

# Animal

## ROUNDBABOUT



ISSUE No. 15, Summer 2005

Produced for people with an interest in the exhibition of animals in zoos, circuses, mobile farms, fauna and wildlife parks in NSW.

### Aggressive encounter

Steve Jackson

A zoo keeper was spurred by an adult male platypus recently.

Adult males have a pointed spur above the heel of each hind leg. If provoked or not handled carefully, the male platypus can use his spurs as a defensive weapon. The spur injects venom that is produced in the crural gland located in the thigh.

While platypus venom is not considered life-threatening, the symptoms of a person spurred by a platypus include extreme swelling of the limb and excruciating pain that lasts for weeks.

Historical records show that few treatments are effective in stopping the intense pain that occurs after envenomation.

Today, treatment includes the use of a light bandage and a regional nerve block administered to the spurred limb. Analgesics can be taken for several days to assist in the management of pain.



**The first known record of a platypus spurring a human was made by Sir John Jamison on 10 September 1816.**

"It stuck its spurs into the palm and back of his right hand with such force, and retained them in with such strength, that they could not be withdrawn until it was killed.

The hand instantly swelled to a prodigious bulk; and the inflammation having rapidly extended to his shoulder, he was in a few minutes threatened with locked-jaw, and exhibited all the symptoms of a person bitten by a venomous snake.

The pain from the first was insupportable, and cold sweats and sickness of stomach took place so alarmingly, that I found it necessary, besides the external application of oil and vinegar, to

administer large volumes of the volatile alkali with opium, which I really think preserved his life.

He was obliged to keep his bed for several days, and did not recover the perfect use of his hand for nine weeks."



# Looze Lipz



## Inspector afloat

Exhibited Animals Protection Act approval holders are an intrepid bunch as one of our inspectors recently discovered. The routine inspection involved loading animals and equipment onto a launch at Brooklyn for an early morning trip to the Sport and Recreation Camp on the Hawkesbury River.

An appreciative audience of primary school students got close to lizards and snakes and learned about some of the animals encountered on bushwalks around the camp.

Equally appreciative was a fairly nervous teacher with an aversion to snakes. By session's end he was handling a beautiful Olive python with (almost) the same enthusiasm as his students.



## 2005 Conferences

'Conservation and Conditioning' will be the topic of the conference hosted by the Australian Society of Zoo Keeping (ASZK) in Melbourne from 29 April 2005 to 1 May 2005. The conference will be held at Ciloms Airport Lodge at Tullamarine. Further information and registration form can be downloaded from the ASZK website at <http://www.aszk.org.au/Index.htm>

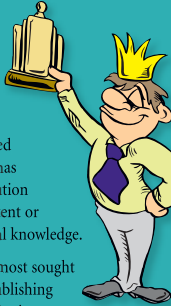
Zoos Victoria is proud to host a joint annual conference between the Australasian Regional Association of Zoological Parks and Aquaria (ARAZPA) and the South East Asian Zoos Association (SEAZA). The conference will be held from 1 May 2005 to 5 May 2005 at the Y Hotel in Melbourne.

Further information and an information brochure can be downloaded from the ARAZPA website on <http://www.arazpa.org.au/>

## Steve's prestigious award

The prestigious 2004 Whitley Medal was awarded to Dr Stephen Jackson, exhibited animals inspector and project officer for NSW Department of Primary Industries Animal Welfare Unit. The medal was presented by the Royal Zoological Society of New South Wales to Steve for his outstanding publication, Australian Mammals: Biology and Captive Management. His publication was deemed of superior quality and it has made a landmark contribution to the understanding, content or dissemination of zoological knowledge.

The Whitley Medal is the most sought after prize in zoological publishing in Australia. Steve's expertise is an asset to the Animal Welfare Unit in monitoring and regulating the zoo and fauna park industry in NSW. Congratulations Steve.



## Editor slows down

The Editor of Animal Roundabout, Sonya Begg has taken the opportunity of early retirement from NSW Department of Primary Industries, Animal Welfare Unit to follow her passion of 18 years – Heliciculture is the cultivation of edible snails for the gourmet food industry. Sonya assures us that while it is a 'slow' industry she won't be working at snail's pace in her endeavours to further develop and promote a new project in free-range snail farming in Australia. Editorial enquiries for Animal Roundabout should now be directed to Steve Jackson at [stephen.jackson@agric.nsw.gov.au](mailto:stephen.jackson@agric.nsw.gov.au) or telephone (02) 6391 3474 or Peter Johnson at [peter.johnson@agric.nsw.gov.au](mailto:peter.johnson@agric.nsw.gov.au) or telephone (02) 9264 9533.



# Dolphins in the swim

Sonya Begg

After many years of difficulties a new dolphin pool was opened at the Pet Porpoise Pool in Coffs Harbour on 24 October 2004.

The Pet Porpoise Pool and Oceanarium was originally established by Hec Goodall and a group of associates in Coffs Harbour, NSW in 1969.

