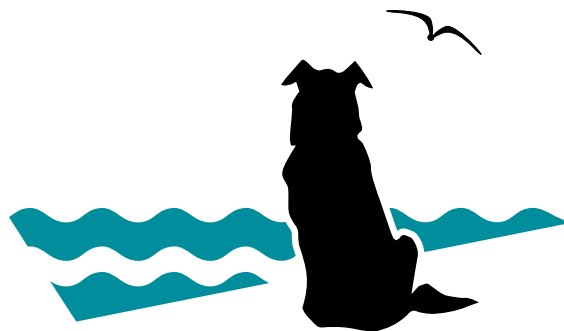


UNIVERSITY
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AVC NEWS

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Sir James Dunn Animal Welfare Centre
ATLANTIC VETERINARY COLLEGE • UNIVERSITY OF PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND

From the Coordinator's Desk



Welcome to the spring 2011 edition of *AWC News*, the newsletter of the Sir James Dunn Animal Welfare Centre (SJDAWC) at the Atlantic Veterinary College, University of Prince Edward Island. Highlights in this issue include a feature on the 2010 Animal Welfare in Practice conference on exotic animals, and information on the upcoming 2011 conference (Lameness in Dairy Cattle); reports on SJDAWC-funded projects that were completed in 2010; and a profile of Josh Smith, 2010 Christofor Award winner.

Niamh Caffrey, Jackie Ellis, and Cyril Roy, three PhD students working with Dr. Michael Cockram, Chair in Animal Welfare, continue their research on *Transportation of animals for slaughter in Canada: current practice, welfare issues and regulatory control*, *Environmental enrichment in shelter cats*, and *Welfare issues associated with the transport and slaughter of horses*, respectively. Vicky Protopapadaki, a visiting scholar from Greece during the summer of 2010, received her MSc with distinction in Applied Animal Behaviour and Animal Welfare from the University of Edinburgh, following her work with Jackie Ellis and Dr. Cockram while at AVC on "Some factors affecting the feeding behaviour of domestic cats (*Felis silvestris catus*)."

Dr. Cockram was recently appointed to the Canadian National Farm Animal Care Council (NFACC) Equine Welfare Code Development Committee (nfacc.ca/code.aspx) representing research/academia and the Canadian Veterinary Medical Association (CVMA), and to the NFACC Sheep Welfare Code Scientists' Committee representing the International Society for Applied Ethology.

Please visit our website (upei.ca/awc) to view the newsletter in colour or for more information about the SJDAWC. **Please contact us at animalwelfare@upei.ca to receive the newsletter electronically.**

Alison

Help animals by supporting the Sir James Dunn Animal Welfare Centre

We welcome and appreciate the generosity of animal welfare supporters and friends of the Atlantic Veterinary College (AVC). Donations or planned gifts in the name of a special animal companion, friend, or family member can be a fitting and lasting tribute that will benefit animals for generations to come.

Donors may direct their contributions to support all activities of the Centre to improve the welfare of animals, or may direct their donations to service or research projects. Donations may be made through UPEI's secure online system (upei.ca/awc "To make a donation") or by cheque to the SJDAWC (address below).

For more information on the work of the Centre, please contact animalwelfare@upei.ca or (902) 628-4360. To inquire about giving options, including bequests, gifts of securities, RRSPs, and RRIFs, please contact Tracey Comeau, AVC Development Office, at tcomeau@upei.ca or (902) 566-0354 or (866) 453-4119 (toll-free in Canada and the United States).



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COMPLETED PROJECTS—2010

Research and service projects completed in 2010 are summarized briefly below. Publications to date for the research projects are listed with the project, or will be added to the SJDAWC website as they become available (upei.ca/awc/research).

