

Ban McDonalds' TV Ads!

**DO YOU WANT TO HELP STOP
MCDONALDS ADVERTISING
EXPLOITING CHILDREN? THEN
PLEASE SEND THIS COMPLAINT (OR
DO YOUR OWN) TO THE INDEPENDENT
TELEVISION COMMISSION....**

Dear Friends,

We are supporting a campaign to get all McDonald's children's ads banned by the Independent Television Commission. This is on the grounds that the High Court has ruled that McDonald's advertising 'exploits children'. [There were also other relevant findings, including that their food has been deceptively

promoted as 'nutritious' when in fact it is high in fat and salt and therefore linked to heart disease]. This means that their adverts contravene the Guidelines that are supposed to regulate advertising in order to protect children. It is all explained comprehensively in the letter below, which has been checked by an

appropriate expert. An injunction is being prepared to force the ITC to take action on this issue. The following standard letter has been written for people to add their name to and send to the ITC.

Please copy and circulate the letter widely...

Best wishes,

Dave Morris,
McLibel Support Campaign

To: ITC, Advertisements & Complaints
33 Foley Street, London, W1P 7LB, UK
From: [Your name and address]
Date:

Dear Stephen Locke [Director],

Re: McDonalds Advertising

I wish to make a serious complaint about the current advertising of McDonalds Restaurants Ltd aimed at or viewed by children. Please find below my reasons.

Under the ITC Code, all advertisements must 'comply in every respect with the law', and 'be applied in the spirit as well as the letter'.

Appendix 1, Rule 5: 'Advertisements must not exhort children to purchase or to ask their parents or others to make enquiries or purchases.'

In the recent 'McLibel' trial [McDonalds Corporation & Anr vs Steel & Morris], trial judge Mr Justice Bell ruled that it is a fact that McDonald's 'exploit children by using them, as more susceptible subjects of advertising, to pressurise their parents into going to McDonalds' (June 1997).

McDonalds have accepted (in a written submission to the Court of Appeal, 5.1.99) that the judge 'was correct in his conclusions'. That is to say, they accept that they exploit children through their advertising - in direct contravention of the ITC's published guidelines governing advertising to children. In fact, their strategy of systematic exploitation of pester-power is obviously far more serious than if they were to make a specific reference to this in a single advert (which is prohibited). Every parent of a young child,

who has been subjected to this cumulative pester-power effect, knows this very real and infuriating pressure to go to McDonalds.

The Corporation spends 2 billion dollars each year worldwide on marketing and advertising. In a recent interview Mike Love, McDonalds' Vice-President of Communications stated that McDonalds would not consider changing its advertising strategy because of the judgement of Mr. Justice Bell, showing an absolute disregard for what the Courts judge to be true. This demonstrates that McDonalds will continue to exploit children for the foreseeable future, unless they are stopped by the ITC.

There can be no doubt about your power and responsibility in this matter. On July 3rd 1997, when asked about the McLibel judgement, Junior Government Minister Mark Fischer [for the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, also responsible for the ITC] stated: 'The Government recognise their special responsibility to protect children from exploitation, but the existing Code allows the ITC scope to act in their defence.'

McDonalds produce Happy Meals for children which are advertised as such. However, their Happy Meal Premiums (free toys) do not always come in premiums of 4. Their 101 Dalmatian Disney collection came in

a set of 101 distinctly different toys. That set was produced in sealed white plastic wrappers. That resulted in children not knowing which of the 101 entirely different toys they were to receive. McDonalds have also produced the 'Beanie Babies' premiums in a set of 30. These premiums run for 4 weeks, backed up by advertisements directed at children.

Children naturally wish to collect anything collectable. However, to produce a large number over a four-week period, with the character of the toy unknown at the point of sale creates unnecessary competitiveness amongst children to be the first to collect the entire set, or to collect the entire set at all. This amplifies the 'pester-power' problem in contravention to Rule 5. The above is born out by the very fact that some of the sales of McDonalds Happy Meal premiums had to have sales restrictions placed upon them, as so many adults and children alike tried to buy as many as they could and the stores could not meet the demand.

Guidance Rule 10.36 states: 'Advertisements must not encourage or condone excessive consumption of any food.' - The increase in meals per week needed to buy a substantial number of the premiums per four weekly cycle will lead to an increase in consumption of food low in fibre, and high in fat and salt. This will lead to a detrimental, long-term affect on a child's physical health, also in contravention with Rule 1 (below).

