

British Wildlife  
Rehabilitation Council  
Registered Charity No.1157841



Summer 2014 - Issue 59

# The Rehabilitator

B W R C N E W S L E T T E R

## SYMPOSIUM 2014

*In association with*



*South of Scotland Wildlife Hospital  
Saturday 18th & Sunday 19th October  
SRUC Barony Campus, Parkgate, Dumfries, DG1 3NE*

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*"recycle.co.uk is a platform that allows users to list items they are willing to give away for free in an attempt to help others within their community and stop items that are perfectly reusable from going to landfill sites."*



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# A word from the Chair

**W**ELCOME to this Summer 2014 edition of The Rehabilitator in which you can find full details of this year's BWRC Symposium including the full programme, an introduction to some of this year's speakers, and catering and accommodation arrangements at and around Barony Campus.

Feedback from recent conferences tells us that travelling distance is a common limiting factor for potential delegates and so we are now aiming to move the symposium around even more to give people in different areas the chance to take part. This year we are delighted to be working with SOUTH OF SCOTLAND WILDLIFE HOSPITAL who are based on the site of this year's venue – Barony College near Dumfries.

The Charities Commission has approved our application to change the BWRC into a Charitable Incorporated Organisation – I'd like to say a big THANKYOU on behalf of the committee to our Treasurer Janet Peto for all the work she has put in to support this process. We hope that this is the first step in some significant developments for the charity that you'll be hearing about soon!

At the back of this edition you'll find an invitation to take part in a study being run by UK-qualified, US-based vet Rob Adamski who's interested in that 'special relationship' between rehabilitators and vets, and so is asking rehabilitators worldwide to answer a questionnaire on their own experiences.

The role of the vet in wildlife rehabilitation is also a theme in this year's BWRC Symposium. Last year, Cheshirepet's Molly Varga (also BWRC's veterinary representative) gave us an insight in to some of the practical



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difficulties of handling wildlife casualties in a veterinary practice (her report was also published in our last edition of *The Rehabilitator*), and this year the theme will be developed by Michael Stanford of the Veterinary Defence Society and Secret World's Liz Mullineaux with particular attention to current legislation.

We'll also gain some local knowledge through speakers from Save Scotland's Red Squirrels Project (Scottish Wildlife Trust), SSPCA Fishcross Wildlife Centre and Science and Advice for Scottish Agriculture (SASA) to contrast with some experiences from the Cape Wildlife Centre, Massachusetts, US via their Director of Wildlife Rehabilitation and the current President of the International Wildlife Rehabilitation Council, Lynn Miller.

This year's venue – SRUC Barony Campus – is part of a group of land-based colleges delivering a wide range of further and higher education courses in areas including Agriculture, Animal Care, Environment, Equine & Horse Care, Garden Design, Golf, Horticulture and Sports Coaching and Activity Tourism. South of Scotland Wildlife Hospital is also based on the campus and works with the Animal Care and other departments to introduce students to wildlife rehabilitation.

This venue will provide us with the facilities to combine conference and workshop style sessions over the weekend, and we hope you'll also join us for our conference dinner on the Saturday evening with the option to stay on campus in the student accommodation blocks.

Read on to find more details of this year's programme, ticketing and other details, and we hope to see you in Dumfriesshire in October!

*Terri Amory*  
**BWRC Chair**



# Symposium 2014's Speakers

Here's a little background information on some of this year's symposium speakers to whet your appetite!



**M**ichael Stanford FRCVS, MRCVS qualified from Liverpool University in 1987 and after working in an avian and small animal referral practice in North Yorkshire for five years, he moved to Cheshire to open Birch Heath Veterinary Clinic. The practice specialises in non-domesticated pets, zoo and wildlife patients together with providing laboratory interpretation services for exotic animals for several pathology laboratories. In 2006 he was awarded the Diploma of FRCVS by thesis for his work on calcium metabolism in birds and was granted RCVS Specialist status in Zoo and Wildlife Medicine the following year. He is a recipient of the BVA William Hunter medal. Michael is author of various book chapters associated with exotic animal and wildlife medicine, including several BSAVA manuals, and has published widely and lectured extensively both at home and abroad. He has been employed as a Claims Consultant for the professional indemnity insurer, the Veterinary Defence Society, since 2007 and is their current Newsletter Editor. Michael is currently President of the British Veterinary Zoological Society.



**D**r Elizabeth Mullineaux BVM&S, DVM&S, CertSHP, MRCVS, graduated as a vet from Edinburgh in 1988, and worked in mixed practice overseas and in the UK before settling in Somerset as a director of a small animal veterinary hospital. Liz developed an interest in British wildlife and became responsible for the veterinary work for several wildlife charities including Secret World Wildlife Rescue (SWWR). She completed a clinical doctorate at the University of



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Edinburgh investigating the factors influencing badger rehabilitation and release in 2011, and since 2012 works as scientific advisor to SWWR, in small animal emergency medicine, and has part-time posts at several academic institutions. Liz has written several papers and book chapters on wildlife rehabilitation, badgers and tuberculosis, and co-edited the BSAVA manual of wildlife casualties. Liz will follow Michael Stanford's explanation of legal issues related to wildlife veterinary practice with a guide to practicing veterinary medicine and working with your vet within the law.