RESEARCH PROJECTS

Survey of euthanasia practices in animal shelters in Canada to identify ways of reducing pain, distress and fear and incorporate ‘best practice’ into guidelines for humane euthanasia

M Cockram, A Mouchili, S McConkey, N Caffrey

The objective of this project was to establish a baseline of knowledge regarding current euthanasia practices in Canadian animal shelters. Through a survey by questionnaire, it was determined that the majority of establishments used an injectable method of euthanasia. Very few establishments used physical or gaseous methods of euthanasia. At least 36 per cent of establishments used the services of a veterinarian for euthanasia. Of the 67 responders, sodium pentobarbital injection was the only method of euthanasia used by 61 per cent of establishments euthanizing dogs and 53 per cent of the establishments euthanizing cats. Many of these establishments used pre-medication. Sodium pentobarbital was mostly administered intravenously; however, some establishments also used intracardiac and intraperitoneal routes, and some used only intracardiac administration for cats. T-61 injection was the only method of euthanasia used by 23 per cent of the establishments euthanizing dogs and 35 per cent of the establishments euthanizing cats. All of these establishments used pre-medication, but the percentage of establishments that only used the intravenous route for administration of T-61 in dogs and cats was 45 per cent and 7 per cent, respectively. An important finding from this study was that in many establishments, T-61 was not used according to the manufacturer’s recommendations, i.e., a slow steady rate of intravenous administration. This method of administration is thought to reduce the likelihood of the animal experiencing respiratory paralysis before it is unconscious. The use of pre-medication facilitates slow intravenous injection of T-61. Further research into the use of T-61 is required. The importance of staff training in euthanasia as necessary for best practice was highlighted by respondents. The

provision of support services for staff may also be an area that requires attention. Further discussion of euthanasia practices, veterinary involvement and drug availability can help develop the drafting and adoption of best practice guidelines.

The results of this study^{1,2,3} may be useful in promoting discussion of best practice guidelines among veterinarian and animal shelters, in influencing legislation and regulations surrounding anesthesia, and in training of staff in animal shelters.

Investigation of a blood-borne parasite (*Theileria annae*) in wild red foxes and in dogs with anemia on PEI

B Horney, P Foley, S McBurney, K Tefft, A Birkenheuer

This project was designed to study a parasite (*Theileria annae*—also called *Babesia annae* or *B. microti*-like parasite) that infects red blood cells and was found in red foxes on Prince Edward Island. Infection with babesial parasites is somewhat like malaria in people and often causes anemia in infected animals in endemic areas. Specifically, *T. annae* is associated with anemia and renal disease in dogs in Spain. Through this project, Dr. Horney et al determined that *T. annae* infection is found in a significant proportion (overall 38.5%) of PEI foxes without obvious predominance in any one region, sex, or age group. Information collected in a parallel project by one co-investigator (A Birkenheuer) showed that the infection rate with this parasite is also high in red and gray foxes from North Carolina, suggesting that similar high infection rates will likely

¹Caffrey N, Mouchili A, McConkey S, Cockram MS. 2011. Survey of euthanasia practices in animal shelters in Canada. *Can Vet J*;52:55-61.

²Caffrey N, Mouchili A, McConkey S, Cockram M. 2010. Methods of euthanasia for exotic species in animal shelters in Canada. Poster upei.ca/awc/animal_welfare_resources

³Caffrey N. 2008. MSc thesis—Applied Animal Behaviour and Animal Welfare, University of Edinburgh, UK. A survey of euthanasia practices in animal shelters in Canada: Identification of key issues and recommendations on best practice for euthanasia in the shelter environment.

be found in foxes from other Eastern Canadian provinces and north eastern states. No evidence of *T. annae* infection was found in dogs (healthy or with anemia or renal disease) on PEI, suggesting that *T. annae* infection does not appear to cross species from foxes to dogs on PEI; nor was it identified in the 12 coyotes tested. These results are especially important in light of a recent report of the identification of a dog from Mississippi which tested positive for *T. annae* (*Babesia annae*), indicating that it is possible for this agent to be found in dogs outside of northern Spain.

