

Seeking a scientific approach to deciding the most humane method of killing poultry

Around the world billions of hens and broilers are slaughtered for the table each year and it is most important that this is done as humanely as possible. UFAW and the Humane Slaughter Association (HSA) jointly supported a workshop in June 2004 on controlled atmosphere methods. The latter offer many welfare advantages. A report of this successful meeting was published in a recent edition of *Animal Welfare* (Wathes CM 2005 Controlled atmosphere stunning of poultry: an integrated approach. *Animal Welfare* 14: 85–86). It was clear from this workshop that, whilst there have been significant advances in the science underpinning these new methods, some important issues about optimum gas mixtures remain unresolved. UFAW and HSA are organising a small follow-up workshop to be held in London in Spring 2005 with a view to trying to reach a scientific consensus about how the remaining questions may be answered. Participants are travelling from several European countries and the USA to contribute to this workshop, which we hope will provide guidance for new approaches to humane poultry slaughter around the world.

UFAW/BVA Ethics Committee symposium, May 2006

Ideas are under discussion for an international symposium, to be organised jointly by UFAW and the Ethics Committee of the British Veterinary Association, on issues surrounding quality of life in animals, focusing particularly on companion animals. The current plan, which we hope to confirm early in 2005, is to hold this Symposium in London in May 2006.

The thinking is that it would be informative and valuable to bring together leading scientists, practicing veterinarians, animal scientists and keepers, and medics to discuss:

- recent advances in the science underpinning our understanding of animals' feelings
- recent advances in methods for assessment of quality of life in man and other animals
- species variation in factors affecting quality of life
- ethical and practical implications for veterinarians and others of advances in understanding in this field;

and, in so doing, to emphasise and to promote concern for quality of life at the centre of care for companion animals.

The prime focus will be on animals kept for companionship. However, this covers a very wide range of species including all those commonly kept as farm and laboratory animals and we would hope that contributions would be forthcoming from experts in farmed and laboratory animal welfare to help inform thinking about quality of life in companion animals. We would be interested in members' views on this idea.

Can you help us spread UFAW's message?

UFAW is happy to speak to interested groups about current animal welfare issues and UFAW's work to tackle these. If you know a Womens' Institute, Probus, University of the Third Age or other group that would like a speaker, please get in touch.

Council changes at the 2004 AGM

Dr John Sanford and Dr Barry Hughes retired from Council and Miss Liz Wright retired due to business commitments. We welcome Professor Andrea Nolan (Dean of the Faculty of Veterinary Medicine, University of Glasgow Veterinary School), Dr James C Anderson (retired from Animals Scientific Procedures Inspectorate, Home Office) and Mr Arthur Sains (Senior Strategy Consultant, Meat and Livestock Commission, 1971–2001).

Notification for election to Council at the 2005 AGM

In accordance with Article 46 of the Constitution, members' nominations for election to Council at the 2005 AGM must reach the UFAW office between 2 August and 30 August 2005. Further information is available from the UFAW Secretary.

2005 Annual General Meeting

This year's AGM will be held in the afternoon of Tuesday 11 October 2005 at the Womens' Institute Hall in Wheathampstead. Full details of the time and business of the meeting will be sent to members in due course.

Donations and legacies

UFAW relies on the generosity of members and supporters and income from legacies to fund its ongoing charitable work. An advice leaflet on how to leave a gift to UFAW in your Will is available on request – please tick the reply form to receive a copy.

Response to the Autumn Appeal

We are extremely grateful to everyone who contributed to our Autumn Appeal, 'Support for developments in the 3Rs, Reduction, Refinement and Replacement'.

Staff changes

The good news was that Kate Davey joined us in July to work as PR and Fundraising Officer for both UFAW and HSA. The bad news (from our point of view) is that she is now getting married and moving to the west country. Having been unable to talk her out of this, we are now looking for a replacement to carry on the valuable start she has made in this work. Also, we are pleased to welcome Dr Louise Wiskin, who joined us in January as Editorial Assistant.

We are pleased to announce the birth of a daughter to Liz Roberts our Publications Officer, and we are very grateful to Sophie Vickery for standing in for Liz whilst she was away on temporary maternity leave. We also announce the birth of a daughter to Samantha Mills, Scientific Officer. Kate Parkes is providing temporary maternity leave cover whilst Samantha adjusts to parenthood.

