

Universities Federation for Animal Welfare

News-Sheet, Spring 2009



***Darwinian selection,
selective breeding and
the welfare of animals***
International Symposium
June 2009

***Companion animal
welfare initiatives***
New award scheme and
genetic welfare problems
resource are underway

***Vacation Scholarship
Meeting 2008***
Supporting animal
welfare science education



Letter from the Chairman

I have great pleasure in introducing the Spring 2009 News-Sheet which highlights some of the wide range of activities in which the charity is successfully involved.

It is particularly pleasing to report that the University Links scheme, which both promotes UFAW and supports the development of animal welfare science, continues to expand both in the UK and overseas. Likewise does the Vacation Scholarship scheme, which now includes students at overseas institutions, in its important role of encouraging interest in animal welfare science. The scheme is the subject of this Spring's appeal and your support will be greatly appreciated.

There has been much interest recently in welfare problems associated with the breeding of dogs. Both the UFAW International Symposium in June, which will be considering issues relating to welfare and selection with an exciting line-up of speakers, and the ongoing development by UFAW of a web-based information resource for prospective pet owners describing genetic welfare problems of companion animals, are timely reminders that these problems are by no means limited to dogs. The new UFAW Companion Animal Award has also received much interest and we look forward to the announcement of the winner of the inaugural award shortly.

I am delighted to report that our 'Garden Bird Health *initiative*' is progressing; you will see that new information is being revealed from what I hope will become an increasingly successful part of our work.

I thank all our supporters for their interest in the charity's activities, and my fellow Council members and the UFAW staff for their commitment and hard work.



Work starts on UFAW web-based information resource on genetic welfare problems in companion animals

UFAW thinks that the clear presentation of information about the welfare impacts of hereditary problems is likely to be very helpful for prospective pet owners in assisting them to decide which species, breed or strain to chose, and in enabling them to seek the appropriate assurances from breeders or suppliers so as to avoid unintentionally perpetuating known genetic problems.

Our aim is to develop a web site that will provide information on a breed by breed and condition by condition basis. The intention is for this information to be, as far as possible, science-based and referenced but presented in a way that makes clear to a wide range of readers, the nature of the physical or behavioural hereditary problems described and their welfare consequences.

This is a large task but one that can be tackled steadily with time. The way forward, we thought, might be to seek volunteer help in collecting and assessing information for presentation at the website. We launched this project in September and have been delighted with the response we have received from scientists, vets, students and others who have contacted us and offered to contribute. If you would like to help contact James Kirkwood at UFAW. We hope to start adding material to a pilot website shortly.



Award for significant advances in companion animal welfare

In 2008 we launched a new prize award scheme to recognise individuals or organisations who have made significant advances for the welfare of companion animals. We are delighted with the response to this and with the quality of the applications received. These are being considered by the judging panel and we hope to be able to announce the winner of the first award shortly. Applications for the 2010 award will be advertised in October this year.



Darwinian selection, selective breeding and the welfare of animals.

UFAW International Symposium 2009, University of Bristol, Bristol, UK, 22nd-23rd June

Plans for the UFAW Symposium marking the 200th anniversary of the birth of Charles Darwin and the 150th anniversary of the publication of his ‘On The Origin of Species’, to be held this June in Bristol, are well advanced with an international line-up of contributors for what promises to be a very exciting event.

The Symposium will take place on the 22nd – 23rd June 2009 at the University of Bristol and is the latest in UFAW’s continuing and successful programme of themed international meetings that bring together leading scientists, veterinarians, policy makers and all those with an interest in animals and their welfare. A drinks reception will also take place at Bristol’s City Museum and Art Gallery on the evening of the 22nd.

Issues relating to the welfare impacts of natural selection and of our selective breeding of animals will be considered at the Symposium, with presentations covering farm, laboratory, companion, zoo and free-living animals – planned contributions are listed opposite.

To ensure a place, early registration is encouraged as UFAW symposia are usually over-subscribed. There are also a limited number of subsidized places for students and veterinary nurses that will be allocated on a first-come-first-served basis.

It is intended that the proceedings of this Symposium will be published as a special issue of ‘*Animal Welfare*’.

Further details about the meeting, including a registration form and a full list of contributors can be obtained from the UFAW office or at www.ufaw.org.uk.

Contributors to the Symposium:

JWS Bradshaw and ES Paul (University of Bristol): Is (was) empathy for animals an adaptation?

R Casey and JWS Bradshaw (University of Bristol): Individual differences in behavioural response style in domestic cats.