Post-mortem, clinical, and/or laboratory results showed no obvious differences between infected and non-infected foxes with respect to anemia or renal disease. Thus, *T. annae* infection did not seem to contribute significantly to ill health in the foxes for which such information was available, which may indicate a well-adapted host-parasite relationship. Further research would be required to investigate whether infection with this parasite has subclinical effects on fox health, or has interaction with other disease states.

In summary, the results of this study^{4,5,6} show that *T. annae* is present in a surprising proportion of red foxes in PEI without apparent associated primary illness. Other causes of severe illness and death of a red fox should be sought, even in the face of identification of infection with this agent. The prevalence of *B. microti*-like infections (*T. annae*) in North American foxes (PEI and North Carolina) is similar to that described in European foxes. It is not known why *T. annae*, an agent genetically similar to the parasite which has been associated with significant disease in dogs in Spain, is found to infect a significant proportion of Island foxes and has not been found to be associated with anemia or renal disease in PEI dogs. It is possible that the Spanish parasite is transmitted to dogs by a vector (tick?) not

present in PEI, but other explanations may exist. Low transmission rates and rare canine infections cannot be ruled out and surveillance should be continued. The ability of the North American *B. microti*-like parasite to infect domestic dogs and induce disease remains unknown.

The effect of dietary organic and inorganic selenium supplementation in mares and their foals

J Wichtel, F Markham, J McClure, M McNiven, M Wichtel, J Montgomery

Selenium (Se) is a trace element that is essential in the diet of horses. Se deficiency is a serious problem in many parts of North America, mainly due to soil deficiency, which results in low Se concentrations in feedstuffs grown in these soils. Foals are especially susceptible to Se deficiency, which can be seen clinically as white muscle disease and also is associated with decreased immune function in many species. In foals, septicemia (blood infection) as a result of inadequate immunity is common and often fatal. There is little information available on the effects of maternal supplementation on the Se status and immune function of neonatal foals.

In previous work funded by the SJDAWC⁷, it was shown that many mares have deficient levels of Se, resulting in Se deficiency in their foals. The objective of the current project was to investigate the effect of Se supplementation and the source of Se on the Se status of pregnant mares and the Se status and immune function of their foals. The ultimate goal is to correct Se deficiency in mares and foals by the most effective and practical means, and thereby improve preventive health care.

Twenty pregnant Standardbred mares were randomly assigned to two groups, one of which received inorganic and the other organic selenium supplementation for two months prior to, and one month after, foaling. There were no significant differences in maternal plasma or red blood cell Se concentrations between the organic and inorganic groups at any time during the study, and the same was true in the foals at birth. At one month of age, there was a significant between-group difference in red

⁴Birkenheuer AJ, Horney B, Bailey M, McBurney S, Sherbert B, Catto V, Marr HS, Camacho AT, Ballman AE. 2010. *Babesia microti*-like infections are prevalent in North American Foxes. *Vet Parasit* 172:179-182.

⁵Clancey N, Horney B, Burton S, Birkenheuer A, McBurney S, Tefft K. 2010. *Babesia (Theileria) annae* in a red fox (*Vulpes vulpes*) from Prince Edward Island, Canada. *J Wildlife Dis* 46(2):615-621.

⁶Birkenheuer AJ, Horney B, Bailey M, McBurney S, Acton AE, Marr HS. 2008. Identification of a *Babesia microti*-like parasite in North American wild canids. *J Vet Int Med* 22(3):780-781.

⁷Muirhead TL, Wichtel JJ, Stryhn H, McClure JT. 2010. The selenium and vitamin E status of horses in Prince Edward Island. *Can Vet J*;51(9):979-985.

blood cell Se concentration of foals ($p < 0.05$), with higher levels in the organic group. Selenium source did not affect colostrum or milk Se concentration; however, colostrum and milk Se concentrations were closely correlated with the plasma and red blood cell Se concentrations in the mare. This finding may be of future use to predict selenium concentrations in colostrum and milk based on the Se status of the mare in late pregnancy. The effect of Se on immune function was also examined—Se source influenced relative gene expression of some lymphocytic cytokines. No Se source appeared to be consistently superior to the other and the significance of these observations remains to be clarified.