Appendix 1, Rule 1 states: 'At times when large numbers of children are likely to be viewing, no product or service may be advertised and no method of advertising may be used which might result in harm to them physically, mentally, or morally, and no method of advertisement may be employed which takes advantage of the natural credulity and sense of loyalty of children.'

But the McDonalds Corporation's secret 'Operations Manual', the instruction book for every local store manager, explains the company's strategy for targeting young children: 'Ronald loves McDonald's and McDonald's food. And so do children, because they love Ronald. Remember, children exert a phenomenal influence when it comes to restaurant selection. This means you should do everything you can to appeal to children's love for Ronald and McDonalds'. It adds that offering toys is 'one of the best things...to make them loyal supporters'.

In the witness box during the McLibel trial David Green, the Corporation's Head of Marketing, from Chicago, recognised that McDonalds 'could change people's eating habits', and said that children were 'virgin ground as far as marketing is concerned'. Their

UK Marketing Services Manager Alistair Fairgreave stated: 'It is our [general] objective to dominate the communications arena...because we are competing for a share of the customer's mind.'

The Court of Appeal, in the appeal by the defendants in the McLibel case, concluded: 'If one eats enough McDonalds food, one's diet may well become high in fat, etc., with the very real risk of heart disease... (this last finding) must have a serious effect on their trading reputation since it goes to the very business in which they are engaged.' (March 1999) In the original trial the judge had ruled that such a risk of heart disease would be made the more likely for people who ate at McDonalds often and over a long period of time 'encouraged by [McDonalds'] advertising'. He further ruled that McDonalds deceptively portray their food, in reality high in fat and salt and low in fibre, as 'nutritious'. These three rulings, taken together, and compounded with the targeting and exploitation of children (who are the most vulnerable to the manipulation of long-term dietary patterns) surely demonstrate a conscious and systematic breach of the spirit and the letter of the ITC Guidelines. McDonalds view children as their future customers, and so wish to introduce them into a life of eating this kind of unhealthy food regularly from an early age. This is detrimental to their health in a serious way.

For the above reasons I urge the ITC to cease all McDonalds advertisements that are directed at children. I then urge the ITC to review all guidelines regarding advertisements to children - to ensure effective protection against exploitation and pester-power, and to include the banning of advertising of unhealthy food products. There is a great deal of concern over these issues, shared by many child welfare, consumer and health organisations* - and the need for a review has been very carefully outlined to you on their behalf in the past by the National Food Alliance [now known as Sustain] Working Party on Advertising. It should be noted that in Australia no advertising is allowed during pre-school programming, and in Sweden all advertising to children is banned.

I look forward to reading a considered opinion within the next 28 days.

Yours faithfully

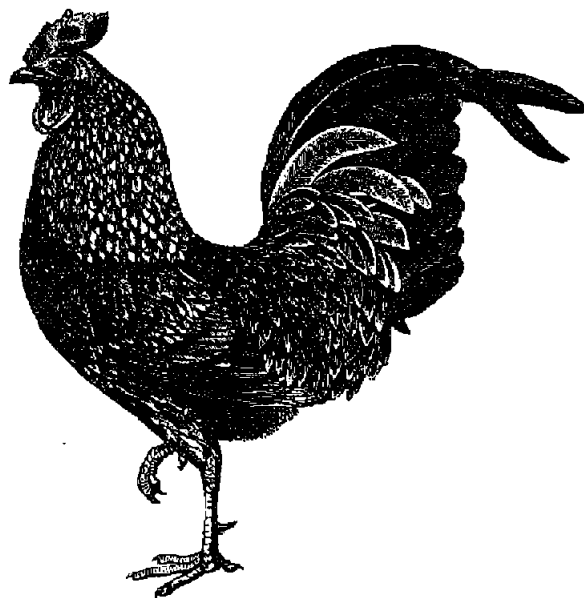
[your signature]

*eg. Association of Community Health Councils, British Dental Association, British Heart Foundation, GMB Union, Institution of Environmental Health Officers, National Children's Home, National Confederation of Parent Teachers Associations, National Farmers Union, National Federation of Consumer Groups, TGWU, TUC, WRVS, World Cancer Research Fund.