Mrs Ruth Robinson

We are sad to hear of the death of Mrs Ruth Robinson on 3 January 2005. Ruth worked at UFAW for ten years at the South Mimms offices during the 1970s and early 1980s contributing to, amongst other things, the production of the sixth edition of the Laboratory Animal Handbook. We send our sympathies and best wishes to her family.

UFAW Spring Appeal — Vacation Scholarships

The 2005 Spring Appeal is to support activities associated with the UFAW vacation scholarships. Since their inception 21 years ago, the scholarships have proved to be a very effective way of encouraging interest in the scientific approach to animal welfare among students at UK universities and colleges. To date, the studies of over 200 students have been supported. The scholarships have also proved to be the starting point for many into further study and professional involvement in the field. Your support will help to ensure that the scholarships continue to play an important role in furthering our knowledge of animals and how to care for them. Thank you.



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Universities Federation for Animal Welfare

News-Sheet, March 2005



Science in the service of animal welfare

Letter from the Chairman

At the AGM last October I had the great privilege of being elected Chairman of Council following a successful two years under John Sanford. These are interesting times as you can see from the contents of this news-sheet and I am looking forward to the next two years.

It is quite remarkable how much is achieved by the small but dedicated staff. I would just like to highlight two novel initiatives in the newsletter. The first is the establishment of the UFAW Wild Animal Welfare Award, the first of which was won by Dr Jonathan Reynolds of The Game Conservancy Trust for the development of an innovative mink raft enabling trapping of mink without harm to other species. The second is an important initiative for UFAW which is to address the consequences of the growth in the feeding of wild birds. This interest started in 2003 with the establishment of a working group and is being taken forward actively by UFAW. I cannot finish this letter without mentioning the publication of two more books in the UFAW Animal Welfare Series. These make impressive reading and we are most grateful to the authors for providing such scholarly and important contributions.

Finally, I urge you to support the charity to ensure it will continue with programmes as important as those in progress at present and described in the following pages.



UFAW Animal Welfare Book Series

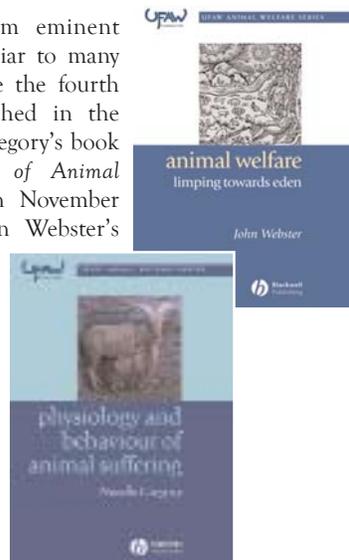
We are pleased to announce that two more books are now in the pipeline for publication by Blackwell in the UFAW Animal Welfare Series. These are:

- *Understanding Animal Welfare* by Professor David Fraser of the University of Columbia, Canada
- *The Sciences of Animal Welfare* by Professor David Mellor, Dr Kate Littin and Dr Kevin Stafford of Massey University, New Zealand

These contributions, from eminent authors who will be familiar to many UFAW supporters, will be the fourth and fifth volumes published in the series. Professor Neville Gregory's book *Physiology and Behaviour of Animal Suffering* was published in November 2004, and Professor John Webster's book *Animal Welfare: Limping Towards Eden* was published in February 2005.

This is promising to be a monumental series. If you have an idea for a contribution, seize the moment and let us know.

Available from Blackwell Publishing (www.blackwellpublishing.com).
Special UFAW members' prices: N Gregory, *Physiology and Behaviour of Animal Suffering*, £31.99; J Webster, *Animal Welfare: Limping Towards Eden*, £19.99.



Mink raft wins first UFAW Wild Animal Welfare Award

The first UFAW wild animal welfare award was won by Dr Jonathan Reynolds of The Game Conservancy Trust for his innovative mink raft, which allows the predators to be trapped without harming other species. The £1000 award was presented by Mr Ben Bradshaw, Minister for Nature Conservation and Animal Welfare, at The Royal Geographical Society in London in September. The award recognises innovations that are relevant to improving the welfare of captive wild animals or which alleviate or prevent harm of human origin to animals in the wild.



Above: Tom Porteus and Mike Short of the Game Conservancy Trust (GCT) discussing one of the GCT Mink Rafts.