LM Collins, L Asher, G Diesel and JF Summers (Royal Veterinary College, UK): Conforming to standards: a review of inherited defects as a consequence of physical conformation in pedigree dogs.

J Conington (Scottish Agricultural College): Natural selection for easier sheep management.

MD Cooper and JHM Wrathall (RSPCA): Assurance schemes as a tool to tackle genetic welfare problems in broilers.

RB D'Eath, AB Lawrence, J Conington, IAS Olsson and P Sandoe (Scottish Agricultural College, University of Porto and University of Copenhagen): Breeding for behavioural change in farm animals: practical and ethical considerations.

P Honess, MA Griffiths and S Narainapoullé (University of Oxford and Bioculture (Mauritius) Ltd): Selective breeding of primates: consequences and challenges.

J Hurst (University of Liverpool): On the origin of laboratory mice and consequences for welfare.

P Jensen (University of Linköping): Domestication, selection, behaviour and welfare of animals – genetic mechanisms for rapid response.

TW Lewis, JA Woolliams and SC Blott (Animal Health Trust and The Roslin Institute, UK): Optimisation of breeding strategies to reduce the prevalence of inherited disease in pedigree dogs.

JM Macfarlane, SM Matheson and CM Dwyer (Scottish Agricultural College): Genetic parameters for lamb birth difficulty, vigour and sucking ability in Suffolk sheep.

T Mark and P Sandoe (University of Copenhagen): New genomic developments in dairy cattle breeding – the risks and opportunities for health and welfare.

G Mason (University of Guelph): The ‘comparative approach’: Using inter-species variation to test evolutionary and ecological hypotheses about animal welfare.

P McGreevy (University of Sydney): Challenges and paradoxes in the companion animal niche.

FD McMillan (Best Friends Animal Society, USA): Selective breeding in fighting dogs: What have we created?

PA Oltenacu and D M Broom (Oklahoma State University and University of Cambridge): The impact of genetic selection for increased milk yield on the welfare of dairy cows.

J Quinn (University of Oxford): The adaptive significance of personality traits in nature.

SP Redrobe and JB Carroll (Bristol Zoological Gardens): Gorilla reproduction in captivity – to assist or not.

TB Rodenburg, P Bijma, ED Ellen, R Bergsma, S de Vries, JE Bolhuis, B Kemp and JAM van Arendonk (University of Wageningen and Institute for Pig Genetics, The Netherlands): Breeding amiable animals? Improving farm animal welfare by including social effects into the genetic model.

NJ Rooney (University of Bristol): Welfare concerns associated with pedigree dog breeding in the UK.

M Špinka (Institute of Animal Science, Prague): Domestication effects on animal emotional signalisation: a conceptual model.

PC Trimmer, JAR Marshall, JM McNamara and AI Houston (University of Bristol): A theoretical analysis of the evolution of fear.

SP Turner, R Roehe, RB D'Eath, SH Ison, M Farish, MC Jack and AB Lawrence (Scottish Agricultural College): Selection against pig aggressiveness at regrouping; practical application and implications for long-term behavioural patterns.

T Woodfine (Durrell Institute): Wild animal conservation genetics.

J Yeates, R ter Meulen and DCJ Main (University of Bristol): Breeding for pleasure: the value of pleasure and pain in evolution and welfare ethics.



photos: top, Bluemoondog Pictures
bottom l and r, Robert Hubrecht

Research News

Better regulation of research using animals under the Animals (Scientific Procedures) Act 1986

It is often stated that the legislation governing research on animals in the UK is amongst the most stringent in the world. This rightly reflects legitimate public concerns about the use of animals in research. Over the years UFAW has made significant contributions to laboratory animal welfare, including supporting Professor William Russell and Rex Burch in their development of the 3Rs principles (Replacement, Reduction and Refinement), funding research into ways of improving laboratory animal welfare and through publications such as the UFAW Laboratory Animal Handbook. However, whilst UFAW's concern is for animal welfare, there is a balance to be struck with regard to the world-wide situation. If researchers find the regulatory process to be too slow or burdensome there is a risk that research will move overseas, perhaps to places where the standards of ethical review and animal care are rather less than in the UK.