Note: All the references regarding McDonalds and the McLibel trial can be supplied on request by:
The McLibel Support Campaign: 5, Caledonian Rd, London N1
mclibel@globalnet.co.uk www.mcspotlight.org

One More Step

by *Viva!*'s Kate Fowler



When asked, most people will say that they turned vegetarian because they could not accept the way in which animals are treated. Whether it was seeing first hand the slaughter of farm animals or whether it was a slow dawning of the horrors involved in the meat industry, animals are generally the underlying catalysts for the change to a meat-free diet. As vegetarians we get to feel pretty proud of ourselves - not only are we saving thousands of lives by our stand, but we are fully aware that vegetarianism is better for the environment and the world's poor - not to mention our own health and well-being. We have every reason to feel pretty damn proud of ourselves and if a touch of smugness creeps in as well, then who could blame us?

But is vegetarianism the end of the right-on road? Is that where we draw the line and say: "I have done all I can possibly do to ensure no animal suffers on my behalf?" or should we take off those comfortable blinkers and look again at what made us go vegetarian in the first place?

Farm animals suffer. We know that slaughter is horrific and is carried out with maximum profit in mind and with little thought for the terror and pain of the creatures involved. It may sound obvious but even free-range

hens and dairy cows are slaughtered in the same way as broiler hens and beef cows when their time is up. The meat goes to make low grade products like pies, stock cubes and even baby food. By continuing to buy the milk or eggs, the well-meaning vegetarian is financially supporting the meat industry and the chicken who laid your tasty free-range egg yesterday may well be on the conveyor belt towards the scalding tank today.

But it isn't just about slaughter. The lives of free range hens and dairy cows are not so rosy as they are made out to be. At a Sussex sanctuary, the most battered, feather-less and scrawny looking chickens to arrive were not from the battery units, they were free-range. Free-range laying stock is bred in the same way as battery hens. Incubated without a mother, these tiny birds will be sexed on the day they hatch and any males will be gassed or crushed to death. The females will live for two years, often in terrible conditions.

By definition, 'free-range' hens need only have access to the outside and this is often taken literally by the farmers who still keep their birds crammed into a shed but have a few openings into a barren yard. Because chickens are territorial, the stronger birds whose territory lies just

before the opening will defend that area and the weaker birds may never see the light of day. Diseases are rife amidst these over-crowded conditions and antibiotics are fed to the birds in an attempt to reduce the deaths. The majority of free-range birds are de-beaked because these stresses lead to aggression and fighting. It is now well documented that the beak is not a piece of dead tissue but a highly sensitive organ. Free-range birds, as well as those from battery units, can die from the shock or the pain of having the end of their beak sliced off with a red-hot blade.

At the end of their useful lives, the same 'catchers' as are used to clear out battery units will come in and grab these birds by wing, leg or neck and shove them into crates to be transported to the slaughterhouse. 14% of free-range birds have broken bones before slaughter. The only way to ensure your eggs are cruelty-free is to either keep your own chickens or to visit the farm, or better still sanctuary, for yourself and see the conditions the birds live in. If you are refused entry, it is a fairly safe bet that they have something to hide.

But what about dairy cows? You see them in a field quietly munching the grass and looking pretty contented with life, so what could be

wrong with taking some of their milk? Well, nothing is as simple as that. Cows do not just produce milk on demand whenever a milkmaid pushes a pail underneath her. She must be impregnated first and this results in the birth of a calf. "Obviously!" you may say, but then what happens to this calf - the calf that the milk is intended for? After just a couple of days mother and offspring are separated - an act that is heart-breaking for them both. Anyone who has ever heard a cow bellow for her new-born calf will never, never forget that sound. Before she has finished grieving for her lost calf she will be impregnated again. But the calf is merely the by-product of the milk industry. If female, she will be thrown into the miserable cycle of the dairy herd, if male he may be used for beef, sent to market or shot and disposed of as a waste product. A dairy cow would naturally live to the age of 20 and beyond but with the constant cycle of impregnation, lactating and giving birth, she will instead be killed at 5 years of age.