Right: Water vole being released from a GCT Mink Raft. Trapping based on mink rafts is highly selective, greatly reducing risks for non-target species.

Mink first established themselves in Britain in the 1950s after being released from fur farms. They are now found throughout the British Isles, where they have had a disastrous impact on water vole populations which have declined by 90% in some areas. The water vole is now a priority species under the UK Biodiversity Action Plan, which recognises the need to control mink to conserve dwindling numbers.

Dr James Kirkwood, UFAW's Scientific Director, said: "We were impressed with the mink raft as it is simple, cheap and enables efficient monitoring or capture without compromising the welfare of non-target species. A drawback with many trapping systems is that they are often unselective and need to be used in large numbers over long periods of time to take effect. This results in many non-target species such as moorhen and water vole being captured which is obviously undesirable. It's important that welfare is taken into account in all aspects of wildlife management including trapping. We hope that this award encourages a scientific approach to tackling welfare concerns in this field."

The raft is essentially a mink detector which guides trapping efforts to create an incisive population-control programme. A tunnel on the raft houses a simple cartridge which records the footprints of any visiting animals in a moist clay and sand mixture. By showing where mink are active, the raft avoids wasting trapping efforts at locations without mink and also reduces non-target captures.

When a mink is detected, a trap placed in the raft tunnel typically catches within ten days. After capture, the raft is returned to monitoring mode to check whether other mink are present. Continued monitoring guides further trapping and provides crucial feedback about its impact on mink numbers. This was the missing element that previously created much uncertainty about the value of mink trapping. The raft even chronicles the recovery of water voles! The mink raft is being used by Wildlife Trusts and other conservation bodies in Hampshire, Wiltshire, Devon, Kent, Norfolk, Suffolk, Essex, Cheshire, Cumbria, Aberdeenshire and Somerset.

The project received considerable publicity in a wide range of media, largely thanks to the photographs of a water vole which accompanied the press release. The story was featured on the BBC News Online website on the science page, and other high profile coverage was achieved in *The Field*, *Scottish Field*, *Country Life*, *The Veterinary Record* and on the Government's Community Newswire website, which was set up to ensure that rural organisations' stories are well-publicised. Regional coverage was achieved in a number of weekly newspapers.





Workshop on assessment of animal suffering

When animals are used in research, as when they are used for any purpose, it is important to assess the risk of suffering so that a proper judgement can be made as to the balance of the welfare costs against the benefits of the research. Detection and assessment of suffering are crucial to its treatment and prevention, and assessments are also necessary for reporting on the welfare of laboratory animals. The issue of suffering is currently being considered by a number of organisations, including the Animals Procedures Committee, the Boyd Group, and the European Commission. The



UFAW Deputy Director, Dr Robert Hubrecht, co-convoked a session on animal suffering at The Laboratory Animal Science Association's Winter Meeting, to provide an update on the activities of the various organisations considering suffering, and to provide a forum for animal care staff, veterinarians and scientists to discuss the, often difficult, issues surrounding the subject. Speakers included the Chief Inspector of the Home Office Inspectorate, scientists (who addressed new methods of assessing pain and suffering), lay persons on ethical review committees who are charged with balancing the harms and benefits of procedures, and veterinarians. The session was extremely well attended and allowed LASA and the APC to recruit institutions for a pilot study on the retrospective assessment of suffering in animals used in scientific procedures.

UFAW Deputy Director wins award

Dr Robert Hubrecht was awarded the 2004 GlaxoSmithKline Laboratory Animal Welfare Prize. Dr Hubrecht said: "This award highlights the importance of UFAW's scientific approach to improving the welfare of animals used in research, and in particular, to improving their housing conditions which affect their well-being throughout their life". In his acceptance speech, Dr Hubrecht described milestones in laboratory animal care achieved by UFAW since its inception in 1926. He then drew attention to recent progress in housing and husbandry standards resulting from UFAW's work with animal welfare scientists, animal care professionals, regulators and research institutions, and the need for further developments worldwide.