To conclude, Se is an essential micronutrient of horses, with important effects on antioxidant status and immune response. This study is one of a series completed over the past five years that have contributed to an understanding of how different Se sources influence the Se status of mares and their foals, as well as insights as to how the source of Se may influence the immune function of foals^{8,9,10}. The ultimate goal is to present owners and advisors with a range of options, including pros and cons, for ensuring selenium adequacy that can fit all management situations.

SERVICE PROJECTS

Financial aid to neuter companion animals of owners with low incomes

P Foley

SpayAid PEI (spayaidpei.com/) is a non-profit charitable community organization, founded in 2007, that works with participating PEI veterinary clinics to maintain a spay/neuter assistance programme to aid citizens with demonstrated limited financial means. Several Island veterinary clinics take part in this project, through which one third of the cost is paid by the owner, one third by SpayAid, and one third by the

⁸Montgomery JB, Wichtel JJ. 2010. Selenium—what you should know and why it is important for the health of your horse. *Atlantic Horse & Pony* April 2010

⁹Montgomery JB, Wichtel JJ, Wichtel MG, McNiven MA, McClure JT, Markham F, Horohov DW. 2009. The effect of selenium source on measures of selenium status of mares and selenium status and immune function of their foals. CRWAD (Conference of Research Workers in Animal Diseases), Chicago, IL.

¹⁰Montgomery JB. 2010. PhD thesis. The effects of organic and inorganic dietary selenium on selenium status and immune function of horses.

clinic. Through this service project, the SJDAWC pays for SpayAid's portion of neuter surgeries performed at the AVC Veterinary Teaching Hospital (VTH) by students, thereby freeing up SpayAid funds to increase the number of neuters carried out at other clinics.

The overall objectives are to decrease the numbers of feral and unwanted stray or abandoned companion animals on Prince Edward Island; to reduce the numbers of companion animals brought to and euthanized at the PEI Humane Society; and to increase the chances for shelter companion animals to be placed in homes by providing low-cost spay and neuter services at AVC to families with proven limited financial means. The project received a generous donation from the Humane Society of Canada to continue the service.

Chinook project—providing veterinary care to Northern communities

upei.ca/projects/chinook

L Miller, J Magrath, M Hopson

The objectives of this service project, funded since 2006, are to provide basic veterinary care to animals in selected communities in Northern Canada in need of veterinary services; to educate community members in basic animal care and provide a contact for further information; and to provide vaccines and medication to allow for proper vaccination and emergency care after the initial visit. In 2008, 2009, and 2010, respectively, the Chinook Project made a return visit to Kimmirut, Nunavut; travelled to two communities in Nunavut:

Kugluktuk and Cambridge Bay, and travelled to Natuashish, Labrador. In 2011, the Chinook Project will return to northern Labrador, holding clinics in Makkovik and Natuashish.

Travel and shipping of supplies to Northern communities are extremely expensive. In addition to those generous, previously-mentioned, companies, communities, and individuals who support the project (please see Sponsors, page 12), the Chinook Project has recently received a very generous donation from Air Labrador.



Health management services for the PEI Equine Retirement Society, Inc. (2008–10)
Health management services for Handibear Hills Equine Sanctuary, Inc. (2008–10)
W Duckett, G Conboy

These two service projects provide consistent basic and preventive health care to incoming and resident horses at the PEI Equine Retirement Society, Inc.



