Tipton. Mark is providing SPA-SOS with thick foam mats to act as beds for the cats. The mats reflect body heat and, once they have been covered with fabric to resist claws and teeth, will make very cosy insulation against the sub-zero Ukraine winter temperatures.

Naturewatch: 14 Hewlett Road Road, Cheltenham, Gloucestershire, GL52 6AA

Tel: 01242 252871 Fax: 01242 253569

Email: info@naturewatch.org Website: www.naturewatch.org