The Davidson review of 2006 provided a number of recommendations regarding the regulation of the use of animals in research. As a result of which, a Better Regulation Steering Group, on which Robert Hubrecht, UFAW's Deputy Scientific Director serves, was set up originally through the Cabinet Office and later through the Department for Business, Enterprise and Regulatory Reform (BERR). As the Davidson review recognised, it is important to ensure that any changes should not compromise the protection of the animals and so the group contains representatives from animal welfare organisations as well as other stakeholders. The steering group has monitored and advised on various Home Office initiatives. These have included shorter and clearer project licences that still retain the information needed for ethical analysis of proposed research; and, for personal licences, standard wordings for commonly specified regulated procedures. The adoption of these wordings should reduce bureaucracy but not impact on welfare as applicants are required to demonstrate that they have appropriate experience or training for the techniques. Further information can be found at <http://scienceandresearch.homeoffice.gov.uk/animal-research/publications-and-reference/publications/09pcd-holders-circulars-2008/07aspdnewsletter>

UFAW 3Rs Liaison Group

UFAW established this group to help develop the academic base of laboratory animal welfare research and fund UK studentships into any aspect of the 3Rs (Replacement, Reduction and Refinement). Thanks to the generous support of the UFAW 3Rs Liaison Group members (they are listed on the UFAW website), the group was able to advertise last Autumn for a 6th Award, to be given in 2009. The Award is now closed and the group are considering the applications received.

Anjanette Harris, a previous winner of the award, is in the final process of writing up her report for UFAW. We were delighted to hear that Anjanette passed her viva examination on 8th January 2009. She has also had a publication accepted by the journal *Animal Behaviour*, and has two other articles under review.

UFAW is always seeking new institutional members prepared to contribute to this initiative, so if any reader works for a commercial organisation involved in animal research that is not already a member of the UFAW 3Rs Liaison Group and who feels that they might be able to help, please contact Dr Robert Hubrecht at UFAW.

Welfare of rabbits in research

The UFAW/RSPCA Rabbit Behaviour and Welfare Group has now published its report providing practical guidance on improving the husbandry of rabbits used in research. It sets out the welfare needs of the rabbit and explains how these needs can be fulfilled.

'Refining rabbit care, a resource for those working with rabbits in research' is the result of collaboration between UFAW, the RSPCA, and representatives from industry and academia. The report describes various enrichment strategies based on rabbit biology and behaviour and is intended for animal technicians, research facility managers, veterinarians and scientists. The free report, already in great demand and receiving excellent reviews, will also help facilities comply with, and improve upon, the new Appendix A to Council of Europe Convention ETS123. Email rabbits@rspca.org.uk for a copy of the report.



11th UFAW Vacation Scholarship meeting, University of Chester



Some of the Vacation Scholars and guest speakers at the 2008 Vacation Scholarship meeting, University of Chester.
Photo: Steve Wickens.

This year's UFAW Vacation Scholarship meeting, where successful scholars present the findings of their studies, was held at the University of Chester in December 2008. Besides the high quality of the talks, one of the features of these meetings is the wide range of subjects covered, and this year was especially diverse. Amongst these was the study undertaken by Janina Mukanowa (Royal Holloway and Bedford New College) who was seeking to determine whether a social amoeba, *Dictyostelium discoideum*, might make a suitable alternative to the animals normally used to test the emetic effect of new medicines. Her work showed that *Dictyostelium* might indeed prove to be a suitable replacement, for the initial screening of new medicines at least, and she is seeking further funding to carry on this work.

Also pleasing was the interest in animal welfare shown by students from outside the traditional life science background. Lorna Wilson, who is reading mathematics at the University of Oxford, presented her study on the 'Statistical examination of latency to choose as a measure of laying hen welfare'. Much of animal welfare science is based upon the appropriate application of statistical techniques, so it was good to hear that Lorna hopes to continue to work in this area.

Other notable features of the meeting include the inaugural talk from the first, of what we hope is many, overseas UFAW Vacation Scholarship students. Mona Wendelin, who is studying at the Estonian University of Life Sciences under the supervision of UFAW link Dr David Arney, gave a very good talk about pain markers in horses recovering from laminitis. UFAW 3Rs Liaison Scholar Anjanette Harris (University of Edinburgh) and Hume Fellow Dr Johanneke van der Harst (University of Utrecht), also talked about their exciting work on how environmental enrichment seems to indirectly enhance cognitive performance in rats, and on anticipatory behaviour and drug-discrimination as tools to assess welfare and elucidate subjective feelings in animals respectively.

UFAW would like to thank everyone who attended or contributed to this popular meeting, including those students who attended from Warwickshire and Bishop Burton Colleges and the scholars whose excellent presentations helped make it such an enjoyable day. Special thanks are due to those speakers who kindly agreed to attend from overseas, and to the staff and students at Chester, and especially Dr Emma Creighton, for their hospitality and assistance with the meeting.

