

NEWS FROM EUROPE

New conditions? Please see Dr Torsten Morner's report on herring gull deaths, in the Nordic Section.

A European perspective on the WDA - meeting in South Africa: Around 20 European participants attended the International Joint Conference between the Wildlife Disease Association and the Society for Tropical Veterinary Medicine in Pilansberg National Park, South Africa in July this year. A very good meeting was held at an excellent place. The introduction session was chaired by Torsten Morner; and European colleagues Marc Artois, Kai Frolich and Sarah Cleaveland presented three introduction talks. Further European papers were presented from Spain, France, United Kingdom, Germany, Italy, Norway, Sweden and Switzerland. Ursula Hoefle from Spain took part in the student presentation contest.

Europe was further featured as Torsten Morner became vice president of the WDA and also received the Distinguished Service Award from WDA. The WDA-meeting was then followed by two workshops on FMD and tuberculosis and the relevance of these diseases to European Wildlife was discussed.

- Kai Frohlich, Institut for Zoo and Wildlife Research, Berlin, Germany

The Second European Wildlife and Zoo Pathology Workshop. (31 May -1 June 2001) and the post-conference tour to Wildpark Eekholt (Schleswig-Holstein) (2-3 June 2001) was organised jointly by the research group for wildlife diseases at the Institut for Zoo and Wildlife Research, Berlin, Germany (IZW), the National Veterinary Institute of Wildlife, Uppsala, Sweden and the Centre for Fish and Wildlife Health, Bern, Switzerland.

Altogether 40 participants from 13 different countries attended the workshop at the IZW. The three day workshop covered the following main sections: (1) non-infectious diseases and causes of death in zoo and wild animal species, (2) mycobacterial infections and foot and mouth disease and (3) viral diseases in carnivores. Each day was divided into a morning and an afternoon session.

The first day (section 1) included the sessions "poisoning" (Tataruch, Kenntner), "predation" (Giacometti, Janovsky, Hard af Segerstad) and "anthropogenic factors to wildlife (large birds)" (Krone). The second day (section 2) included the talks "introduction to mycobacterial infections"(Brunner), "Mycobacterium bovis"(Brunner, Gavier-Widen), "Mycobacterium avium" (Mörner, Brunner), "Mycobacterium microti" (Begon), as well as "M. paratuberculosis" and "foot and mouth disease" (Kaandorp). The last day (section 3 and 1) included talks about "distemper" (Frölich, Hofer), "parvovirus" (Latz, Frölich), "other viral diseases" (Gortazar, Artois) and "metabolic diseases" (Wisser, Jakob).

The theoretical part of each section was followed by a 75-min. practical session which was performed in the modern post-mortem hall and the room for the reference collection of histological and anatomical specimens at the IZW.

Most participants used the evening events to meet and to continue discussions while enjoying the relaxed atmosphere in the restaurants in Berlin's "Mitte".

12 participants used the chance to visit Wildpark Eekholt (post-conference tour) to share information about keeping European species, and diseases of European species.

- Kai Frohlich, Institut for Zoo and Wildlife Research, Berlin, Germany (IZW).

The new National Research Institute on Game Biology, Ciudad Real, Spain

A new institute, the IREC (the National Research Institute on Game Biology) was set up in 1999 in Ciudad Real, central Spain. A few weeks ago we got our new building, with over 3,000 m² of laboratories and other facilities, and we also share with the University a nice 1,000-hectare field station close to the main building.

In the year 2000 we have been working on projects dealing with red deer and wild boar (tuberculosis; heterozygosity-reproduction-FA-parasites), rabbits (restocking, RHD) and particularly with gamebirds (red-legged partridge), but any species that is affected by hunting activity may become the subject of future research. Despite the short life of the IREC, last year's output included over 30 papers in SCI-journals.

Our aim is to build a multidisciplinary team with experts in ecology, physiology, pathology, genetics and other subjects. During this year, one or two full-time positions for experts in veterinary medicine will probably be announced. Therefore, I am interested to make contact with people with the following characteristics:

- a.. Interested in joining a multidisciplinary research institute devoted to game species.
- b.. Having a PhD degree or equivalent, veterinarian, biologist or similar.
- c.. Accredited experience in writing scientific papers.
- d.. Research/expertise fields: microbiology, immunology, histopathology, wildlife diseases and other related fields.

Those that may be interested should send me an E-mail (gortazar@irec.uclm.es) including a Curriculum Vitae and a brief description of their experience and research interests.

Christian Gortazar

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Mass-mortality among sea birds in Sweden. Increased mortality among waterfowl, particularly herring-gulls (*Larus argentatus*) has been observed in Swedish coastal waters (both the western and eastern coasts of Sweden), and inland lakes, during June and July. It is estimated that several thousand birds have been found dead.

Clinical signs in sick birds have included ataxia, dropped wings, convulsions and diarrhoea. Birds die acutely or after a period of illness. The condition of birds examined at post-mortem have ranged from a good state of nutrition to emaciation. Several birds have been submitted to the National Veterinary Institute in Uppsala for post mortem examination. No clear marked macroscopic lesions have been observed in dead birds. Histologically, minor inflammatory reactions including necrosis have been observed in liver and kidney. Bacteriological, virological and parasitological investigations have so far been negative. Investigations for botulism have been negative.

Investigations for Newcastle disease as well as Influenza virus have also been negative. No indication of any toxic compound is demonstrated. Based on the spread of the disease and other epidemiological data a viral disease cannot be excluded and specimens are presently being examined in our laboratories for virus. Collaboration has also been established with colleagues in the Netherlands, where mortality in gulls and other sea birds have also been observed.

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European Section. Material suitable for publication includes news of recent wildlife disease outbreaks in Europe, short case reports, job and scholarship announcements, announcements and reports on relevant meetings in Europe. Submissions should be in English, but members for whom English is a second language and who send material in basic English or in their own language, will be accommodated as far as possible. The deadline for submission of articles for the next issue is November 2001.

Please mail, fax or e-mail submissions to Paul Duff, VLA Penrith, Merrythought, Calthwaite, PENRITH, Cumbria, CA11 9RR, United Kingdom, e-mail (p.duff@vla.defra.gsi.gov.uk).