**Ian Hutchison, Species Protection Officer, Scottish Badgers and Crime Prevention Lead - Operation Meles.** Ian spent 33 years working first as a Military Policeman and then as a constable with Tayside Police in Scotland, during which years of service he worked part time as a wildlife liaison officer for Eastern Division covering the glens of Angus. On retiring he turned his attention to badgers and their protection and for over 10 years he has represented Scottish Badgers as their species protection officer which has brought him into contact with many of the problems badgers face through criminal persecution as well as the impacts they suffer due to development, forestry and agricultural operations. He is also the crime prevention lead for Operation Meles - an intelligence led operation targeting badger persecution as part of the UK Wildlife Crime Priorities. This position funded by Scottish Badger and The Badger Trust for the past three years has meant travelling throughout the UK promoting awareness of badger crime. Ian was recently given the UK Partnership Against Wildlife Crime partner of the year award for 2013.



**S**imon Allen MSc (R) Simon is a co-founder of Gower Bird Hospital and has been involved in wildlife rehabilitation and animal welfare for 26



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years. The wildlife centre has an excellent reputation, mainly due to a scientific approach in monitoring the welfare of the animals pre- and post-release. Simon recruits and supervises students from Swansea and Bristol Universities to carry out pre- and post-release research projects that he has designed for the centre. These projects have included radio tracking of hand-reared blackbirds, starlings, house martins, and hedgehogs to monitor behaviour and survival. Pre-release research has been focused on stress experienced by wildlife casualties in captivity and methods to reduce it.

Simon has been invited to give talks across the UK and abroad on the work of Gower Bird Hospital to disseminate the results of his research to other organisations, and in 2007 Simon's work in animal welfare was recognised by the national and local RSPCA through awards for outstanding kindness in the field of animal welfare and meritorious service.

Recently Simon was invited to join an Animal Welfare Network Wales working group including representatives from the RSPCA, The Dogs Trust, Redwings and many smaller animal welfare organisations. The group was set up to make the case for the regulation of animal welfare establishments in Wales to the Welsh Government due to growing concerns that animal welfare establishments were not being run properly and animals were at risk. Although initially focused on companion animals, Simon's involvement as a key note speaker at Llandudno June 2009 stated the case for the regulation of wildlife rehabilitation centres.

Simon graduated from Bristol University in 2014 with a master's degree by research in veterinary parasitology and ecology and is a visiting researcher at Swansea University and a member of their ecological research team. Simon will share some of the findings from his research based around the helminth parasites of the Western European hedgehog.





**H**einze Traut - Conservation and Forest Ecosystems BSc (Hons). Heinz acquired his love for nature in his country of birth, South Africa, and it was later that he graduated, as a mature student, from Bangor University in North Wales. There he enjoyed the outdoors as assistant warden seeing to the practical management needs of woodland, coastal & grassland reserves. After a few years in Southern Africa managing an estate in the African bush, near the renowned Kruger National Park, he returned to the cooler climate of Cumbria where he assisted the red squirrel project in England, Red Squirrels Northern England. This led on to his current post with the Scottish Wildlife Trust, as Project Officer for Saving Scotland's Red Squirrels in southwest Scotland.



**E**lizabeth Sharp – Senior Analyst, Chemistry Section, Pesticides Branch, Science and Advice for Scottish Agriculture (SASA). I am an analytical chemist and I've been involved with the Wildlife Incident Investigation Scheme (WIIS) for almost 30 years. In my current role, as a senior analyst, I am responsible for the day to day operation of the scheme in Scotland. This involves having a practical input with sample examination and analysis, analytical method development and being responsible for compiling the individual incident reports and website updates.

The WIIS investigates suspected poisoning of wildlife, companion animals, livestock and beneficial insects in incidents where there is evidence to implicate pesticides. The aims of the scheme are two-fold: firstly to provide a means of post-registration surveillance of pesticide use throughout the UK; secondly to furnish evidence of misuse or deliberate abuse of pesticides that may be used in enforcement legislation. The scheme originated because of concerns about the environmental effects of





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the use of persistent organochlorine insecticides, especially their effects on egg shell thickness during the late 1960s. Today, it has evolved to encompass a wide range of animals and has been refined to monitor acute toxic effects of most types of pesticides in current commercial use.

