

This document sets the standards for zoos in the UK and will be essential reading for all involved in zoo work here. The previous edition had wider influence through going on to form the core of the standards adopted by the European Association of Zoos and Aquaria. These new standards also set out ideas and ideals that deserve consideration by the zoo community internationally. The standards came into force in the UK in April 2000.

Secretary of State's Standards of Modern Zoo Practice (2000). The Department of the Environment, Transport and the Regions: London, UK. 156pp. Paperback. Obtainable from: the Department of the Environment, Transport and the Regions, Eland House, Bressenden Place, London SW1E 5DU, UK; or via the website <http://www.detr.gov.uk>. Single hard copies available free to interested parties.

The Use of Wildlife for Research

In response to alarming rates of decline in koala, *Phascolarctos cinereus*, populations across Australia earlier this century, animals were relocated to a number of safe sites. In one such programme, 18 koalas were introduced to Kangaroo Island. The population grew and has now reached about 5000 and, since good habitat is limited, this has resulted in numerous tree deaths from over-browsing. To address this problem of habitat degradation and its potential effect on the health of the koala population, the Koala Management Program was initiated in 1997. The approach it adopted to tackle the problem included large-scale fertility control to reduce koala birth rates (by vasectomy of males and sectioning of the oviducts of females) and relocation of animals from the worst-affected areas. In the first 18 months of the programme, over 2500 animals were sterilized and over 1100 were relocated to areas within their former range in the south east of Australia.

This story, told by Drew Laslett of the Department for Environment, Heritage and Aboriginal Affairs, is one of the five case studies included in the Proceedings of the Australian and New Zealand Council for the Care of Animals in Research and Teaching (ANZCCART) Conference, *The Use of Wildlife in Research*, held in May 1999. It illustrates well the many scientific, ethical and public relations challenges that can arise in wildlife conservation and management programmes. With such species and ecosystem management problems becoming common around the world, there has been a proliferation of research aimed at helping to solve the problems. Ethical and welfare issues associated with research involving wild animals have tended to receive less scrutiny than those relating to research using laboratory animals. The proceedings of this conference, the first held by ANZCCART on wildlife, helps to redress the balance.

The papers cover a variety of topics including the ethics of zoology (V Monamy), wild animals in the laboratory (D Cooper), zoo-based research in Australia (R Woods), ethical issues in vertebrate pest management (C Marks), and the consequences of employing an ecological ethic to guide wildlife research (G Albrecht). B Warburton and D Choquenot, in their chapter on animal welfare and pest control, argue that the humanity of pest control techniques should be judged not against a zero-suffering standard (which is generally the aim in the husbandry of domestic animals) as this may be an unrealistic ideal in many cases, but in comparison with the suffering the animal would be likely to incur from natural mortality agents if left undisturbed. They review data on causes of death in free-living animals and discuss the welfare consequences of these in comparison with the harm caused by pest control techniques and conclude: 'Most tools in use for controlling possums in New Zealand act sufficiently rapidly to exceed the time to death that is possible with natural mortality factors.'

There are few easy answers in balancing human, species conservation and animal welfare interests but we are becoming more familiar with the questions. This book illustrates a range of

problems and offers some ideas towards their resolution. It will be of interest to all those concerned with the welfare and ethical aspects of wildlife management and research.

The Use of Wildlife for Research. Proceedings of the Conference Held at the Western Plains Zoo, Dubbo, New South Wales, Australia 26-27 May 1999. Edited by D Mellor and V Monamy (1999). Australian and New Zealand Council for the Care of Animals in Research and Teaching: Glen Osmond, Australia. 128pp. Paperback. Obtainable from: ANZCCART, P O Box 19, Glen Osmond, SA 5064, Australia, or E-mail anzccart@waite.adelaide.edu.au (ISBN 0958682127). Price £12.00.

SCAS report on the benefits of keeping animals in schools

The Society for Companion Animal Studies (SCAS) firmly believes that keeping pets is beneficial for the health and well-being of people. Their latest publication, *Animals in Schools: A Teachers' Guide to the Educational and Therapeutic Benefits*, aims to encourage the use of animals in schools by outlining the perceived educational and spiritual benefits for pupils, and the school community, of allowing pets into the classroom; and by giving some ideas of the ways in which pets can be used in the school. Predominantly human-orientated, the focus of the report is less on the health and well-being of the animals being used than on that of the pupils with whom they come into contact. As such, it is perhaps typical of other publications in this field. Many of the examples and suggestions for animal use relate to primary schools and the use of animals to increase pupil confidence and self-esteem. While some basic principles on the selection and introduction of animals are given, readers seeking specific guidance are (correctly) advised to contact veterinary surgeons prior to introducing any animal. Overall, the report is perhaps a little too positive in tone and would have been strengthened by a more detailed discussion of the welfare issues concerning the role of animals in schools and of the associated health and safety issues (particularly if, as the report suggests, schools choose to encourage pupils to bring their own pets to school). Once the positive and upbeat message of the report has been digested, its final list of organizations and publications that can give further guidance about the use of animals is likely to be the most useful part of this publication.

Animals in Schools: A Teachers' Guide to the Educational and Therapeutic Benefits (2000). SCAS: Callander, UK. 13pp. Paperback. Obtainable from the Society for Companion Animal Studies (SCAS), 10b Leny Road, Callander, Perthshire, FK17 8BA, UK. Tel/Fax +44 (0) 1877 330996. Price: Free, but there may be a charge for large orders.