

BVA Overseas Newsletter



JULY 2014 – PART 1

BVA OVERSEAS GROUP – RECENT ACTIVITY

BVA book scheme

Veterinary surgeons have kindly donated hundreds of veterinary text books to the [BVA's book scheme](#), which aims to pass them on to those who need books overseas. Feedback has shown that the books are very much appreciated and valued by the recipients.

Those planning to do veterinary work overseas or who have links to NGOs or veterinary educational institutions are encouraged to take some books with them. Alternatively if you are aware of an organisation which would benefit from some books, please let us know. Please contact Susie Child at BVA susiec@bva.co.uk or 020 7908 6373 for a list of books that are currently available.

Anyone wishing to donate books should bring them to [BVA HQ in London](#). If this is not possible then alternative arrangements can be made. Again, please contact Susie (as above) to discuss. Recently books have been taken for Himalayan Animal Rescue Trust (HART); World in Need (Jordan and Uganda); Kumasi and Accra vet schools in Ghana; Jamaica; and Sri Lanka. Donations of books and equipment have been received from: David Clarke, Millhouse Vets; Salih Eminaga; Catherine Corden-Parry; Graham Munroe; Anja Petrie of University of Aberdeen; Sarah Wolfensohn (copies of her handbook, co-authored by Maggie Lloyd, on laboratory animal management and welfare). Thank you all!

BVA overseas travel grants

Since 1983, [BVA's Overseas Travel Grants scheme](#), has awarded more than 100 travel grants of up to £500 to undergraduates attending veterinary schools in the UK. Usually four grants are awarded each year but in 2014 we were delighted to be able to offer two additional grants, thanks to the support of [Vetwork UK](#). Grants were awarded to the following research projects:

- Rosie Beaumont (RVC): studying captive juvenile elephant collection in Sri Lanka (Grant funded by Vetwork UK)
- Georgia Bednall-Brough (Edinburgh): mortality of beef cattle in Zimbabwe
- Fiona Ditcher (RVC): vector borne diseases in dogs in Sri Lanka
- Sophie Ivil (Edinburgh): goat herd health and productivity in India
- Catherine Spedding (Liverpool): ocular disease in working equids in Morocco
- Alice Whittle (Bristol): conflict management between farmers and nomads in Chad (Grant funded by Vetwork UK)

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Reports from last year's travel grant recipients are now on the website. Well worth a read!

- **Marise Curran** (Nottingham) who visited Morocco this summer to establish clinical guidelines for the treatment of equine colic in developing countries
- **Sam Greenaway** (Cambridge) for work evaluating the use of the short-form Glasgow Composite Measure Pain Scale in street dogs undergoing ovariohysterectomy in Jaipur, India
- **Alexis Pridmore** (RVC) who carried out comparative observations on strongyle parasites in domestic horses (*Equus ferus caballus*), Grevy's zebra (*Equus grevyi*) and Plains zebra (*Equus quagga*) in Kenya

The fourth recipient, **Abigail Waddington** (Nottingham), has recently completed her project on rabies control in community dogs in Goa, India, and her report will be available on the website soon.

The £50 prize for the best report on the projects funded in 2013 was awarded to Alexis Pridmore.

The Overseas Group decided at its March meeting that all veterinary students at UK vet schools will be eligible for the overseas grant in 2015, rather than just students in their clinical years. Promotion for the 2015 grants will start in the autumn and tutors at vet schools will now be involved.

BVA guidance on working or volunteering overseas

If you're planning to work or volunteer overseas don't forget the BVA Overseas Group has produced a series of useful [guidance notes on different aspects of overseas work](#).