**C**laire Fraser, **Scottish SPCA National Wildlife Rescue Centre.** I started working with the Scottish SPCA on September 2011, prior to working with the society I studied Marine Biology at St Andrews University with a strong emphasis on marine mammals. I specialise in rehabilitating seals at the centre, working with both harbour and grey seals.

The wildlife centre is able to rehabilitate every species of native wildlife from juvenile right through to adult with the exception of cetaceans. We also have the facilities to deal with a major oil pollution incident. The centre also has the largest purpose built seal rehabilitation centre in Scotland, dealing with on average 100 seals per year.



**A**нна Meredith MA VetMB PhD CertLAS  
**DZooMed DipECZM** is Professor of Zoological and Conservation Medicine at the Royal (Dick) School of Veterinary Studies, University of Edinburgh. She has been Head of the Exotic Animal and Wildlife Service at R(D)SVS since 1992 and was also Head Vet at the RZSS Edinburgh Zoo for 17 years.

Anna is an RCVS and European Recognised Specialist in Zoological Medicine and lectures internationally on all aspects of wildlife medicine. She is also Programme Director for a new Masters programme in Conservation Medicine. She has published many scientific papers and authored or co-authored numerous books and book chapters, including *Wildlife Medicine and Rehabilitation: Self-Assessment Colour Review*, *Infectious Diseases of Wild Mammals and Birds in Europe* and two chapters in the upcoming *BSAVA Manual of Wildlife Casualties*. Anna



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currently works mainly with native Scottish Wildlife, including post-mortem surveillance for red squirrels, and is on the steering group of the recently launched Scottish Wildcat Conservation Action Plan.



**D**r Lynn Miller B.Sc.Ag., Dipl. Ecotox., PhD, CWR, Director of Wildlife Rehabilitation at the Cape Wildlife Centre, Barnstable, Massachusetts, USA, President of the International Wildlife Rehabilitation Council.

Lynn Miller began life in New Zealand surrounded by animals; cats, dogs, chickens, horses, budgies, etc. But it was her passion for wildlife and conservation that led to Summer School at Jersey Wildlife Preservation Trust and a stint at London Zoo. A rather lovely holiday in France led to meeting a gorgeous French Canadian chap and a new life in Quebec. While attending McGill University's MacDonal College, Ste-Anne-de-Bellevue, near Montreal, she began working with birds of prey at the Macdonald Raptor Research Centre. Of course, although the fact that raptors were the specialty did not deter the many people who bought in ducklings, song birds, herons and pigeons. The mistake was to take these birds to her home, or was it? That was 25 years ago. Since then, Lynn has continued her education with a PhD in Environmental Toxicology due for completion in May 2011. Her rehabbing has also been central to her life, with the founding of Le Nichoir in 1994, becoming an International Wildlife Rehabilitation Council (IWRC) instructor some 12 years ago, joining the IWRC board, and in 2011, becoming president of IWRC. Lynn is currently Director of Wildlife Rehabilitation at the Cape Wildlife Center in Barnstable, Massachusetts, a Fund For Animals facility affiliated to the HSUS. Lynn will be sharing with us some of her experiences, and initiatives developed, at the Cape Wildlife Centre.



# Symposium 2014

(Please note that this programme may be subject to change).

09.30

**Registration and Welcome to delegates**

10.00

**Morning session** (including a coffee break) –

Legal issues related to wildlife rehabilitation in veterinary practice *Michael Stanford MRCVS Veterinary Defence Society*

Practising wildlife rehabilitation within legal restrictions' *Liz Mullineaux MRCVS Secret World Wildlife Rescue*

The first two years at Fishcross *Claire Fraser, Scottish SPCA National Wildlife Rescue Centre*

'Save Scotland's Red Squirrels' Project. *Heinz Traut, Scottish Wildlife Trust*

Pesticides and wildlife *Elizabeth Sharp, Science and Advice for Scottish Agriculture*

Operation Meles *Ian Hutchison Scottish Badgers*

13.00

**LUNCH**

14.00

**Afternoon session** (including a tea break) –

Essentials of wildlife triage Prof. *Anna Meredith,, Royal (Dick) School of Veterinary Studies*

Hedgehog Lungworm: some findings on pathology and treatment. *Simon Allen, Gower Bird Hospital*

Methods of releasing mammals. *Rob Scrivens, RSPCA Stapeley Grange Wildlife Hospital*

Pesticides and wildlife *Elizabeth Sharp, Science and Advice for Scottish Agriculture*

Experiences and initiatives from the Cape Wildlife Centre, Massachusetts *Dr Lynn Miller HSUS*

17.30

**Close of Saturday presentations**

18.30

**DINNER** (please ensure you purchase a ticket which includes Saturday dinner if you wish to partake!)

(The campus bar will be open during and after dinner, and evening entertainment is being arranged).