AVC Students at April 2010 vaccination and deworming clinic at Handibear Hills



Fourth-year student Malgosia Mosielski performing dentistry at Handibear Hills

(PEIERS), in O’Leary, PEI (since 1997), and Handibear Hills Equine Sanctuary, Inc. in Breadalbane, PEI (since 2004). The specific objectives are to minimize the spread of respiratory disease and the chance of contracting neurological disease, to decrease parasite burdens for the horses at the facilities, to increase the adoptability of the horses, and to provide an educational opportunity for veterinary students. This involves strategic deworming¹¹, fall vaccinations for influenza and rhinopneumonitis and

¹¹Duckett W, Conboy G. 2009. Equine parasite control strategies: A case for targeted deworming. Annual Meeting Western Veterinary Conference. Las Vegas, NV (published in Proceedings)

¹² Duckett W, Fell Y. March 2009, April 2010, and April 2011. Annual Horse Health Care Clinic at Handibear Hills Equine Sanctuary, Inc.

spring vaccinations to protect against tetanus and eastern and western equine viral encephalitis, routine dentistry, and regular assessment for quality of life and age-related health issues. In addition, the annual spring health clinics at Handibear Hills provide practical information to the community about appropriate equine health care¹². The horses contribute back to the community through such programmes as PEI Student Volunteers and the Trailblazers Club, through which young people learn to care for and work around horses. Merial Canada and Intervet Canada generously provide supplies for the clinics.

Since fall 2009, a facility at Brookfield, PEI (sadiesplace.ca), has expanded the number of horses that can be cared for through the PEIERS, with the goal of adopting horses out to permanent homes.

The horses at the three facilities benefit from consistent basic preventative health care and monitoring and they continue to be a source of learning for community youth groups and veterinary students. Funding for these projects was renewed for 2010–12 through the 2010 SJDAWC competition.

Medical and surgical care of homeless animals (2008–10)

C Runyon, P Foley, E Cawthorn, D Dunn-MacLean, and M MacLean

First funded in 1994, this successful service project has relieved pain and suffering for thousands of injured and sick companion animals, and has enabled many of them to find a new, permanent home with caring and loving owners.

The project provides veterinary care to injured or ill animals brought to the AVC Teaching Hospital by the PEI Humane Society, Good Samaritans, or, occasionally, other shelters in the Maritimes. Treatments may include physical examinations, x-rays and other diagnostic procedures, emergency medical care, humane euthanasia in the case of severe illness or injury, continued medical or surgical care in consultation with the shelter, and occasional neutering. Some lost animals are returned to their owners while most, once healthy, are placed in adoptive homes through standard shelter adoption. Some animals require “special needs” adoptive homes due to their requirement for specialized care during or after recovery.

Over the most recent two-year period, 252 animals (primarily dogs and cats) received medical and surgical care through this project. Senior veterinary students in all small animal rotations, as well as interns and residents, were extensively involved in the care of these animals. This project received renewed funding for 2010–12 through the 2010 SJDAWC competition.

Pegasus feral cat neutering programme (2010)

A Crook, M Hopson, M MacLean, H Gunn

Feral cats are neutered on Fridays by senior veterinary students or interns at the AVC Veterinary Teaching Hospital through this project, which is funded by the Pegasus Family Foundation through the Silicon Valley Community Foundation. Under the supervision of a Community Practice veterinarian, procedures are carried out as established by Dr. Peter Foley in consultation with the PEI Cat Action Team (CAT) for the SJDAWC-funded project *Neutering feral cats on PEI*. Additional feral cats are neutered at participating Island veterinary clinics with funds privately raised by CAT. This neuter programme benefits the individual cats by decreasing fighting activity associated with mating and by preventing the spread of disease. On a broader level, the programme is also decreasing the proportion of reproducing feral cats on PEI, with the ultimate goal of achieving negative population growth.

In 2010, 365 feral cats were neutered through the Pegasus neuter programme, which represents a major component of the activities of CAT. Since 2001, over 6,000 feral cats have been spayed and neutered using funds provided by the SJDAWC and the Pegasus Family Foundation, as well as other funds raised by CAT.