The Royal Veterinary College has also produced an excellent guide on overseas extra mural studies (EMS) which can be downloaded from <http://www.rvc.ac.uk/Global/UsefulResources.cfm>

Overseas Group meeting (June 2014)

The last Overseas Group (OG) meeting was held on 3 June, and matters discussed included:

- How to engage more with the WVA and benefit from membership
- The future of the BVA book scheme: the scheme will continue and options for working with vet schools and others to promote the scheme will be explored
- European issues: all BVA committees now incorporate European matters into their agenda and issues covered this time included a draft FVE AMR paper, professional qualifications, animal health visits, pet travel and alien species
- The licensing of Diclofenac in Europe: which killed off vultures in India
- Nominations for the Trevor Blackburn award: the prize will be awarded at [BVA Members' Day](#) on 25 September
- The OG strategy: OG has put together a strategy, setting out its objectives and actions to achieve them. The strategy is reviewed and updated at each meeting
- An application for support from the Overseas Fund: further information was requested

Requests for volunteers

We have recently received the following requests for veterinary volunteers:

[Hetta Huskies](#) has been added to the list of organisations on the BVA website, seeking veterinary volunteers. They have been welcoming vets, vet students, vet nurses and medical students for the past six years to their farm in Arctic Finland where they learn about mushing and life and in the arctic on a sled dog farm whilst overseeing the health and welfare standards for the 200 huskies in their care.

[MAPS Ilha](#) is an animal welfare society based on Ilha de Mocambique, off the coast of Northern Mozambique, mostly dealing with stray dogs and cats. They are seeking qualified experienced vets to spay and neuter; vaccinate; de-worm; prescribe medication; perform operations as necessary. There are currently no veterinary facilities available nearby and when they can afford it they get help from a group of vets in Mozambique when they can fit them into their schedule. Otherwise they are on their own and trying to cope as best they can with the little knowledge and facilities available. Therefore any veterinary support would be very welcome.

The Portuguese charity [Their Voice Portugal](#) works with neglected horses, ponies and donkeys, many of which require veterinary care. They would very much appreciate some voluntary support from vets and vet nurses.

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GETTING TO KNOW THE OVERSEAS GROUP

In the first of a series of articles by members of the Overseas Group, Andrew Routh gives us an insight into his work as a wildlife vet...

It was wildlife and conservation that stimulated my interest when young, including the writings of a certain Gerald Durrell, and my careers master pointed me in the direction of a veterinary degree. Little would we know that 40 years later I would be living on Jersey and working as Head of Veterinary Services for Durrell Wildlife Conservation Trust (DWCT).

I oversee a very small department, primarily charged with the veterinary care of the Trust's wildlife park on Jersey. However, DWCT plays a wider role in conservation world-wide. They have many projects, often with species perceived as uncharismatic and in very poor countries.



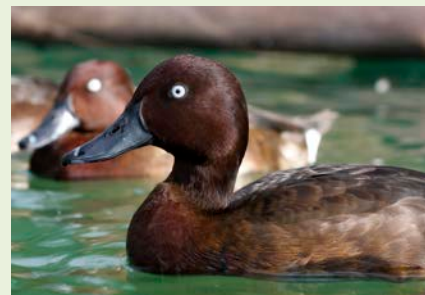
Pygmy hogs (Photo: Andrew Routh/DWCT)

Previously, during my time at ZSL, I had spent eight years working with colleagues in India and Nepal on the conservation breeding of vultures; their populations in precipitous decline due to the veterinary drug diclofenac. Strangely, my first trip abroad with DWCT was back to India. Partly it was to teach on a course we were running with the Central Zoo Authority. Teaching, either in Jersey or range countries, is an efficient way of advancing conservation. The advantage is that the skills remain in-country, giving the project teams degrees of autonomy and self-sufficiency. In addition I took advantage of the visit to catch up with Durrell's pygmy hog project in Assam. There they are successfully breeding and reintroducing to the wild these diminutive pigs that were once believed extinct.

In January 2014 I made my first trip to Madagascar, a country with which DWCT has very strong ties. There I worked with Durrell's team breeding the ploughshare tortoise, a species not only at risk from habitat loss but also being driven towards extinction by its theft for the illegal pet trade. Then it was north to the breeding centre for the Madagascar pochard. Once believed extinct it was inspiring to see how well the programme was going, though salutary realising that over 65% of the world population was in this one facility. The visit also gave me chance to catch up with colleagues whom I had previously only known via email, telephone and Skype.