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## SUNDAY 19TH OCTOBER 2014 – Workshop Sessions

At breakfast time - a secure room will be provided for luggage and sandwiches can be ordered for lunch. Delegates will then be grouped and rotate through each workshop session – details will be provided at 9am.

09.00	<b>Meet and workshop arrangements - allocation of groups</b>
09.10	Workshop Session 1
10.00	(Change over)
10.10	Workshop Session 2
11.00	Morning coffee break
11.30	Workshop Session 3
12.20	Plenary & questions
12.30	<b>SYMPOSIUM CLOSE</b>

**North Solway Ringing Group will also be giving us a practical demonstration of wild bird ringing throughout Sunday morning!**

<b>Workshop title</b>	<b>Demonstrator(s)</b>
A. Post-mortem examinations	Molly Varga MRCVS, Cheshire Pet Medical Centre
B. Pesticides and wildlife persecution	Elizabeth Sharp, Science and Advice for Scottish Agriculture (SASA)
C. Animal nursing practical	Liz Mullineux Secret World Wildlife Rescue

*BWRC Symposium 2014 in association with South of Scotland Wildlife Hospital  
SRUC Barony Campus, Parkgate, Dumfries, DG1 3NE*

*Symposium 2014 is sponsored by*



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# British Wildlife Rehabilitation Council Symposium 2014



In association with South of Scotland Wildlife Hospital  
SRUC Barony Campus, Parkgate, Dumfries, DG1 3NE

## BOOKING FORM

Name..... Organization .....

Address.....

Telephone..... Mobile..... Email .....

Organization ..... Any special dietary requirements? .....

If you are purchasing tickets on behalf of other colleagues please give their names below so that we may compile a delegate list. Thank you. Tickets include a buffet lunch and registration, morning and afternoon refreshments.

.....  
.....

Number of tickets required (please indicate the number of each type of ticket you wish to purchase):

### Saturday only

..... Saturday conference only – full price £35/students and regular contributors £30

..... Saturday conference plus evening dinner – full price £55/students and regular contributors £50

### Combined/Sunday day tickets (please note that Sunday tickets are restricted to the first 60 applicants)

..... Saturday and Sunday ticket – full price £45/students and regular contributors £40

..... Saturday and Sunday plus Saturday dinner – full price £65/students and regular contributors £60

..... Sunday only day ticket – full price £10.00/students and regular contributors £7

The following payment options can be used:

- Cheques payable to the BWRC posted to *Anne Maskell, 20 Garlic Row, Cambridge CB5 8HW*
- Internet Banking to Sort Code – 54-41-26, Account No. 36290521 (Use your name as reference).
- Payment may also be made by debit /credit card via [www.ottershop.co.uk](http://www.ottershop.co.uk).

**HOWEVER YOU PAY, PLEASE ENSURE THAT A COMPLETED BOOKING FORM IS SENT TO [annemaskell@gmail.com](mailto:annemaskell@gmail.com) or Anne Maskell, 20 Garlic Row, Cambridge CB5 8HW.**

British Wildlife Rehabilitation Council

[www.bwrc.org.uk](http://www.bwrc.org.uk)





# SRUC Barony: Directions

## SRUC Barony, Parkgate, Dumfries, DG1 3NE

### ► By Bus

There is a limited service from Dumfries to Parkgate. If you are travelling from the North, most buses from Glasgow / Edinburgh travel through Parkgate en route to Dumfries.

Phone Traveline (public transport information) on 0870 608 2 608 for details of all services and travel times.

There is no direct bus service from Lockerbie to Parkgate. If you arrive at Lockerbie station and want to travel to Parkgate by bus, it will be necessary to go via Dumfries.

### ► By Train

The closest railway stations are Dumfries and Lockerbie. The Dumfries service is comprehensive and includes trains from Stranraer, Carlisle, Glasgow and Newcastle. The Carlisle trains run at approximately 2 to 3 hour intervals, Glasgow at 2 hour intervals and Newcastle is less frequent at 3 trains per day. A taxi can be hired to travel from the station to the college (approximately 9 miles).

The Lockerbie Station is on the main West Coast Rail Line with services to Glasgow and Edinburgh.

#### How to Reach Us

Barony Campus is in the Dumfries and Galloway region, 10 miles North East of Dumfries, the regions main centre.



[www.sruc.ac.uk/education](http://www.sruc.ac.uk/education)

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# SRUC Barony: Directions

## SRUC Barony, Parkgate, Dumfries, DG1 3NE

### ► Location and Directions

Barony Campus is in the Dumfries and Galloway region, 10 miles North East of Dumfries, the regions main centre. By car, we are 40 minutes from Carlisle in the north of England and well connected to public transport networks.

### ► Directions for Car Drivers:

#### M74 from the North

Leave the M74 at **Junction 15** (signposted Moffat and Dumfries) and bear right, under the motorway, following signs for the **A701** Dumfries. Barony Campus is approximately 10 miles south of here, signposted off to the left.

