

Editorial

I have to refer readers back to 1988 and Volume 14, number 2, to remind them of the last mention of the Klinowska Report, and to 1986 and Volume 12, number 2, to find reference to the British Governments acceptance of the two main conclusions arising out of the Report. It was then that the announcement was made that 'A Steering Committee will be set up to consider the Report's detailed recommendations, . . . and to draw up a programme by the end of November 1986 showing how and when the required improvements will be made. This programme must be completed within five years'.

It may surprise some readers—though not your Editor—that it was only in August 1990 that the Government issued its 'Additional standards for UK Cetacean keeping' to its Inspectors under the Zoo Licensing Act and other interested parties. What does surprise your Editor is that these standards relate their definitions very closely to the Klinowska Report and appear to ignore the existence of the EEC draft standards—to whose proposed levels they fail to reach in a number of important areas. It would have seemed sensible, to an outside reader, to delay the introduction of any national standards until the EEC have produced their definitive version. On the other hand, does this perhaps mean that the EEC have much further to go to reach agreement than they are letting on to the public at large? We, in the European Association for Aquatic Mammals, will keep a close eye on the situation and keep all interested parties up to date with the situation as it develops.

It may amuse, or infuriate, readers to learn, from the review of the book 'Animal Sonar Processes and Performance' published on page 93, that, under the conditions laid down there, human discrimination of echoes for a wide variety of target types was at least as good as the dolphin's!

Readers will find elsewhere in this issue comments on the everwidening concern being shown, not only about the animals for which we are responsible, but also for the environment as a whole. Perhaps the imminent arrival of the second millenium will introduce a new awareness of responsibility for all forms of Creation, a change of heart earnestly to be wished and which no amount of legislation can bring about.

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News and Views

The President of the European Association for Aquatic Mammals (Dr Cees Kamminga) has asked me to point out that he still has a few printed abstracts of the papers given at the eighteenth symposium, in Lipperswil, March 1990. These may be obtained from him at: Delft University of Technology, Faculty E, P.O. Box 5031, 2600 GA Delft, The Netherlands.

Following on his report to the above meeting on the 'Diary of a wild bottlenose dolphin', and concerned about the consequences of interference with the animal by well intentioned, but ignorant, members of the public, Peter Bloom has produced an excellent coloured one page double sided handout. This is given out free to interested members of the public and very clearly summarizes the reasons why there should be a lone animal off the north-east coast of Britain and what precautions swimmers should take to minimize the risk of an accident. It also offers the public a chance to participate in the plotting of the animal's movements by obtaining, using and returning, Dolphin Diary Record Sheets—a very commendable public relations exercise, especially in view of the adverse publicity in the United Kingdom against dolphinaria today.

The Marine Mammals Commission, amongst others, has criticized the issuing of a public display permit out of Fort Aransas, Texas, to feed wild dolphin in the Corpus Christi channel. Such feeding, it is felt, will attract dolphins to vessels other than the official ones and encourage other recreational boats to harass the animals as well. At the time of this report (April 1990) the National Marine Fisheries Service had not then issued proposed regulations for this permit or for the more than 12 *unpermitted dolphin feeding cruises* operating out of the Gulf of Mexico.

Beluga of June 1990, reported on the very welcome step, of both the Governments of Canada and Quebec, in setting up the Saguenay Marine Park on the St. Lawrence River and signing an agreement to this effect. This is indeed a great step forward in helping to protect the local population of Belugas in that area.

Whale News—from the American Cetacean society—reports that yet another food firm (StarKist Seafoods) will no longer sell any tuna caught by methods that will harm dolphins. They state that 'zero-tolerance' is the only acceptable policy. In Britain a large food chain (John Sainsbury) already

advertise that the tuna they sell is caught by rod and line—a dolphin friendly method.

On the same subject, the forthcoming International Whaling commission symposium on Mortality of Cetaceans in passive fishing nets and traps has laid charges to:

- (1) identify and describe new and expanding net and trap fisheries which take Cetaceans,
- (2) investigate how and why entanglement occurs,
- (3) the extent possible, estimate mortality and assess it's impact on Cetacean populations; and
- (4) consider possible ways of reducing levels of net-caused mortality of Cetaceans.