UFAW's Vacation Scholarship scheme was established in 1983 to encourage and support interest in animal welfare science amongst young people at UK colleges and universities. It now also includes overseas institutions. Almost 250 students have now participated in the scheme. This year, as usual, studies covered a very wide range of subject areas including: enrichment for captive sloth bears, screening for deafness in dogs, pain responses in lambs, benefits of ranging in laying hens, enrichment for pigs, and pain assessment in working donkeys. The annual meeting provides a forum for scholars to present their work to peers.

photos: from top, Ashleigh Brown; Jenny Jamieson;
Rowena Packer; Michael Petri; Cyril Rayappan.



Small Project and Travel Awards 2008

The UFAW Small Project and Travel Award scheme has continued throughout 2008 to support a variety of projects aimed at benefiting animal welfare. UFAW is keen to both encourage and support young academics in the field of animal welfare and to further extend international links.

Successful applicants in 2008 included Dr Joana Marques, a recent doctoral graduate from Portugal, who was supported in her attendance at an international conference to present her work on improving the welfare of pre-weaning mice through a novel characterisation routine for phenotyping and monitoring welfare. Ms Wiebke Wellbrock, currently studying for her Masters in Animal Science, The Netherlands, received funds to assist in her work investigating the effect that the European welfare directives will have on recent EU accession countries – in particular, the directives related to pig welfare and their effect on pig farms in Croatia.

Other projects which have been supported include a fish welfare session at the Aquaculture Canada conference due to take place later this year. The importance of investigating sentience in fish and the impact that these findings may have on the aquaculture industry, is increasingly being recognised and UFAW looks forward to hearing about the outcomes of this conference later in 2009.

UFAW's objectives include dissemination of animal welfare information. Therefore a number of UFAW publications, including the Journal *Animal Welfare*, were donated to both Chittagong Veterinary and Animal Sciences University, Bangladesh, and the newly set-up Animal Welfare Resource Centre, managed by ACIN-International in Kenya.



photo: Joana Marques

The UFAW University Links scheme

UFAW's University Link scheme, which seeks to encourage interest in the science of animal welfare at academic institutions, has continued to expand. The newest additions are Hartpury College, Gloucestershire, São Paulo State University in Brazil, Pontificia Universidad Católica de Chile, and the University of Lisbon. We look forward to reporting on their activities in the future.

If you are interested in becoming a link person for your university and assisting UFAW in this way, then please contact us (ufaw@ufaw.org.uk).

Further information about link universities and the scheme can be found on the UFAW website.

Support for an animal welfare science teaching and research post in Israel?

The UFAW SAWI Fund (its name reflects its origin – the Society for Animal Welfare in Israel) provides funds specifically for the support of animal welfare initiatives in Israel. Talks have begun with our contacts at universities in Israel to explore the possibility of helping to fund a new animal welfare science teaching and research post. This would be an excellent way of helping to promote strategic developments for animal welfare and to stimulate further interest in the subject and we hope to be able to find a way forward.



photo: Bluemoondog Pictures

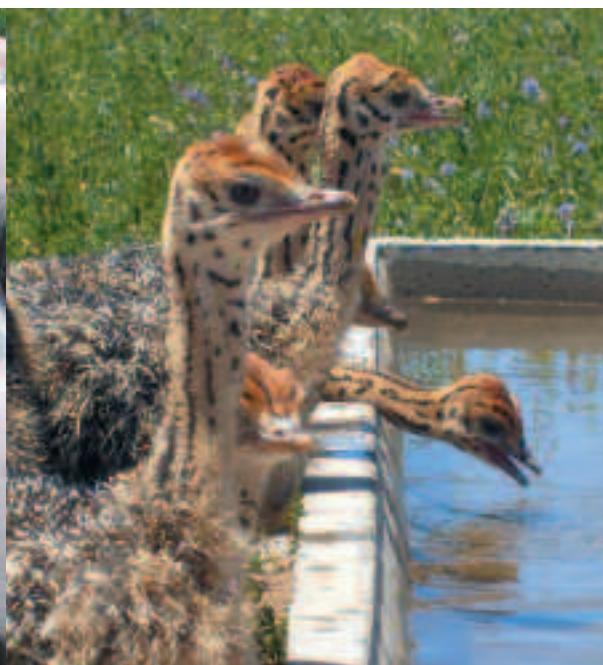


photo: Liz Carter



photo: Ali Taylor

Garden Bird Health *initiative* (GBHi)

Congratulations to Becki Lawson of the Institute of Zoology who won the best student presentation award at the European Association for Wildlife Disease Conference, Croatia, September 2008. Her presentation was entitled 'The Garden Bird Health *initiative*: a novel citizen science scheme for garden bird health surveillance'. The GBHi work this year has revealed that trichomoniasis has continued to be a common cause of death in finches and, in collaboration with the University of East Anglia, molecular diagnostic methods are being used to try to identify the strain involved. In addition to the long-term supporters, we are most grateful to Defra which has contributed £25,000 to the GBHi project this year.