#### M74 from the South

Leave the M74 at **Junction 18** (signposted Lockerbie and Dumfries) and join the **A709** Dumfries/ Lochmaben road. In Lochmaben, as you approach the Town Hall the road splits into two. Bear to the right and at the bottom of the street, beside the children's play area, turn left (opposite the village shop). Barony Campus is signposted from here on. Alternatively, carry on until **Junction 15**, follow the signs for the **A701** Dumfries. Barony Campus is approximately 10 miles along the **A701** signposted off to the left in Parkgate Village.

#### From Dumfries

Follow the **A701** (Edinburgh) through the town. Barony Campus is approximately 10 miles north of Dumfries and is signposted to the right in Parkgate village.



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# British Wildlife Rehabilitation Council Symposium 2014



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## TRANSPORT, ACCOMMODATION & CATERING NOTES



We can provide lifts to-and-from Dumfries Railway Station – if you would like a lift please let us know when you book your symposium ticket!



Bed and breakfast is available on campus at Barony Campus (on a first come first serve basis – please contact Pearl Edgar on 01387 242910 or via [pearl.edgar@sruc.ac.uk](mailto:pearl.edgar@sruc.ac.uk) to make bookings):

- *Nith and Cree hostels - Sixteen single study bedrooms (each) with shared facilities (1:4). Each hostel has a common area with TV, kettle, fridge and toaster. The bedrooms have sink facilities in each room. £32 per person per night .*
- *Kirkmichael Hostel - Thirteen single en-suite bedrooms (£35 per person per night) and eleven twin en-suite bedrooms (£30 per person per night)*

**For more options try Barony College's 2DAY portal online –  
[baronycollegedumfries.2day.ws/BaronyCollegeDumfries/](http://baronycollegedumfries.2day.ws/BaronyCollegeDumfries/)**

Southpark Country House, Quarry Road ,  
Locharbriggs, Dumfries, DG1 1FA. Contact  
Ewan Maxwell. Tel. 01387711188  
E-mail [rooms@southparkhouse.co.uk](mailto:rooms@southparkhouse.co.uk),  
website - [www.southparkhouse.co.uk](http://www.southparkhouse.co.uk)

Partridge Cottage Caravan Site, Amisfield, Near  
Dumfries, Dumfries, DG1 3PB, Mr and Mrs  
Black, Tel. 01387 711421 or 077452 89278;  
[j.black@nhs.net](mailto:j.black@nhs.net); £10.00 per night, Dogs allowed.

**EVENING MEALS WILL NOT BE AVAILABLE AT BARONY CAMPUS ON FRIDAY 17<sup>TH</sup>.**

PLEASE LET US KNOW IN ADVANCE IF YOU WISH TO PURCHASE MEALS AT THE  
CAMPUS OTHER THAN THOSE INCLUDED IN YOUR TICKET OR ROOM BOOKING.



*Orders for freshly made sandwiches can be made at breakfast at on the  
Sunday morning (at Barony Campus ) ready to be collected at lunchtime.*

**British Wildlife Rehabilitation Council**

**[www.bwrc.org.uk](http://www.bwrc.org.uk)**

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# An Investigation into the post release survival of rehabilitated juvenile common buzzards (*Buteo buteo*) *by Jess O'Doherty,* **RSPCA**

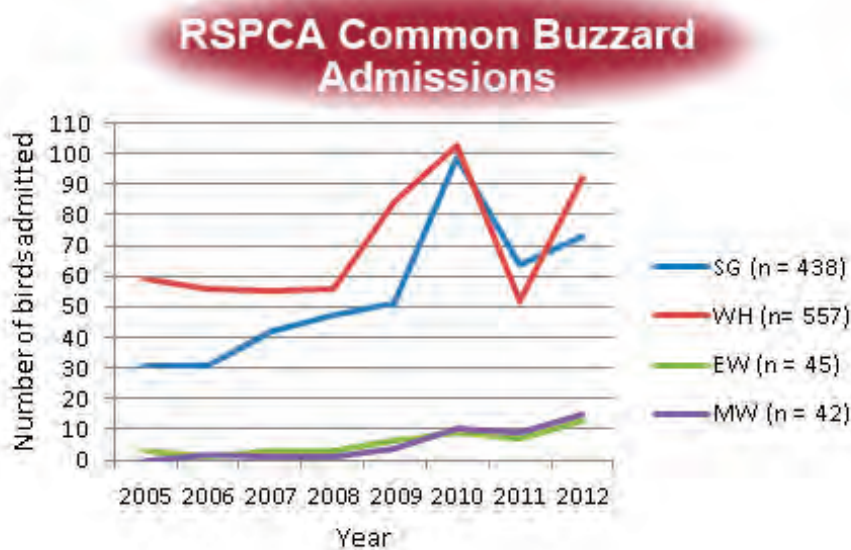
**C**ommon buzzards are the most abundant diurnal raptor in the U.K. (Clements, 2002), the 2009 results from the British Trust of Ornithology's Breeding Bird Survey estimated a population of 57,000 – 79,000 breeding pairs in Britain. The current population trend is one of rapid population increase and range expansion