CONFERENCE NEWS

September 30–October 1, 2011

Animal Welfare in Practice: Lameness in Dairy Cattle

The seventh annual “Animal Welfare in Practice” conference will address the widespread and significant welfare problem of lameness in dairy cattle. The conference will take place at AVC on September 30–October 1, 2011. Keynote speaker Dr. Dan Weary (Animal Welfare Program, University of British Columbia) will speak on Friday night on “Lameness in dairy cattle.” On Saturday morning, AVC large animal veterinarian and epidemiologist Dr. Shawn

McKenna will talk about “Risk factors and prevalence of lameness in dairy herds” and “Management of lameness,” and anesthesiologist Dr. Kip Lemke will speak about “Pain management in lame dairy cattle.” Saturday afternoon there will be a roundtable discussion, “Surmounting the obstacles,” with speakers and producers. Conference-goers may then choose between a video workshop on lameness scoring, led by Dr. Weary, or a practical laboratory on hoof trimming led by Dr. McKenna.

Full programme details and registration information are available at upei.ca/awc. The conference is co-hosted by the SJDAWC and the AVC Animal Welfare Club, with generous support from the Animal Welfare Foundation of Canada.

Animal Welfare in Practice: Exotic Pets September 2010

The sixth annual “Animal Welfare: In Practice” conference took place September 17–18, 2010, with the theme of exotic pets. Approximately 80 people attended the Friday night session (open to the public) and the three Saturday morning lectures for veterinarians, technicians, and students. The practical laboratory sessions on “Environmental enrichment, handling, and husbandry” in small mammals and psittacine birds, and in reptiles and amphibians, were each offered twice on Saturday afternoon—all sessions were full.



Speakers Drs. Stéphane Lair, Marion Desmarchelier, and Doug Whiteside, with Romeo the Eclectus parrot. Romeo was surrendered by his original owner because of increasing behavior problems which resulted from his owner’s inability to meet his complex psychological needs. This is a common problem with parrots in captivity, which can live 50 or 60 years, generally bond strongly with only one person, and require a structured and stimulating environment.

The keynote speaker for the conference was Dr. Doug Whiteside, senior staff veterinarian at the Calgary Zoo and Associate Professor, Faculty of Veterinary Medicine, University of Calgary, who spoke on “What you should know before getting an exotic pet” and “Behavioural issues in reptiles, birds and small mammals.” Dr. Marion Desmarchelier (Assistant Professor, Zoo, Exotic Animal, and Wildlife Medicine, AVC, UPEI) spoke about “Pain management in small mammals, birds, and reptiles.” Dr. Stéphane Lair (Associate Professor, Médecine Zoologique, Faculté de médecine vétérinaire, Université de Montréal) discussed “Ethical considerations for veterinarians working with exotic pets.”

KEY MESSAGES FROM THE CONFERENCE

I. Specialized needs of exotics

It is difficult and expensive to meet the physical, environmental, and behavioural needs of exotic pets. All too often, people acquire such an animal without doing the thorough advance research and preparation to know what will be required to care properly for that animal, and whether they can provide such care. These animals have very specialized dietary and housing needs. For example, reptiles and amphibians need rigorous environmental conditions which can be difficult and costly to maintain, including high temperature (e.g., Green iguana 29-33°C day, 20-25°C night) and humidity (greater than 80% for tropical species), and UVB light. Reptiles and amphibians need specialized diets that are not commercially available for most species (e.g., live insects, rodents, varied and fresh vegetables).



Providing proper housing is challenging and expensive—a young Green iguana (left) can grow to larger than 1.5 meters in 5 to 6 years (right). [photos S Lair]



Box turtles in an appropriately complex and varied environment [photo D Whiteside]



Turtle in a barren and, unfortunately, more typical environment [photo S Lair]

It is estimated that 50-90% of reptiles die during their first year of captivity. Caretakers don't realize what will be required; they rely on inaccurate information; and they can't afford the necessary equipment and veterinary care. Environmental and nutritional problems are by far the main reason for veterinary consultations in reptiles. This is associated with tremendous animal suffering.



