

EDITORIAL

This, the fourth issue in Volume 2 of *Animal Welfare* completes the second year of the UFAW journal. The publication itself can hardly now be described as new: it is being noticed in a wide range of abstracting and indexing journals and is attracting a large number of potential papers.

We have, up to the present, received just over 100 manuscripts and have published 42 of them. A rejection rate, however, should not be calculated from these figures; nor should any attempt as yet be made to estimate submission-to-publication time. In the opening to the first Editorial in January 1992 I wrote '*It is a major enterprise to establish a new journal*'. I would, with hindsight, have liked to have added the word *chaotic* to the term enterprise. After two years, however, some of the initial chaos has been organised and we are beginning to settle down into a steadier handling of material from submission, through scrutineering, revising and editing to printing. It may soon be possible to actually talk about rejection rates and publishing times.

A glance at the current *Contents* page shows that the general layout is largely as in previous issues. There is an *Editorial* which is followed by a number of original scrutinised *Articles* and *Technical Contributions*, a *Reports and Comments* section, the signed *Book and Video Reviews* and a place for *Letters* from readers. This particular issue also contains the *Index* to the current volume.

The first of the scrutinised articles is by Mason and Mendl of the University of Cambridge and is entitled '*Why is there no simple way of measuring animal welfare?*' This contribution asks some of the questions which must often have passed through the minds of many readers of the pages in this journal. Animal welfare is not a simple matter and cannot even yet be simply defined. One of the functions of *Animal Welfare* is to provide a place where these matters can be critically discussed.

Paul and Serpell, again from the University of Cambridge, are authors of the next paper, on childhood pet keeping and humane attitudes in young adults. It has often been maintained that humaneness towards animals is not necessarily inherent in humans but has to be acquired. Childhood pet keeping may be one of the important factors in the acquisition and/or development of this humaneness.

The third paper, written by Manteca and Deag of Barcelona and Edinburgh Universities respectively, discusses social roles in cattle and is in effect a plea for the exchange of ideas between primatologists and applied ethologists. The authors point out that the concept of the social role of an animal - an idea widely employed by primatologists - may have value to those studying the behaviour of domesticated cattle. It is certainly recognised by man that a thorough understanding of the behavioural biology of a species is necessary if its biological needs are to be met and its welfare ensured.

The two *Technical Contributions* establish a new section which will contain short descriptions of practical methods of improving animal welfare. The first, by Price of the Jersey Wildlife Preservation Trust, is on gut passage times in primates. It shows what

can be done in the way of research in a zoo environment and illustrates that non-disruptive techniques can be useful in assessing the effects of dietary change on captive monkeys. The information gained may have considerable value in improving diets and hence welfare and breeding success. The second paper in this new section is by Wolfensohn of the University of Oxford and details the use of microchip implants in the identification of macaque monkeys. There is currently great interest being taken in the methods that can be used to permanently mark and thus identify individual animals - the implanted microchip seems to be a humane and efficient way of doing this.

The *Reports and Comments* section - the main purpose of which is to alert animal welfare workers to recent relevant publications - contains eight short pieces on subjects ranging from animal welfare legislation in Europe, through slaughter of pigs, cattle and sheep to justification for the use of animals in biomedical research.

A book on pig production and its complementary video, together with a number of other major publications relevant to animal welfare are appraised in the *Book and Video Reviews*. Criticism of a recent review and the author's response appear in this issue's *Letters* section. A cross-referenced *Index* concludes the Volume.

This Editorial - the last in Volume 2 - would be incomplete if I did not thank the Section Editors, the Editorial Advisers, the Editorial Assistant, UFAW's Development Officer and the in-house typesetter for the enterprise and effort they have put into the journal over the year.

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Roger Ewbank
Editor-in-Chief