*Jess O'Doherty undertook the following study while working as a Wildlife Assistant for the RSPCA at Mallydams Wood in Sussex, and presented her results at our 2013 Symposium. She is now doing field work for Bristol University.*



(Baillie et al 2013). Buzzards are a common patient in many wildlife rehabilitation centres and the number of individuals admitted to the four RSPCA wildlife centres has been increasing in line with the national population trend (Figure 1).

Between 2005 and 2012 the RSPCA admitted 1082 common buzzards 10 % of which were juveniles, of these juveniles 84.4 % were released into the wild but little was known about their survival post release. Given the increasing number of buzzard admissions it highlighted a clear need to investigate the success of buzzard rehabilitation, in order to ensure best possible care was being provided. The RSPCA BTO ring most of the birds released from its wildlife centres but recovery rates for buzzards are very low, out of the 413 buzzards ringed by the RSPCA since 1984 there has been only 23 recoveries, the majority of which were from adult birds. Survival periods from ring recoveries vary from 1 day to 23 years and 212 days. Due to this low recovery rate it was decided to use radio telemetry to monitor post release survival, the study focused on the survival of juvenile birds as these are naive individuals which have missed out on a period of parental care and have little to no experience of living independently in the wild.



*Figure 1: The number of buzzards admitted to RSPCA Stapeley Grange (SG) in Cheshire, RSPCA West Hatch (WH) in Somerset, RSPCA East Winch (EW) in Norfolk and RSPCA Mallydams Wood (MW) in East Sussex between January 2005 and December 2012.*



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Between 2006 and 2013 fourteen individuals were tracked using tail-mounted and leg-mounted radio-tags, six birds were tracked in Somerset and eight birds in East Sussex. The tags weighed between 12 -14g with a battery life of 7.5 months and a range of approximately 3 km. Once fully grown the birds were hard released (Figure 2) after a period of aviary fitness in habitat composed of arable land, grazing pasture and mixed woodland.

The tracking period for the fourteen birds lasted from 1 – 311 days, survival rates were calculated using Kaplan Meier Product Limit estimate. The results estimated an overall survival rate of 56.6 % at 64 days post release. This figure is lower than that produced in a study of non rehabilitated buzzards which estimated a survival rate of 66-73% in their first calendar year (Kenward et al 2000).



**Figure 2: A Rehabilitated common buzzard fitted with leg mount radio tag and BTO ring being released (source: Samiul Mohsanin).**

When Survival rates between East Sussex and Somerset were compared it was found that East Sussex had an estimated survival of 68.6% at 64 days post release, compared to the lower survival rate in Somerset of 53.3% at 20 days post release. This difference was not found to be statistically significant although the p value was low ( $P = .057$ ) indicating that given a larger sample size it is probable that this difference would be found to be significant.

The difference in survival rates between the two counties may be due to



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population size, East Sussex has much lower numbers of buzzards than Somerset. A study in Avon found that as the population of buzzards in the area increased breeding output decreased (Prytherch, 2013). It is likely that the survival rate of fledged buzzards may also be affected by local population density due to competition for resources. If so previous survival estimates (Kenward et al 2000) for non rehabilitated birds in their first calendar year may be an overestimation of the current situation as data was collected between 1990 – 1998 when populations were much lower than they are currently. Meaning that survival for rehabilitated buzzards may not in fact be that different from non rehabilitated birds, but further research in this area is needed to draw any definite conclusions.

Successful rehabilitation is not just about survival post release but also ability to integrate back into a wild population and display normal behaviours (Kelly et al. 2010). Many of the tracked birds were observed interacting with conspecifics, foraging for worms and actively preying woodpigeons, in addition individuals were able to successfully establish home ranges. Most birds did not disperse far from the release site mirroring the philopatric behaviour of non rehabilitated juvenile buzzards (Walls & Kenward, 1995) thus highlighting the need to pick suitable release sites.

In conclusion this project proves that juvenile buzzards can be successfully integrated back into a wild population and survive post release, giving us confidence in the rehabilitation of these individuals.

**REFERENCES** Baillie, S.R., Marchant, J.H., Leech, D.I., Massimino, D., Eglinton, S.M., Johnston, A., Noble, D.G., Barimore, C., Kew, A.J., Downie, I.S., Risely, K. & Robinson, R.A. (2013). *BirdTrends 2012: trends in numbers, breeding success and survival for UK breeding birds*. BTO Research Report No. 644. BTO, Thetford. <http://www.bto.org/birdtrends> (accessed on 01/08/2013)

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Kenward, R.E., Walls, S.S., Hodder, K.H., Pahkala, M., Freeman, S.N. & Simpson, V.R. (2000) *The prevalence of non-breeders in raptor populations: evidence from ringing, radio-tagging and transect surveys of the common buzzard*. *Oikos*. 91: 271- 279.