The larger and deeper primary pool is connected to a secondary pool by a swim-over canal. It includes a shaded area, an enclosed pedestrian overpass and underwater windows for viewing the animals.

The Pet Porpoise Pool has been instrumental in rescuing and rehabilitating injured marine animals since its establishment and has grown into a popular tourist attraction. As well, the Pet Porpoise Pool has enjoyed notable breeding successes



Swim-over connecting canal. Photo courtesy Pet Porpoise Pool.

including dolphins and endangered Australian sea lions.

The new pool is enjoyed by dolphins, seals, fur seals and sea lions.

Visitors have the opportunity to enjoy a positive experience with the marine animals.

# Asian rainforest development

Will Meikle

Work is underway on a massive Asian Rainforest exhibit that is due for completion at Sydney's Taronga Zoo in 2005.

The largest single project in Taronga's 87-year history, the Asian Rainforest will showcase the majesty and wonder of the jungle homes of an amazing array of rare Asian wildlife including Asian elephants, silvery gibbons, François langurs, Asian turtles and fishing cats.

The zoo is committed to working within the Australasian region to establish a viable breeding program for Asian Elephants.

Over 20 bird species will also be seen in walk-through aviaries and around 40 species and 200 individual animals will make their home in the Asian Rainforest.



Visitor education will include a variety of learning initiatives including audio-visuals, interactive sculptures, special animal presentations and themed signage telling stories of the animals of the rainforest.

The exhibit will also include a 'Learning Spot' hut where classroom-based education programs will feature lessons on rainforest ecology, threatened habitats and species human society and its impacts on the rainforest.

## Temporary removal advice

The Exhibited Animals Advisory Committee is very concerned about the removal of animals from licensed display establishments without permission and inappropriate use of the animals.

The removal of an exhibited animal from a licensed animal display establishment without written consent from the Director-General is a direct breach of Clause 32 of the Exhibited Animals Protection Regulation. The minimum penalty for this breach is 10 penalty units (currently \$1100). The inappropriate use of permit species can also result in the suspension or cancellation of the permit and prosecution.

Under the Exhibited Animals Protection Act Regulation an application must be submitted at least seven days before the proposed removal. This allows time for the application to be considered and decisions to be discussed with the applicant.

Exemptions from the need to obtain permits to keep and move 'Category 2' animals under the Non-indigenous Animal Act (NIAA) only apply to people exhibiting animals under an Exhibited Animals Protection Act authority. By exhibiting these species without an EAPA authority the NIAA has also been breached. The maximum penalty for keeping a 'Category 2' animal without a NIAA permit is \$11,000.

## Wild Australia Expo



The Wild Australia Expo held at Darling Harbour in September 2004 was the largest temporary exhibit ever approved by NSW Department of Primary Industries (DPI).

The sheer size and complexity of the display presented logistical challenges for the organiser, DPI approval holder Anthony Stimson and his hard working team.

Tonnes of prefabricated enclosures, plastic floor sheeting, natural sand, and leaf litter substrates, mock rock, lighting and heating equipment were moved into the cavernous space of the exhibition hall, ready to receive animals by Saturday morning.

Assessing and approving applications for so many animals posed a different

challenge for DPI licensing staff in determining the correct application of the Exhibited Animals legislation and standards for an event of this type.

The animals exhibited included unrestricted and permit species, with a predominance of reptiles.

Visitors to the Expo were given opportunities to get close to species of frogs found in the Sydney region and to learn about the threats from habitat loss and degradation and the efforts being made to protect them.

The general focus of the Expo was on entertainment with an educational flavour and visitors were able to see species such as the Oenpelli python and thorny devil.

*Peter Johnson*



Next  
Issue

## Animal stress and construction works

*For contributions, mailing list, amendments or change of address contact:*

### EDITORS

#### Stephen Jackson

Animal Welfare Unit  
NSW Department of Primary Industries  
Locked Bag 21  
ORANGE NSW 2800  
stephen.jackson@agric.nsw.gov.au

#### Peter Johnson

Animal Welfare Inspectorial Office  
NSW Department of Primary Industries  
Suite 3, Level 12  
309 Pitt Street Sydney NSW 2000  
Note: Soon to relocate to Pennant Hills.  
peter.johnson@agric.nsw.gov.au

### For information about the Exhibited Animals Protection Act 1986

#### Matthew Crane, Registrar

Ph: 02 6391 3716  
Fax: 02 6391 3570  
matthew.crane@agric.nsw.gov.au

### Animal Roundabout is complimentary

*The information contained in this publication is based on knowledge and understanding at the time of writing (January 2005). However, because of advances in knowledge, users are reminded of the need to ensure that information upon which they rely is up-to-date and to check currency of the information with the appropriate officer of NSW Department of Primary Industries or the user's independent adviser.*



NSW DEPARTMENT OF  
PRIMARY INDUSTRIES