*Ploughshare tortoise laying eggs
(Photo: Andrew Routh/DWCT)*



*Madagascar pochard
(Photo: Andrew Routh/DWCT)*

To the future – well in addition to our teaching in India I anticipate I will be teaching in the Middle East. There is also more work to be done in Madagascar, not only with the tortoises but also as we look to release the Madagascar pochard. A release site has been identified. This needs to be optimised for our ducks whilst accommodating the needs of the local villagers, and their domestic birds, now using the lake.

How did I end up doing this? Primarily through following an interest and not being afraid to take chances, often volunteer work, when they arose. In between times I did also get a post-grad qualification; the CertZooMed. And what else to pack before embarking on a similar journey? If another language is not there already then at least the willingness to learn will help. And the ability to laugh with fellow workers goes a long way.

EXCITING OVERSEAS LINE-UP AT BVA CONGRESS 2014

BVA is joining forces with the London Vet Show (LVS) again to host the 2014 BVA Congress (LINK) on 20-21 November at Olympia and there is good overseas representation in our contentious issues stream. Here's a flavour of what's coming up with an overseas interest:

- **Antimicrobial resistance: one health, one problem (Thursday 20 Nov)**
 - Antimicrobial resistance has been described as posing as big a risk as terrorism and has been discussed at the highest levels, including at last year's G8 summit. But what can realistically be done about it? Is it fair that tighter restrictions should be placed on UK and European vets when, in other parts of the world, antibiotics are available without prescription? Isn't action at home just a drop in the ocean given the global nature of the threat? This debate will look at the challenge antimicrobial resistance presents to both people and animals and different approaches to dealing with it.
 - Chaired by Paul Cooper, speakers will be **Professor Dame Sally Davies** (CMO and Scientific Adviser, Department of Health) and **Christophe Buhot** (FVE President)
- **Rabies: no reason for neglect (Thursday 20 Nov)**
 - Rabies kills an estimated 60,000 people each year, mainly in Asia and Africa. The WHO lists it as a neglected tropical disease. The tragedy is, it's entirely preventable. This session will look at some of the work being done globally to manage and eradicate rabies; it will also consider what is being done to keep the disease out of the UK, where changes to the pet travel rules have increased the number of travelling pets and added to the responsibilities of vets in practice.
 - Chaired by Peter Jones, speakers will be **Dr Deborah Briggs** (former Executive Director, Global Alliance for Rabies Control) and **Sharon Edwards** (Animal Health Inspector, City of London)
- **Overseas projects: veterinary tourism or long-term aid? (Friday 21 Nov)**
 - Many UK vets and veterinary students travel abroad to developing countries to offer their services to local communities, often through international aid charities. Activities range from holding dog neutering and vaccination clinics, through treating local livestock and working equid populations to conducting research projects. Who really benefits from this? Does it really help the long-term development of local communities, or would it be better to focus efforts on training local vets to undertake such work instead? This session will consider how best to contribute to improving animal health and welfare in developing countries.
 - Chaired by Overseas Group chair Dr Adele Williams, speakers will be **Professor Lord Trees**, **Professor John E Cooper**, **Peter Jeffries** (GALVmed) and **Ellie Milnes**
- **Closer than you think: one health and wildlife (Friday 21 Nov)**
 - As the world's human population continues to grow, the pressures on wildlife and the environment continue to increase. In this session, two case studies will illustrate how all three are interdependent. The first will examine the work of Conservation Through Public Health (CTPH), an NGO that 'achieves gorilla conservation by enabling humans, wildlife and livestock to coexist through improving primary health care in and around Africa's protected areas'. The second will explore the enormous economic impact caused by a decline in India's vulture population and subsequent changes to local ecosystems.
 - Chaired by Sean Wensley, the speakers will be **Dr Gladys Kalema-Zikusoka** (founder and CEO of CTPH in Uganda) and **Nic Masters** (Head of Veterinary Services, ZSL)

The large animal and equine streams may also have relevance to those involved in overseas veterinary work, with sessions on camelids, goat health planning, sheep parasitology, cattle lameness, backyard poultry, treating equine colic, the coughing horse, castration, and critical emergencies in the field.

