

Announcements -- India

Training Programme on Immunopathology

Dr. R. S. Chauhan, Associate Professor, Pathology, College of Veterinary Sciences, Pantnagar will be organizing a short term training course on "Immunopathology : Modern Trends in Diagnosis and Control" as Course Director. This training programme is sponsored by Department of Biotechnology (Ministry of Science & Technology) Govt. of India. The training programme is envisaged for mid career scientists below 40 years of age from Veterinary and Medical Sciences with basic degrees B. V. Sc. & A. H./MBBS. The participants will be given training on many sophisticated diagnostic techniques used for diagnosis of immunopathological disorders of man and animals. Due emphasis will be laid on important topics such as Immunodeficiency, hypersensitivity, autoimmune diseases, Impact of environmental pollutants on Immune system of body, Immunomodulation particularly the use of immunomodulators of herbal origin. For further details please contact:

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Seminar on Animal Welfare 27th & 28th November 1997 Vigyan Bhavan, New Delhi

The Animal Welfare Board of India has decided to organise a high profile seminar at Vigyan Bhavan in November. The purpose of this seminar is to address some of anomalies or contrast between the treatment of animals "in this land of Ahimsa and Non-Violence, the Buddha, the Mahaveera, Thiruvalluvar, Gurunanak, Mahatma Ghandhi." These and ever so many other saints and seers preached and practised kindness and compassion to Animals and all living creatures, says the Board, however, in this Punya Bhoomi the Animal Welfare consciousness is lacking and Animal Welfare Schemes and projects get a very low priority among the public. Kindness and compassion to Animals do not transform into action so easily. Yet, every citizen of this country has a duty towards his less fortunate Animal Citizens who cannot speak.



Art. 51-A (g) of the Constitution of India reads as follows: "It shall be the fundamental duty of every citizen of India to protect and improve the natural environment including Forests, Lakes, Rivers and Wildlife, and to have compassion for all living creatures".

The trait of kindness to Animal is inbuilt in every one, but this sensitivity needs to be kindled to induce the involvement of the people to this Animal Welfare Movement in India.

Objectives of the Seminar :

1. To gather the workers/activities, humanitarians and other concerned with Animal Welfare to discuss the problems and decide about the remedial action to be taken to improve and augment Animal Welfare activities in the Country.
2. To consider and pass resolutions to recommend to the Central/State Governments and Local bodies with appeal to implement the resolutions to alleviate the silent suffering of the mute animals.
3. To create awareness about the concept of Animal Welfare, Animal Rights and Prevention of Cruelty to Animals.

Themes

1. Status of Animals in India - Should they have any rights ?
2. Legal loopholes which negate the Animal Welfare work - How can they be overcome?
3. Should the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act be changed to Protection of Animals Act?
4. Should Animal Welfare be peoples movement and move out of Government control?

Delegates must make their own travel and stay arrangements.

For an application form and announcement write to the :
Animal Welfare Board of India, Ministry of Environment and Forests
No. 7, II Cross St, Venus Colony, Alwarpet, Madras 600 018
Phone 044 432 0528 Fax 044 432 0633

Announcements ... Fur-in

The International Bear Foundation

The International Bear Foundation (IBF) was established in the beginning of 1993 on the initiative of Ouwehand Zoo. The foundation devotes itself to four tasks:

- education and increasing public awareness of bear problems and solutions,
- scientific research in the field of ethology and veterinary medicine,
- contributing to nature conservation,
- providing homes for confiscated bears and improving bear welfare.

With these tasks IBF wants to make an effort with respect to the conservation of the Brown bear (*Ursus arctos*).

The main reason for the establishment of IBF was to deal with the problems regarding dancing bears in big cities of Greece and Turkey. Young bears are often taken out from their natural habitat after their mothers have been killed. They are taught to dance by brutal training and tourists have to pay for a demonstration or picture. Not only these bears are treated badly, many bears in several circuses and zoo's world-wide are also living under terrible circumstances. These bears have been dependant on humans for most of their lives and are incapable of surviving in the wild, they need homes where they will be cared for. IBF offers several mistreated bears a shelter on our semi-wilderness site in Rhenen.

The bears in our Bear Park in Rhenen originate from, among other countries, Turkey, Bosnia, Germany and Russia. Many new bear enclosures are being planned or are currently under development. Examples of these new bear enclosures are an alternative Barenpark Worbis, Germany, a future bear park in Godollo, Hungary, a future bear sanctuary in Primorsky Krai, the Russian Far East.

New enclosures are being built together with an education centre to increase public awareness of matters such as habitat destruction and fragmentation and poaching. With our participation and consulting role in the establishment of homes for confiscated bears and the improvement of bear welfare, we gain more and more in knowledge of these matters.

International Knowledge Centre

International Bear foundation is partly linked to Ouwehand Zoo. Not only in respect to our efforts for the conservation of the Brown bear but also within temporary zoo management the issue of reintroduction is becoming increasingly important. IBF is indirectly involved in the reintroduction programme of orphaned Brown bears into the wild by Dr. Valentin Pazhetnov in Russia and in the establishment of a bear welfare, education and reintroduction programme in Primorsky Krai, also in Russia. Because the foundation wants to contribute to nature



International Bear Foundation

conservation, IBF also wants to broaden its participation in the matters of reintroduction. In our opinion, not only referring to reintroduction programmes but also to nature conservation programmes in general, it is especially of interest that nature conservationists should know of each others successes and miscalculations.