Severe metabolic bone disease in a Green iguana, the result of prolonged improper diet. This problem is common in iguanas and other reptiles. [photo D Whiteside]



Betta fish in housing that is much too small [photo S Lair]



Bird with feather destructive behaviour [photo D Whiteside]

Psittacine birds (parrots, cockatiels, etc.) are very social, highly intelligent, and long-lived (50–60 years). They can develop significant behaviour problems (aggression, self-destructive behaviours) due to an unchallenging life (boredom) or improper nutritional or environmental conditions, or at sexual maturity.

2. Source of animals

Animals for the pet trade may be bred and born in captivity and habituated to human care, but many are captured in the wild. Much of this trade is illegal and many animals die through inhumane capture and transportation. In its position statement supporting a permanent ban on the import of captive wild birds (2006), the British Veterinary Association reported an estimated 40–66% of captured birds die in the exporting country before even arriving at markets for export.

The percentage of wild caught animals in the Canadian pet market appears to be decreasing. The exception is the marine fish trade where the vast majority of fish



Pygmy slow loris (weight 28 gram), part of a group that was seized during a smuggling attempt [photo D Whiteside]

are still wild-caught, often through illegal cyanide fishing which is associated with very high mortality in the fish and in the coral reefs where they live. Those fish that do survive often languish in inadequate conditions (e.g., Betta fish, previous page).

3. Safety considerations and legislation

Besides safety considerations for the exotic pet due to improper housing or handling, there are potential dangers to the owner or the public through physical trauma or zoonoses (e.g., Salmonella in reptiles). There may be concerns for the environment if exotic pets are released or escape. What will be the impact on native wildlife? It is important to find out local and provincial legislation regarding exotic animals, many of which are illegal to own.

4. Veterinary care

It is essential for anyone with an exotic pet to establish a rapport with a veterinary clinic with interest in exotic species for advice on proper husbandry and in case of illness.

The full presentations from the three speakers, as well as a drug formulary provided by Dr. Desmarchelier, may be viewed on the SJDAWC website (upei.ca/awc). The conference was co-hosted by the SJDAWC and the AVC Animal Welfare Club, with assistance from the AVC Exotics Club, Dr. M. Desmarchelier, Ssafe Haven Society for Reptiles and Amphibians (Bedford, NS), and Dr. Shannon Martinson, as well as generous support from the Animal Welfare Foundation of Canada.

Environmental enrichment, handling, and husbandry in reptiles and amphibians—laboratory session.



Student Ali Mason and Roscoe—black and white Argentinian tegu



Lisa Balcombe (Ssafe Haven Society for Reptiles and Amphibians) with Stewie (Green iguana). The majority of the animals at Ssafe Haven were surrendered because their owners were unable to provide proper care for them.

OTHER NEWS

2010 Christofor Award in Animal Welfare—Josh Smith

Fourth-year student Josh Smith received the 2010 Christofor Award in Animal Welfare at the AVC Awards Night on October 6. Josh was selected for the Award because of the effective and varied ways he has put into practice his strong belief in education as the most important means of improving animal welfare.

Many of Josh's efforts to improve animal welfare have occurred through his involvement with the PEI Humane Society. Josh was a member of the SJDAWC-funded *AVC humane dog training programme* for three years, and the programme's coordinator for the last year. Besides working directly providing positive training to countless dogs, he has spoken to many groups (including school groups, 4-H clubs, Boy Scouts, and Girl Guides) about normal and abnormal animal behavior, how to address behavior issues in a humane and effective manner, and the responsibilities of pet ownership. He has also provided pre- and post-adoption counseling to numerous individuals and prepared valuable written educational material for both staff and members of the public.

In September 2009, working with the PEIHS, Josh volunteered at, and co-organized, the first PEI pet expo. Josh ran the educational programme to teach about animal care and about appropriate training of pets, including organizing different 30-minute presentations all day long by veterinary students and providing clicker training demonstrations. Josh also assisted the

PEIHS in October 2009 when 80 animals were seized by the PEI Department of Agriculture. He helped provide veterinary care to the seized animals and recruited additional student volunteers when needed.

In May 2009, Josh travelled to Animal House Jamaica, an animal sanctuary operating without veterinary care, to provide advice on animal behavior and treatment and containment of disease. Josh has also provided counseling by phone to pet owners around the Maritimes on behaviour problems and how they can better understand their pets.