We'd love to see you there. There's more information on our website and don't forget there a 15% discount (until 31 July) for BVA members attending the [London Vet Show](#).

CONGRATULATIONS!

BVA offers its warmest congratulations to the three veterinary surgeons who were awarded OBEs in the Queen's Birthday Honours, two of whom have strong overseas links:

- Professor Sarah Cleaveland, Professor of Comparative Epidemiology at the University of Glasgow, for her contribution to veterinary epidemiology
- Professor Julie Fitzpatrick, the Scientific Director of the Moredun Research Institute and Chief Executive of the Moredun Foundation, for services to animal health and science
- Bert Houston, former Chief Veterinary Officer for Northern Ireland, for services to veterinary science in the country

BVA President Robin Hargreaves commented:

“I am absolutely thrilled and immensely proud that three members of the veterinary profession have been recognised in this way. They have all made outstanding contributions to improving and promoting animal health and welfare, and public health - through science, education and research. Much of their work has profound implications not only within the UK but far beyond our shores and highlights the importance of the work of British vets overseas. Their awards are richly deserved.”

Many will be familiar with Sarah Cleaveland's extensive work on zoonotic, livestock and wildlife diseases in East Africa, where she has made an outstanding contribution to both animal and human health, resulting in widespread and tangible benefits for domestic animal health, wildlife conservation, animal welfare, and public health throughout the region and beyond. In terms of zoonotic diseases, Sarah and her group work to identify animal reservoirs of infection, to understand risk factors of new and emerging zoonotic diseases, and to design cost-effective disease control strategies to improve human, animal and ecosystem health. Most notably, her research on rabies has demonstrated that eliminating canine rabies in Africa is feasible and would provide a cost effective way for preventing human rabies deaths. She is currently working on several livestock disease projects at the wildlife-livestock interface in Tanzania, including epidemiological studies of endemic foot-and-mouth disease and vaccine trials for malignant catarrhal fever, and has an integrated human-animal health research programme focusing on zoonotic diseases that cause human febrile illness, including brucellosis, Q-fever and leptospirosis.

As well as being Scientific Director of the Moredun Research Institute and Chief Executive of the Moredun Foundation, Julie Fitzpatrick is also Vice-Chair of the Board of GALVmed, a public private partnership focusing on supporting the development of biologicals and therapeutics for orphan diseases in developing countries. Julie's current research interests focus on livestock health and disease in the UK and in developing countries. Fittingly Julie and Sarah have worked together on projects in Tanzania in the past.

PART 2 OF THE JULY 2014 NEWSLETTER (TO FOLLOW)

We couldn't get everything in a single newsletter (the file size was too big for our system!) so we've divided it up. Part 2, to follow, will include:

- Commonwealth Veterinary Association news
- World Veterinary Association news
- World Small Animal Veterinary Association
- Rabies: GARC and World Rabies Day 2014
- Conservation Through Public Health
- GALVmed
- OIE global strategy for peste des petits ruminants (PPR)
- East Coast fever vaccine development
- International knowledge transfer and exchange (KTE) hub for livestock health and welfare
- Improving health and farming in Kenya: Liverpool University programme
- Zoonoses in Livestock in Kenya project (ZooLink): joint research initiative
- Neglected zoonotic diseases: University of Edinburgh study
- VetAfrica app
- ISPC synthesis and commentary on the livestock report
- Invisible Helpers report: The Brooke
- 7th International Colloquium on working equids
- Vets with Horsepower
- World Animal Protection
- Good Friday slaughter: Brian Perry
- Preparing for another pink death
- Steppe eagles susceptible to diclofenac poisoning
- Update from Sudan
- Updates from FAO; ILRI; JMICAW; WHO
- FOCUS on Goa Animal Welfare Trust: Penny Stephens

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