Soundings—the journal of the International Marine Animal Trainers Association—has just produced its largest number—not surprising when you realize that there are now more than 825 members—not all of them trainers by any means—and this issue includes a full members list! However there are a number of interesting articles as well. For those who are not aware of the journal, it contains a number of set items each issue. They always include a number of job adverts, regional reports from Hawaii, California, Pacific Northwest, Rocky Mountain, Midwest, Eastern and Southeast US zones, Central America and Europe I-V zones. In this issue articles appear on 'Helpful hints of basic blood values in *Tursiops truncatus*', the Dolphin Tuna problem and the Exxon Valdez oil spill. As well as book reviews and letters it contains run downs on future office bearers and an interview with an author (Karen Pryor). Of use for trainers is a 'Trainer's Forum' set up as a question and answer session with the answers supplied by named respondents. It was encouraging to read of Sea Life Park's Wolphin's fifth birthday together with an up to date picture of her. (Readers will remember earlier pictures in this journal—with her mother—in the summer 1989 number, Volume 15, No. 2.)

Marine Mammal Science Volume 6 No. 2 includes papers on—the decline of Harbour Seals in the Gulf of Alaska, the efficacy of Ketamine, and mixtures of it with other drugs, as sedatives in the Antarctic Fur Seal, parturition in the Hawaiian Monk Seal and the use of Humpback Whale songs as indicators of migration routes.

In Volume 6 No. 3 there are papers on—the entanglement of Antarctic Fur Seals in man-made debris, especially neck collars, the distribution and status of manatees, a record of extrauterine

pregnancy in a ringed seal, the daily fresh water consumption by captive Harp Seals and records of Harbour Seals, Harp Seals and Southern Elephant Seals outside their 'normal' ranges.

The Journal of Zoo and Wildlife Medicine of June, Volume 21,2 reports on the occurrence, among a wide range of sex and age classes of Manatee, of lesions—in the shape of nodules and plaques in the atrioventricular valves—without any apparent resulting heart failures. The authors suggest that the findings may be physiologic or incidental rather than pathologic and point out that this is a very different situation from that found in either man or dogs.

In *The Veterinary Record* of 19th May, a report on the examination of tuberculous lesions in six captive seals showed that this yielded an organism identified as *Mycobacterium bovis* on the basis of biochemical and drug sensitivity tests. The organism was glycerol tolerant and showed a weak cording pattern. Western blotting with a monoclonal antibody (4C3/17) to *M. bovis* identified antigens at 23 and 27 kDa which were present in *M. bovis* but absent in previous isolates from seals. In the same journal of 26th May, the UK Minister for the Environment announced that he was considering proposals for projects to study marine mammal strandings, including tissue sampling, post mortem examinations and analyses of tissue contaminants. A veterinary surgeon would be funded and based at Regent's Park. It was later announced that Dr. Thijs Kuiken of The Netherlands had been offered, and had accepted the post starting in August of this year. He has been a contributor to this journal (11(2),40) and we wish him well in this post, being glad that the work originally based in the Department of Anatomy at the University of Cambridge will be continued and enlarged.

More recently, the issue of 22nd September, quotes an article in *Research in Veterinary Science* on the isolation and characteristics of a morbillivirus of common seals. Because it causes a disease similar both clinically and pathologically to canine distemper, it has been called phocine distemper virus (PDV). The immune response of the seals to PDV was similar to the response of dogs to canine distemper virus.

The 21st Annual Conference of the International Association for Aquatic Animal Medicine, held in Vancouver B.C. included a number of interesting papers. One dealt with the reproductive biology of captive Killer Whales. Since 1985, of the six full term calves born to date, five are still alive—the sixth calf was in fact stillborn—which highlights the improvements in animal welfare over the last ten years. There was also a retrospective study of captive breeding of *Tursiops truncatus* in south Florida over the last 20 years. Much information was documented, very little of which could have been learnt in the wild. It was pointed out that recent data from the wild by Wells and Scott indicated that calf survival rates for females under 15 years of age were low—a figure born out in this study. Indeed data from Wells' wild Sarasota population of bottlenose animals suggest that 'most wild dolphins under 15 years of age fail to raise calves successfully'. The paper shows that, not surprisingly to some of us, captive conditions can better these results. It is now a policy with this captive group that no male dolphins are kept with pregnant females—a recommendation to be borne in mind when building new potential breeding units. It was also pointed out that, as with other species, the successful rearing of offspring is not entirely innate. The best chances of success seem to rest with animals who have had experience of other individuals in the group giving birth and rearing offspring.

Reproduction in the Sea Otter was also covered, as was analysis of oil contamination on the coats of Sea Otters exposed to the Exxon Valdez tragedy, the value of rehabilitation, the occurrence of osteomyelitis in a dolphin spine, the use of radiology for marine mammal medical diagnosis, medical problems of orphan Manatees, the pathology of stranded Bellugas, Selenium toxicosis in Californian Sea Lions, treatment of severe facial lacerations in an orphaned elephant seal, microbial flora of the Cetaceans at Ocean Park, Hong Kong and ocular photography in marine mammal medicine.