Josh believes it is the responsibility of veterinarians to provide education and set a strong example in order



2010 Christofor Award recipient Josh Smith and presenter Dr. Alice Crook

to change the way people view and treat animals. The SJDAWC commends Josh for consistently putting his principles into practice, and congratulates him most heartily on receiving the Christofor Award.

2010 Animal Welfare Judging Contest—Michigan State University

Congratulations go to the AVC team of 5 students—Josh Aalders, Michael Walker, Alexander Burrows, Samantha Sanford, and Emma Vaasjo—who took part in the 10th Annual Intercollegiate Animal Welfare Judging & Assessment Contest, held at Michigan State University, USA, November 20-21, 2010. The team placed third overall in the Veterinary Division and Josh Aalders tied for third place for individual performance in the Veterinary Division. Each student was provided with contrasting scenarios for the management of broiler chickens, working dogs (police and guide dogs) and giraffes (in a zoo). They were required to assess and evaluate the welfare of the animals in each situation and present their reasoning to a judge. There was also a practical team assessment of a beef cattle



Contest judge Dr. Richard Reynells and AVC team Josh Aalders, Michael Walker, Alexander Burrows, Samantha Sanford and Emma Vaasjo

photo courtesy of MSU Animal Behaviour and Welfare Group ABWG

unit. Dr. Michael Cockram was the team coach with specialist coaching from other AVC faculty: Dr. David Sims (working dogs), Dr. Marion Desmarchelier (giraffes) and Dr. John VanLeeuwen (beef cattle). Funding for the students' travel expenses was provided by the SJDAWC, the American Veterinary Medical Association, and the Universities Federation for Animal Welfare.

CVMA Animal Welfare Lecture Tour—Animal Abuse

In November 2010, Dr. Alice Crook undertook the first part of the Canadian Veterinary Medical Association's (CVMA) Animal Welfare Lecture Tour. She spoke to students at the four English Canadian veterinary colleges (Western College of Veterinary Medicine at the University of Saskatchewan, Faculty of Veterinary Medicine at the University of Calgary, Ontario Veterinary College at the University of Guelph, and Atlantic Veterinary College) on the subject of animal abuse and what veterinarians need to know in recognizing, documenting and reporting animal abuse and neglect.



Dr. Alice Crook at the University of Calgary, Faculty of Veterinary Medicine

Dr. Crook's presentation can be viewed at upei.ca/awc/ under Animal Welfare Resources. The tour was sponsored by the CVMA and Hagen.

Dovekies in distress

During an intense wind storm that hit PEI in December 2010, dozens of dovekies—small black and white sea birds also known as little auks—were blown on shore. The little birds rapidly become exhausted and weakened when they are out of their ocean environment. More than 20 birds were brought to the AVC Veterinary Teaching Hospital where they received intensive care until they recovered.



A team of veterinarians, technicians, and students helped to take care of the birds over five days. Thanks to these dedicated people and financial support from the SJDAWC, through the *Wildlife rehabilitation project*, the dovekies were released back to their natural habitat. (For more information see upei.ca/awc/service_projects.)



Dr. Marion Desmarchelier (Assistant Professor, Zoo, Exotic Animal, and Wildlife Medicine, AVC) releases dovekies into the water at Bellevue Cove, PEI.

Year of the Cat—2011 (YOC)

YOC 2011 is a Canada-wide campaign with a vision of increasing the value of owned, homeless and feral cats in Canadian communities through education and facilitation of nationally coordinated events such as adopt-a-thons and an identification week. The on-line “Community Tool Box” includes information on cat health and behavior, the importance of spaying and neutering, the delivery of spay/neuter financial assistance programmes, how to improve or establish Trap/Neuter/Return (TNR) programmes for feral cats, ways to increase shelter “Return-to-Owner” rates, and much more. See careforcats.ca for information.

SPONSORS

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