But the misery doesn't end there. Milk is money and when more of the former is produced, more of the latter swells the farmer's bank balance. As expected, when financial gain rears its ugly head, welfare and ethics head for the hills. Dairy cows currently produce ten times more milk than their calves could drink and this is achieved by dietary control, genetic

manipulation and antibiotics. In the US, Bovine somatotropin (BST) is legally used to raise milk yield by 20% even though it has many side effects, including clinical mastitis, digestive disorders and lameness. It is currently banned in the UK. If you see that happy-looking cow out in the field, take a closer look. Her udders are painfully swollen with the weight of the milk and she may be infected with mastitis as a result. Forcing antibiotics up her teats does not control this disease but adds one more painful process she must endure.

The immense weight of her udders also leads to diseases of the legs and feet, particularly laminitis. To understand how this feels, it has been said that you should slam all your fingers in a door and then try to stand on your fingertips. Almost every cow at some time in her life will suffer from this crippling disease. And those beautifully gentle creatures suffer all this just so we can enjoy milk on our cereal in the morning.

These animals suffer but so does the environment. Slurry run-off pollutes our waterways and leads to acid rain, which destroys forests and woodlands world-wide. The methane produced by our dairy herds destroys the ozone layer. Air, land and waterways are all being poisoned by our love of dairy as much as by the

meat-eaters' love of flesh. And we are being poisoned too. Dairy products are the main dietary source of the highly toxic organochlorine pesticides. Most outbreaks of E. coli, salmonella and listeria have been linked with consumption of meat, milk or cheese. In fact, reported cases of food poisoning in the UK are on the increase, 95% of which are meat and dairy related. 90 per cent of BSE cases have been in dairy cows rather than in beef cattle although the latter are generally slaughtered before infection can be diagnosed. Traces of BSE have been found in milk, probably via the infection of mastitis. And of course dairy products are full of saturated fat, the consumption of which is linked to a whole range of diseases, particularly heart disease and cancer. Cholesterol is also found in dairy produce and if taken in excess furs up the arteries - leading to high blood pressure, gall stones, heart attacks and strokes.

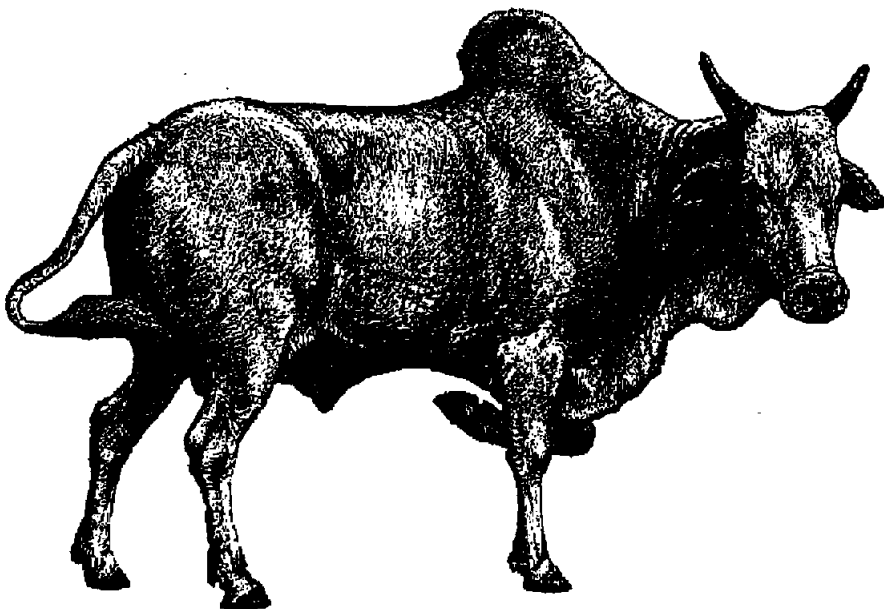
So is it time to take another look at ourselves and see that what we do, although well-meaning and very positive, may not be enough? No one would condemn the vegetarian for the efforts they have made to reduce suffering but if we are serious about ending the suffering of animals, protecting the environment and looking after our own health, then maybe we should re-examine the food that we eat. Perhaps it is time to go the whole hog, if you'll excuse a very inappropriate phrase, and end the egg consumption, ditch the dairy and launch wholeheartedly into the totally tasty, cruelty-free and justifiably smug world of veganism.

