

Wildlife in captivity: assessment and enforcement workshops

The World Society for the Protection of Animals (WSPA) has produced an instructional videotape series from their '*Wildlife in Captivity: Assessment and Enforcement*' workshops, held in Toronto, Canada. The set comprises seven videotapes, totalling over ten hours of viewing, and may be of interest to those involved in the inspection or assessment of zoos, wildlife parks, aquariums, circuses, pet shops, and trade or transport conditions. The videos feature lectures and demonstrations on the following topics: inspecting and assessing captive wildlife facilities — animal health and psychological well-being, presented by Samantha Scott; assessing bird husbandry and housing conditions, presented by Richard Farinato; assessing reptile husbandry and housing conditions, presented by Clifford Warwick; assessing conditions in travelling shows, presented by Cindy Machado; inspecting and assessing captive wildlife facilities — facility operations, presented by Greg Tarry; assessing mammal husbandry and housing conditions, presented by Karen Cowan; and finally, assessment and enforcement — problems and challenges, presented by Richard Farinato. The videos are available in NTSC or PAL format from WSPA Canada.

Wildlife in Captivity: Assessment and Enforcement. Produced by WSPA Canada, 90 Eglinton Avenue East, Suite 960, Toronto, Ontario M4P 2Y3, Canada; e-mail: wspa@wspa.ca. Prices in Canadian dollars: VHS NTSC, \$60.00 per series or \$10.00 per individual tape; VHS PAL, \$85.00 per series or \$12.00 per individual tape.

Council of Europe recommendations on turkeys

On 21st December 2001, the Council of Europe Recommendation Concerning Turkeys (*Meleagris gallopavo* ssp.) came into force. The document begins by running through the biological characteristics of turkeys. The general provisions required for turkeys kept for farming purposes are then detailed. Areas covered include stockmanship and inspection, enclosures, buildings and equipment, management, changes of genotype, changes of phenotype, emergency killing, research, and killing of unwanted poults and embryos in hatcheries. There are many recommendations within the report, some of which are described below.

Every person engaged in the keeping of turkeys shall ensure that all reasonable steps are taken to safeguard the welfare of the entire flock. Furthermore, birds should be cared for by a sufficient number of people with adequate knowledge of turkeys and of the husbandry system in use. Stockmen should be able to recognise good health, normal standing and moving behaviour, and behavioural changes and their significance, and be able to recognise appropriate environments for the birds' welfare. Flocks should be inspected at least twice a day and records kept of turkey mortality, culling and morbidity. Any injured, sick or distressed turkeys should receive attention immediately, and any unsuitable environmental factors should be corrected without delay.

It is recommended that all new or modified accommodation or husbandry practices should be professionally tested for turkey welfare prior to implementation. The design, construction and maintenance of enclosures, buildings and equipment for turkeys shall allow the fulfilment of essential biological needs of turkeys. Barren environments and traumatic injuries to the birds must be avoided and the risk of disease and disorders manifested by behavioural changes must be minimised. Thorough inspection and easy maintenance of good conditions of hygiene, air quality and thermal comfort must be achievable. Protection from predators and adverse weather conditions should also be provided.

Endeavours should be made to provide turkeys with adequate facilities to allow the expression of the various behaviours described under 'Biological Characteristics'. In addition, the document states specific requirements for the provision of flooring, litter, nesting facilities,

food and water supply, and fire-prevention measures. Birds should have sufficient space to move around freely and to perform normal social, standing, turning, defecating, wing-flapping, preening, feeding and drinking behaviours, to run during at least the first five weeks of life, and to escape aggressors. Furthermore, minimum illumination should be 10 lux at bird eye level, and a 24 h cycle with both twilight and uninterrupted dark and light periods should be applied.

There is a section on food provision and a ban on routine drug use as part of a management system to compensate for poor hygienic conditions or management practices. Recommendations regarding equipment checks, recording of information, artificial insemination and suggested areas for future research are also included. There are guidelines on handling, transport and emergency killing. Emergency killing methods must cause immediate loss of consciousness and death or rapidly render the animal insensible to pain and distress until death supervenes, or must cause the death of an animal that is anaesthetised or effectively stunned.

Breeding programmes that cause, or are likely to cause, suffering to birds are not permitted. Furthermore, at least as much attention shall be paid to improving bird welfare as to production criteria. Mutilation of turkeys is generally prohibited and measures shall be taken to avoid the need for such procedures. There are also recommendations regarding the practice of beak-trimming. The next step in the UK is for DEFRA to revise the existing turkey welfare code to incorporate the requirements of this recommendation.

Standing Committee of the European Convention for the Protection of Animals Kept for Farming Purposes (T-AP): Recommendation concerning turkeys (*Meleagris gallopavo ssp.*). Adopted by the Standing Committee on 21 June 2001. T-AP (95) 15. Document available at <http://www.defra.gov.uk/animalh/welfare/publications/legislation/coeturk.htm>