

REPORTS AND COMMENTS

Feral pests in Australia

This series of publications is made up of: a six-page coloured leaflet-card on 'Environmental Weeds in Australia'; a four-page coloured leaflet-card on 'Feral Animals in Australia' in general; and five, two-page coloured leaflet-cards on 'The Feral Cat (*Felis catus*)', 'The Feral Goat (*Capra hircus*)', the 'European Wild Rabbit (*Oryctolagus cuniculus*)', 'The Feral Pig (*Sus scrofa*)' and the 'European Red Fox (*Vulpes vulpes*)'.

This well-produced, clearly written and stylishly illustrated material is aimed, presumably, at informing the Australian general public about the natural history and biology of introduced animals and plants, the damage they can do, the methods which can be used to control them and the research being undertaken so that, in future, the problems they cause can be more efficiently and humanely contained.

The series is obviously attuned to Australian conditions but it – and especially the five individual animal leaflet-cards – will be of interest to all who are concerned about man's management of wild animals and the environment.

Feral Pests Program. Produced and published by the Australian Nature Conservation Agency (1995). An A4 sized folder containing seven leaflet cards. Obtainable from the publishers, GPO Box 636, Canberra, ACT, 2610, Australia. Free.

Alternatives directory

This publication grew out of a side-meeting at the 1st World Congress on Alternatives and Animal Use in the Life Sciences: Education, Research and Testing, held in Baltimore, Maryland in November 1993. It was felt there was a need for a directory of resources addressing various aspects of the alternatives issue. Four people volunteered to develop such a resource and in the Spring of 1994 a questionnaire was developed and sent to all interested parties. The Directory grew out of the responses to the questionnaire. It gives information on newsletters, databases, publications and computer models. Each entry comprises the resource developer's name, address, telephone/fax, descriptive information, costs, availability, audience, language and a contact person's name.

As the authors state in their introduction, this first edition is by no means complete. They request that organizations who have resource material and who have not been included in the Directory should send details – there is a questionnaire included at the end of the booklet.

The second edition should, perhaps, have a short piece in the Introduction on the different meaning which different people give to the term alternatives. For some it means replacement (only), for others it additionally covers refinement and reduction. The title of the publication includes the phrase 'alternatives and animal use' and not 'alternatives to animal use'. It is a little unclear whether the Directory is intended to cover all or only some of the concepts of replacement, refinement, reduction and animal use in the life sciences.

These somewhat critical comments should not deter scientists, animal welfarists and others from consulting this useful Directory – a publication, I suspect, that will be even more useful in its second edition.

Directory of Resources on Alternatives and Animal Use in the Life Sciences 1995. J A Larson, D C Anderson, K Ungar and P S Stark (1995). AWIC (Animal Welfare Information Center) Resource Series No 1. US Department of Agriculture: Beltsville. 65pp. Paperback. Obtainable from AWIC, National Agricultural Library, Beltsville, Maryland 20705, USA (ISSN 1082 9644). Free.