During its work IBF has noticed that nature conservation in general but also nature conservation directed towards the brown bears and their habitat, becomes a more and more disordered web. For this reason IBF is establishing a service that can provide all kind of information on the brown bear (*Ursus arctos*) and its conservation. With this service, which will be called the International Knowledge Centre of Brown Bears (*Ursus arctos*), IBF intends to gather and provide all kinds of information on brown bears.

The aim of the International Knowledge Centre (IKC) is to provide a source of information on the ecology, taxonomy, conservation programmes and veterinary aspects of the brown bear.

The IKC is therefore committed to the following tasks:

- providing the knowledge we have about setting up, building and maintaining large bear enclosures,
- providing an updated overview of the current situation of Brown bear populations in the wild,
- providing information on the persons and organisations involved in nature conservation projects concerning the brown bear,
- providing information on brown bear ecology,
- providing information on taxonomic studies on *Ursus arctos* species,
- providing information on veterinary aspects concerning the attendance of brown bears in captivity and concerning the attendance of brown bears in reintroduction programmes.

These tasks will be implemented into the establishment of a database including names, addresses and reports of scientists and organisations dealing with the topics mentioned above. Also communication message and other news will be kept in this database. This database will be used for an updated overview of the current situation of brown bear populations in the wild.

The IKC can be visited at our Internet-site at the Agricultural University of Wageningen where a map index will be visible. If possible, direct links will be given to the organisations involved. Our Internet site will provide the visitor a fair amount of information on the different topics mentioned above. If the information is not available at our site the visitor will be able to find other contact possibilities. If the searched-for information is not available it is always possible to drop the question at our help-desk.

Setting up a proper IKC will take quite some time. For the completion of our database IBF is still searching for several contacts. The IKC can soon be a success when you help us collect valuable information including names and addresses. The Centre does not plan to file all the information itself, but is especially interested in what kind of information exists and where it is available. Therefore, scientists, organisations and all others who can be any help are kindly requested to contact the foundation. Any recommendations or criticism is always welcome, but co-operation even more! Contact:

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International Bear Foundation

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<http://www.tref.nl/veenendaal/berenbos>

trolling reproduction in Bears, Katarina Jewgenow and H. Meyer

- The dancing Bear project in Turkey, Gerry Dorrestein

- Bear behaviour in large enclosures, Paul Koene

- Introduction of blind bears in the Bear forest, Annie Woudstra and Paul Koene

- Behaviour and habitat use of two brown bear cubs, Monique Bestman

- The raising of orphan Bear cubs in the special forest biological station: A way of reintroducing them into the wild, Valentin Pazhetnov

India has a very big problem with bears. One sees references to bears in the news frequently and we know from work with Central Zoo Authority and Animal Welfare Board of India as well as the wildlife agencies that habitat shrinkage and population expansion are pushing bears out of their natural habitats and more into conflict with human beings. Bears also present another ethical problem and that is that they are owned by individuals who use them for their livelihood, more than not, quite cruelly. When authorities confiscate them, there is always the likelihood of the owner going to court and creating a big expensive, time consuming tamasha and the poor bear ending up going back to the owner or being kept in a small cage in a zoo. Bears deserve better than this but the problems are not going to go away fast.

It is possible that courts would be kinder to confiscation agencies if there were not so much criticism of zoo cages and other holding areas. Therefore, one of the major research efforts of International Bear Foundation, the creating and construction and research of large bear enclosures is particularly relevant.

It is one thing to say that bears need a large enclosure, however, and another to create and maintain it with the bears having the security and comfort they require. Too many bears in an enclosure will create intra-specific competition. A large enclosure which has no proper monitoring facilities could easily create a situation where illnesses and other problems were overlooked. Also, since there seem to be too many bears already, it may not be good to breed them until we know more about their population and distribution requirements.

The International Bear Foundation has a cute logo. I wonder if they would mind if someone in India started an Indian Bear Foundation which would use the same or a similar logo and have similar objectives for bears in India. Grass roots work for bears in India is urgently required. If you are interested you may like to discuss it over e-mail with IBF.

Just a suggestion!

Zoo Outreach Organisation and International Bear Foundation

Because of our contacts with Ouweland Zoo for the past few years, Zoo Outreach Organisation is serving as a temporary Indian contact point for the International Bear Foundation.

We have distributed the booklet entitled Large Bear Enclosures, the proceedings of an international workshop on captive bear management held in Ouweland Zoo, Rhenen in 1995 and have one left for xeroxing if any zoo or individual is interested. The book contains several very pertinent articles which are listed below. We have sent this booklet to zoos known to have bear problems and the Central Zoo Authority and featured it in ZOOS' PRINT in a previous issue. Articles in the issue are listed below. They can be ordered either article by article or the whole book. Article by article cost will be Rs. 10 each and cost of entire xeroxed book will be Rs. 100. The articles are:

- Introduction to Large Bear enclosures, Frans van de Helm
- The Rhenen Bear Forest, Gerard Baas
- Managing the Bears in the Bear forest in Rhenen, Peter van der Eijk
- Veterinary care of the Bears in the Rhenen Bear forest, Jan Bos
- Marketing and Communications, Petra Pouwels
- Large Bear enclosure projects in Norway, Hans-Ove Larsson
- Fencing large Bear enclosures, Andrew Venables
- Bear park in Belgium, Didier Ladry
- Potential relationship between regional collection planning and large Bear enclosures, Lydia Kolter
- Bears in Zagreb, Dijuro Huber
- An Introduction of the Zoo Decin, Lubomir Moudry
- Mode of action of antigestagens and their potential use for con-



INDIAN BEAR FOUNDATION
Regional Network of the International Bear Foundation