

EDITORIAL

Animal Welfare is, as its readers may know, the scientific and technical journal of the Universities Federation for Animal Welfare (UFAW) charity and it is now in the fifth year of production. UFAW itself has existed for 70 years and this anniversary will be commemorated at a special reception and exhibition to be held in London in June.

When the University of London Animal Welfare Society (ULAWS) was set up in Birbeck College in 1926 the aim was to tackle animal welfare problems on a scientific basis with a maximum amount of sympathy but a minimum of sentimentality. In 1938, in order to widen the scope of the organization and to spread its influence outside London, UFAW was established with ULAWS as its first branch. In 1939 UFAW attempted to produce a *UFAW Quarterly Journal* which combined some of the features of the then regular UFAW publications the *Animal Year Book*, the *Annual Report* and the *Half-Yearly Bulletin*. It was perhaps more a house journal than an independent refereed scientific/technical publication – only one issue was produced in July 1939 before it was stopped by the outbreak of war in September of that year.

The present UFAW journal *Animal Welfare* was started in 1992 to again ‘. . .widen the scope of the organization and to spread its influence . . .’. There was, at that time, no scientific animal welfare journal either nationally or internationally and UFAW felt it could make an important contribution by producing such a journal, to be circulated worldwide.

As the contents of the present issue of *Animal Welfare* show it certainly has achieved a wide coverage of subjects. There are three papers on farmed animals: one by Savory *et al* on the welfare of broiler breeders, one by Hughes and Grigor on the behaviour of floor-housed turkeys and a contribution by Braastad on the behaviour of farmed silver foxes in modified breeding boxes. These are all animals kept under intensive farming conditions and they often show signs of having welfare problems. If the welfare of the animals cannot be assured under intensive systems then less intensive husbandry methods may have to be adopted. Savory’s paper is an extensive study on qualitative versus quantitative food restriction in broiler breeders, to investigate ways of limiting the stress associated with chronic hunger. Hughes and Grigor postulate that the amount of beak related behaviour in their turkey poults is relatively constant, but a major proportion is strongly directed towards their own or other birds’ plumage. A possible solution to the feather pecking/cannibalism problem may be to increase the amount of time the birds spend feeding. Braastad found that female breeding foxes were more successful raising their young in boxes with tunnels, females in boxes without tunnels were more stressed.

There are two articles on laboratory animals. The first is by Schapiro *et al* and is on the effects of different kinds of feeding enhancement on single-caged yearling rhesus macaques. It is clearly shown that feeding enrichment programmes which combine stimulating devices with foods that are novel and require processing by the animals, can positively affect the behaviour of captive primates. The second paper is by Young *et al* and is on the influence of group housing and corticosteroid administration on weight gain and locomotor activity in neonatal rats. The pups from group-housed mothers fared better: they showed superior motor development and increased weight gain.

Zoo and wild animals are covered in two further papers. The first by Veasey *et al* discusses the difficulties of using a comparison of the behaviour of zoo animals with their wild counterparts, as a welfare indicator. The example used was the giraffe and while obvious behavioural differences could be seen between the zoo and the wild situations, it was felt that these differences alone could not be used to assess welfare. The second contribution is by O'Leary and is on the deleterious effects of uncontrolled feeding by the public on free-ranging Barbary macaques on Gibraltar. It is suggested that future management plans must recognize and seek to remedy the negative impact of tourism.

As was stated in the first editorial (*Animal Welfare 1(1): 2*) the journal 'is being produced in the belief that a quality technical journal dealing specifically with scientific and factual aspects of animal welfare will, by the dissemination of knowledge, lead to an improvement in the health and well-being of the animals used or controlled by man.'

The *Animal Welfare* journal spreads the influence of UFAW in that it not only receives contributions from a variety of scientific establishments scattered across many countries, but it is now circulated worldwide to a varied collection of individuals, research institutions and animal welfare societies. All the signs now suggest that the journal is being accepted as a reliable source of scientific animal welfare material.

I would like readers to recommend the journal to their colleagues as a publication where scientific and technical material can be published and the latest developments in animal welfare science can be found.

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Roger Ewbank
Editor-in-Chief