Prytherch, R. (2013) *The breeding biology of the common buzzard*. *British Birds*. 106: 264-279.

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# What are the Coopers up to now?

**J**ohn and Margaret Cooper will be familiar names to many of our more ‘experienced’ rehabilitators. Professor John E Cooper is a veterinary surgeon specialising in pathology with particular interests in wildlife and exotic species. His wife Margaret graduated in law and qualified as a Solicitor of the Supreme Court, and has been a member of the Farm Animal Welfare Council and the Zoo Standards Review Team.

Together they have travelled widely and lived and worked across Africa, Arabia and the West Indies, including working in several universities and on high profile projects such as mountain gorillas in Rwanda, and continue to work in East Africa although they are now based back in the UK.

John was a founder of the BWRC in 1981, serving as Chair of the committee for many years and both John and Margaret presented and chaired sessions at the early symposia.

We thought you might like to see some of their recent work (see overleaf) and so have included information on recent work on post-mortem examination protocols to investigate large scale flamingo deaths in Kenya – a concept which could of course be useful as a basis for monitoring wildlife disease in the UK, and an introduction to their recently published book “Wildlife Forensic Investigation: Principles and Practice”. Enjoy!



# Preparing for another pink death

## *Flexible, standardised post-mortem examinations important in preventing future flamingo die-offs*

The lakes of Kenya's Rift Valley boast spectacular pink aggregations of lesser and greater flamingos. Over the last 20 years these populations have suffered a series of unexplained mass mortality events, during which hundreds of thousands of birds die over a period of just a few months.

Not only is this a distressing sight to witness, it is also a serious concern for conservationists.

The Rift Valley lakes represent the largest of four populations of this species worldwide – consisting of around 1.5-2.5 million birds. Because only a handful of salt lakes support this huge population, these mysterious die-offs have the potential to threaten the global health of the species.



Suggested causes for the die-off range from infectious diseases such as avian tuberculosis and avian cholera, to poisoning by cyanobacterial toxins, insecticides or heavy metals. This variety of potential causes means that over the years studies have been undertaken by researchers from many different disciplines, each using different approaches. The result has been samples that cannot easily be compared with each other, and no consensus on the underlying cause. There is a real need for the standardisation of sample-taking and examination if we are to understand the causes of mortality in these birds.



In a paper published this month in the journal *'Ostrich'*, Professor John Cooper, Dr Amy Deacon and Dr Thomas Nyariki present tried and tested protocols for the *post-mortem* examination of flamingos, so that we will be better prepared in the event of future die-offs. The strength of these easy-to-follow protocols lies in their flexibility, which allows them to be adjusted according to the available labour and number of dead birds.

When there are many birds and/or few staff, the 'super-fast track' form ensures that the most essential data and vital samples will be prioritised; when there are fewer birds and/or more people, instructions for a comprehensive examination can be followed.

Professor Cooper has confidence that the new protocols will prove vital to conservation efforts: *"We believe that collecting standardised samples and measurements will be the key to finally finding the cause of these highly concerning events, and ultimately being able to prevent future die-offs and protect this globally important population."*

As well as being important primary consumers in the soda lake ecosystem, the promise of the once-in-a-lifetime experience of seeing these stunning pink birds in their millions draws large numbers of international tourists to the Rift Valley. With 15,000 visitors each year to Lake Bogoria alone, the long-term protection of this species is of great economic, as well as ecological, importance to the region.

The protocol forms are available as supplemental information alongside the article itself at:

<http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.2989/00306525.2014.901433#.U35iQ3awlm4>

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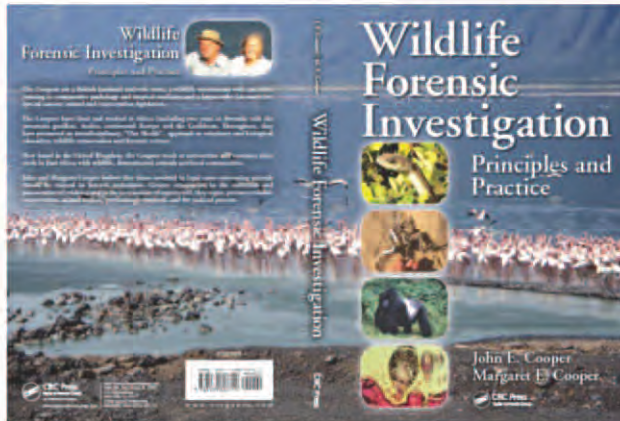
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*This study was carried out as part of a Darwin Initiative workshop and an Earthwatch Project under the direction of Dr David Harper. Text should be credited to Dr Deacon if reproduced in full. Photos are available from Dr Deacon on request and must be credited to Debra Bardowicks.*



# “Wildlife Forensic Investigation: Principles and Practice”



This book by Professor John E. Cooper and his wife Mrs Margaret E. Cooper, with contributions from many countries in the world and a Foreword by Dr Lee Durrell, was published in May 2013. It is published by CRC Press/Taylor & Francis Group.