Garden Bird Health Initiative

There has been an enormous growth of interest in feeding garden birds and this now takes place in many parts of the world on a remarkably large scale. In 2003, UFAW organised a Working Group comprising bird food retailers, conservationists, and wildlife veterinarians to discuss the need to develop a stronger scientific base for this. As yet, for example, little is known about the impact of feeding on population dynamics or about what foods best meet birds' nutrient requirements at various times of the year. This

Group has met several times and has produced a booklet (illustrated) and a leaflet detailing best practice guidelines for feeding garden birds, published in March 2005; please see the enclosed leaflet or contact UFAW to obtain copies. The Group has also endorsed the need, and made great strides in identifying funding, for research aimed at improving our understanding of some common diseases of garden birds so that appropriate steps can be taken towards preventing these where possible. UFAW is now fundraising for this Garden Bird Health Initiative (GBHi) to support a collaborative research programme involving several university and other organisations, which will be coordinated by the Institute of Zoology. If you would like to make a donation to the GBHi, please see the enclosed leaflet or contact UFAW.



Advances in the science and application of animal training

A one-day meeting to discuss recent advances in the science of animal training and new applications of training techniques took place in Glasgow on 6 October 2004. This meeting, supported by UFAW and co-organised with the International Society for Anthrozoology, brought together over 100 veterinarians, animal scientists, animal behaviourists, psychologists, animal trainers and others who work with animals from 15 countries to share knowledge and good practice.

Training has long been recognised as an important component of the successful adaptation of companion animals, their inclusion in sporting events and other recreational activities. As can be found in any bookshop, an extensive 'folk literature' relating to the training of these animals exists. More recently, approaches based upon scientific principles – such as clicker training, where an animal is conditioned to associate a novel clicking sound with the expectation of a future reward – have also been employed. The valuable contribution that relevant training can make to the management and welfare of other animals, for example on farms or in zoos, has been less well recognised. Another area where it is known that training can have welfare benefits is the laboratory, and it was suggested at the meeting that more experienced trainers should consider using their skills in this area.



UFAW's Development Officer, Dr Stephen Wickens, who co-organised the meeting, was very pleased with the response to the meeting and the standard of talks: "By focussing on the process of training animals rather than the product – ie the methods you can employ to train an animal rather than what you are training them to do – the meeting suggested a range of possible approaches to training animals that were of relevance to everyone who works with animals."

Sally Walker wins international prize

Sally Walker set up the Zoo Outreach Organisation (ZOO) in India in 1985 to help develop the conservation and education roles and the welfare standards of zoos in India. Under her guidance and support ZOO has played a remarkably effective role not only in India but also in many other South East Asian countries. UFAW has helped support ZOO in this work during the last decade. We are delighted to hear that Sally has been presented with the World Association of Zoos and Aquariums 'Heine Hediger' Award for her outstanding and dedicated efforts. In her acceptance speech at the WAZA conference in Taipei in November 2004, Sally said: "I could not have done anything without my staff in India. If you drop in for a visit late in the evening – 7.30–9.30pm – you would still find 15 people working, not because this is required but because they want to". Sally and ZOO have been very successful in promoting high standards of animal care and management for species conservation. This is a well-deserved prize. Congratulations, Sally.

Animal Welfare Research Training Scholarship

There has been a good response to UFAW's call for applications for the 2005 Animal Welfare Research Training Scholarship. Subjects highlighted as being of particular interest this year were:

- methodologies aimed at elucidating the neurological basis of sentience in animals
- approaches to alleviating welfare problems in farmed, companion and laboratory animals through breeding
- detection and alleviation of pain and suffering
- methods of welfare assessment

Shortlisted applicants will be invited to submit full detailed proposals and we hope to announce a winner later in the year.

21 years of the UFAW Vacation Scholarships

A drinks reception to celebrate twenty-one years of the UFAW vacation scholarships was held in the University of Glasgow's Faculty of Veterinary Medicine in December 2004 as part of the annual UFAW Vacation Scholarship meeting. First awarded in 1983, over 200 students have benefited from the scholarships, which aim to provide opportunities for students to develop their interests in animal welfare, encourage a scientific approach to the issues, and establish a starting point for further, longer-term research into improving the lives of animals.

At the reception, Professor Peter Holmes, Vice Principal for Research at the University of Glasgow and UFAW Vice President, spoke warmly of the success of the vacation scholarships and reflected on his involvement with them over the years. He singled out for special praise the vision of UFAW's previous Director, Mr Roger Ewbank, in initiating the scholarships and was pleased that Roger was in attendance to see the regard in which they were held. Everyone agreed with these sentiments and wished the scholarships well for the future.