Notification for election to Council at the 2009 AGM

In accordance with Article 46 of the Constitution, members' nominations for election to Council at the 2009 AGM must reach the UFAW office between 5th August and 2nd September 2009. Further information is available from the UFAW Secretary.

2009 Annual General Meeting

This year's AGM will be held in the afternoon of Wednesday 14th October 2009 at the UFAW office (The Old School, Brewhouse Hill, Wheathampstead, Herts). Full details of the time and business of the meeting will be sent to members in due course.

Welfare of 'alternative' livestock species

In 2008 UFAW's Scientific Officer, Elizabeth Carter, was awarded a Winston Churchill Travelling Fellowship by the Winston Churchill Memorial Trust (WCMT) for her project entitled: 'Alternative livestock farming: considerations for animal welfare'. Liz is interested in the welfare of alternative livestock species that are farmed in the UK, especially those that are not native to the UK and are still considered principally wild, and therefore require

a Dangerous Wild Animal Licence to keep. The species Liz selected for her project include ostrich, bison and crocodile. It is estimated that there are approximately 100 ostrich farms, 20 bison farms and one crocodile farm in the UK at present, and this is likely to increase. Relatively little welfare science literature has been published for any of these three species.

As part of her Fellowship, Liz visited countries established in the farming of these species, including South Africa (ostrich), USA and Canada (bison) and Australia (crocodiles). Liz is now continuing her work and will be submitting her findings to the WCMT during the coming year. For more information about the WCMT please visit <http://www.wcmt.org.uk/>.



photos: Liz Carter



Spring Appeal

Help support the expanding Vacation Scholarship scheme

UFAW's Vacation Scholarship programme was started in 1983 as a way of encouraging and supporting interest in the scientific approach to animal welfare amongst students at UK colleges and universities. Since its inception, almost 250 students have been supported and the scholarships have proved to be the starting point for many into further study and professional involvement in animal welfare science. The popular and successful programme has recently been extended to include students from overseas institutions where there is a UFAW 'Link' person.

Your support will help ensure that the scholarships continue to play an important role in the development of animal welfare science and its vital contribution to improving animals' lives, in the UK and overseas.

If you would like to contribute please send a donation to the Spring 2009 Appeal at the UFAW office address. Many thanks!

Thanks to all those who contributed to the Autumn 2008 Appeal in support of the UFAW companion animal welfare and breeding project.

Other ways you can support the work of UFAW

UFAW's work relies on the support and generosity of members and donors, and this support is greatly appreciated. In addition to our Spring and Autumn Appeals, here are some other ways you can help promote animal welfare and animal welfare science:

Become a member

Individual membership is just £10 a year (£5 for students). Corporate membership from £20 a year.

Recruit a member

If you are already a member, why not recruit a colleague or friend?

Support the University Links

There are currently 35 academic institutions worldwide represented. You can participate in their activities and help promote UFAW's objectives.

Subscribe to 'Animal Welfare'

The quarterly scientific and educational journal now has full online access and back issue search facility for subscribers.

Join our Regular Giving programme

Regular monthly donations greatly help us to plan UFAW activities.

Pledge a legacy

Over the years legacies have been extremely important to UFAW's work. An information leaflet on leaving a legacy is available free from UFAW.

Sponsor an activity

There are frequent opportunities to sponsor particular activities, events or projects of interest to institutional or corporate organizations.

Shop at UFAW

Choose from our exclusive range of clothing, stationery, gifts and cards that also help promote UFAW. Ask for a brochure or visit www.ufaw.org.uk

For more information on any of these contact the UFAW office.

John Sanford. As this News-Sheet went to press, we were very sorry to hear of the death of Dr John Sanford who was a long-time supporter, and Chairman of the UFAW Council and HSA Trustees from 2002 to 2004. Our condolences and very best wishes go to John's wife and family.



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