The book provides an in-depth introduction to the rapidly-evolving field of wildlife forensics. It explains and discusses the crucial role of sound scientific investigation and an understanding of the law in combating wildlife crime and cruelty to animals. The text particularly focuses on forensic science as it relates to animals, free-living and captive, but it also includes mention of threats to plants and habitats because of their relevance to environmental conservation. The damage that can be inflicted on humans and property by wildlife is also covered.

John and Margaret Cooper are a British husband and wife team, a wildlife veterinary surgeon with specialist training in comparative pathology and tropical medicine and a lawyer who has made her special interest animal and conservation legislation. The Coopers have lived and worked in Africa (including two years in Rwanda with the mountain gorillas), Arabia, continental Europe and the Caribbean. Throughout, they have promoted an interdisciplinary, “One Health”, approach to veterinary and biological education, wildlife conservation and forensic science. Now based in the United Kingdom, the Coopers teach at universities and continue their work in East Africa with wildlife, domesticated animals and local communities.

Further information about the book, and how to order (receive a 20% discount when ordering on-line by entering promotion code 083MA), click on the following link: <http://www.crcpress.com> and search for the title “Wildlife Forensics: Principles and Practice”.

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# How well do you get on with your vet?

**B**WRC received the following letter about a research project that may strike a chord with many of you...



“Greetings! I am a wildlife veterinarian at a wildlife rehab facility on the East Coast of the US near Boston, New England Wildlife Center (NEWC.)

I am seeking your help regarding a research survey to gain information about the current state of affairs of the relationship between the wildlife rehabilitator community and the veterinarians they work with.

I hope to define this relationship and determine its strengths and weaknesses. The ultimate goal is to strengthen and improve the relationship between these two professional communities for the benefit of the injured, ill and orphaned wildlife we all love and treat. :)

The link for the online survey is  
<https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/9NRLGYK>

Alternatively please fill out the version over leaf which can be scanned and emailed, faxed or even snail-mailed back to me.

As an American who is a Glasgow vet school graduate and who completed an internship in Saskatoon, Canada I would love to get an international perspective on this project. The IWRC and NWRA have already sent this survey out to their members. I look forward to hearing back from you.

*Dr. Robert Adamski, BVMS*





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# Veterinarian & Wildlife Rehabilitator Working Partnership Survey

- 1** What are the top three (3) positive benefits/advantages of working with your local veterinarian?
- 2** What are the top three (3) negative problems/disadvantages of working with your local veterinarian?
- 3** Regarding the problems you listed in question #2 what are your recommendations as to how to fix, minimize or alleviate the problems?
- 4** What is one service, advice or other form of help that you wished your veterinarian provided but does not?
- 5** How do you think your local veterinarians view the wildlife rehabilitator community? (e.g. Do your local veterinarians have a positive or negative view of rehabbers and their work? And why do they hold this viewpoint do you think?)
- 6** To illustrate the good versus the bad aspects of working with the veterinary community please provide a short description of one specific good & positive example of working with your veterinarian and one specific negative example of working with your local veterinarian.



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## Demographic Information (optional):

- Name:
- Name of Rehabilitation Organization:
- City, State/Province, Country of Organization:
- Estimated Number of Annual Cases Seen Each Year:
- Types of Animals Cared For (e.g. avian, reptilian, mammalian, etc.):
- Do you have a veterinarian on your staff or do you consult with a local veterinarian?:

Please feel free to provide any additional comments, critiques or suggestions that you feel would be helpful in dealing with this important professional issue.

## Please return the survey via:

- E-mail to: [rob.adamski@newwildlife.org](mailto:rob.adamski@newwildlife.org)
- Mail to : Dr. Robert Adamski, New England Wildlife Center  
500 Columbian Street, South Weymouth, MA 02190
- Fax to: 781-682-4878
- Online through <https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/9NRLGYK>



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**BWRC** would like to thank volunteers Caroline Gould **Website Administrator** and Jane Morgan **Facebook Page**

Newsletter designed and produced by Nadine Barrow

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**If you would like to submit an article or letter for publication or give a presentation at a future symposium please contact**

[Annemaskell@gmail.com](mailto:Annemaskell@gmail.com)

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The views and opinions expressed in this newsletter are

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