This 2004 meeting, the seventh, proved to be one of the most successful yet, with over 100 people attending from across the country to hear talks on a diverse range of subjects, from the impact of the electrical environment of the aquarium on fish to how exposure to slurry can aid in the hardening of the hooves of cattle. Most pleasingly, amongst those attending were a number of ex-vacation scholars, who were quick to attest to the success of the scholarships. For example, Stuart Becker (1999, Comparison of behavioural interaction in two populations of captive ring-tailed lemurs in single-species and mixed-species exhibits) has just started a PhD with Professor Jane Hurst at the University of Liverpool and joins Julia Lacey (2002) who is in the middle of hers. Sean Wensley (2000, The welfare implications of manipulating social groups of caged zebra finches [*Poephila castanotis*]), who has recently completed the MSc in Applied Animal Behaviour and Animal Welfare at Edinburgh, informed us that he has just become Animal Welfare Representative for the British Veterinary Association Overseas Group. Deborah Ottway (1998, Behavioural indicators of stress in cats [*Felis catus*] residing long-term in single and communal housing), who was part of a large contingent attending from Anglia Polytechnic University, continues to contribute to their courses. Scholars who have themselves gone on to be supervisors include Dr Natalie Waran, Dr Alison Hanlon, Dr Deborah Wells, and Dr Victoria Melfi. We wish all these, and the other scholars who attended, well, and we look forward to news of their future activities.

Some words of support received in connection with the 21st Year event and the Vacation Scholarships:

- Professor Clive Phillips, University of Queensland: the scholarships offer "a great opportunity for students to focus their study on animal welfare. Keep up the good work!"
- Professor Ian Duncan, University of Guelph: "I would like to congratulate UFAW on reaching this milestone and wish you every success with this excellent scholarship scheme in the future."
- Dr Mike Appleby, Vice President of the Humane Society of the United States: "I hope it goes well. Well done to UFAW!"
- Professor Sandra Edwards, University of Newcastle: "I am sure it will be an interesting day and would like to thank UFAW for their continuing support of these vacation scholarships. I think they are an important way of introducing students to animal welfare research and often stimulate interest which progresses to a longer-term career in this area."
- Cara McCusker (2001 Biologically relevant odour cues function as a novel form of enrichment in captive ring-tailed lemurs [*Lemur catta*]), currently undertaking a PhD at Queen's University Belfast: "My PhD continued from an initial project funded by a UFAW Vacation Scholarship Award [... which] gave me the opportunity to carry out research over my summer vacation before the final year of my degree, to write up my results and to present them at a UFAW Vacation Scholarship meeting. This was a really positive, fun and educational experience for me. It introduced me to the world of research and enthused me towards doing a PhD which I enjoy immensely! Thank you UFAW!"

UFAW university links scheme

UFAW continues to expand its university links scheme, which aims to establish a network of UFAW representatives in universities and colleges to help with promoting UFAW's objectives at their establishments and raise the charity's profile. Four new representatives have kindly agreed to take on this role:

- Dr John Eddison, School of Biological Sciences, Plymouth University
- Dr Deborah Goodwin, School of Psychology, Southampton University
- Professor Mac Johnston, Royal Veterinary College, London
- Dr Tessa Smith, Department of Biology, University College Chester

Amongst their other animal welfare initiatives, such as ensuring that their students all receive copies of UFAW's Annual Reports and other literature, existing link universities, Anglia Polytechnic University (see photograph below), Bristol, Edinburgh, Lincoln and Stirling, have set up annual awards to recognise undergraduate students' achievements in the field of animal welfare science. We offer our congratulations to all the prize-winning students and we look forward to future reports of their activities in support of animal welfare.



Photographs: Speakers at this year's Vacation Scholarship meeting: Naomi Latham, Sarah Wallace, Jade Spence, Ann McGaughey, Ben Garrod, Samantha Ward, Kirsten Watson, Pete Fleming, Lucinda Craggs, Lesley Innes, UFAW's Stephen Wickens. **Inset:** Anglia Polytechnic staff and award-winning students (left to right): Dr Mark Kennedy (Lecturer, Animal Welfare), Dr Toby Carter (Lecturer, Animal Behaviour; UFAW Representative; Scholar Supervisor), Daisy Berthoud, Simon Finnegan, Helen Vargas, Denis Wheller (Head of Department), Dr Sheila Pankhurst (Lecturer, Animal Behaviour; Scholar Supervisor).