For further information contact:

Viva!

at

**12 Queen Square,
Brighton BN1 3FD**



Arkangel 22

THE VIOLENCE OF EATING MEAT

by Gail

When shots rang out in Littleton, Colorado, political activists and leaders sprang forward to spew their theories on why violence had entered our schools. "Too many guns!" they cried, "We need more gun control legislation." "Too much violence in movies, music, video games, and on TV. We must restrict the entertainment industry!" Still others blame the separation of church and state. They actually want us to believe that the reason so many kids commit acts of violence is because we don't have the Ten Commandments plastered all over our nation's classrooms. What does that say about the estimated 20% of Americans who are atheists or the tens of millions of agnostics, Buddhists, Taoists, Hindus and other free thinkers? Are they all violent criminals?

To blame the firearms or entertainment industry alone for the increase of violence among our nation's youth is a tragic oversimplification of the problem. I think the more basic question is: "Why do our children seem to have so little regard for life?" What good is a sign that reads "Thou shalt not kill" when school cafeterias are serving murder for lunch?

In the United States alone, we kill 9 billion animals each year to satisfy our fantastical palates. That's an

astounding 1 million animals per hour. To assume that these animals do not suffer during the process of raising, transporting, and slaughtering is to delude ourselves so that we can feel comfortable eating their flesh.

Author/Journalist Jim Mason wrote, "Americans have a tremendous appetite for meat, dairy products, and eggs. They have little appetite, however, for information about the lives of animals that produce what they eat. Perhaps they sense something." More than one person has said to me, "Don't tell me where my lunch came from. I'll lose my appetite." Well, that's the point. You should lose your appetite!

In recent years, we have witnessed 10 year-olds killing 4 year-olds and teens methodically planning and executing mass murder. How did the innocence of childhood get lost? Certainly, the children who committed these acts were deeply troubled, and there is no simple explanation for their behaviour. However, we continue to focus on the surface while failing to recognise the doses of terror and fear fed to these children at each and every meal.

From the earliest age, we inadvertently teach our children to disregard the sanctity of life. When we place a piece of meat on a child's plate and expect

him to easily overcome his natural repulsion towards eating a once living, feeling, being we are sending the message that it's okay to kill to fulfil our needs

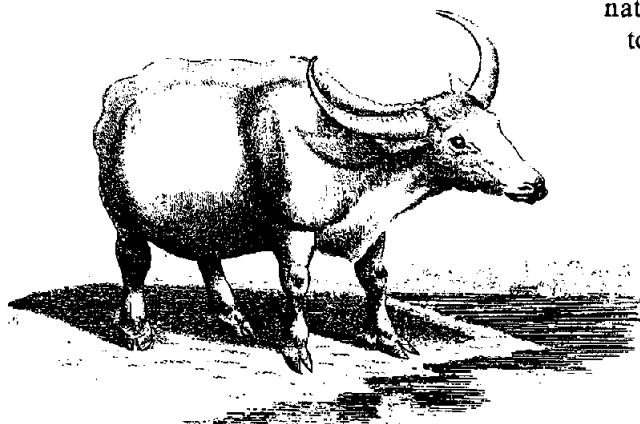
or desires. We are asking children to ignore their own feelings of empathy, humaneness, and compassion. Yet, these are precisely the feelings which when cultivated, prevent childish impulses from becoming acts of violence.

Most small children are horrified to learn that their hamburger once was a cute little barnyard animal. But with repeated reassurance from parents and a bombardment of highly effective advertising targeted at kids, they become culturalised into the mainstream of our eating habits; desensitised, unwitting participants in the cycle of cruelty and killing.

Feed these same kids foods loaded with refined sugar, food colourings, preservatives, and chemical additives like aspartame and the delicate balance of their physiology is thrown into chaos as well.

The animals that will become the next "Happy Meal" know when they are going to die. They smell the blood and hear the cries of their brethren slaughtered before them as they are marched onto the killing floor. Imagine the terror these animals experience the moment they are killed. Hormones course through their veins and remain in their flesh after death. Eat a piece of meat and you are eating the physical manifestation of fear. Still worse, you are feeding it to your children.

To begin to unravel the complex issues surrounding the spread of violence among kids, we need to examine the subtleties of the messages we send to them. Not just in the media, but more significantly, in our homes. Children who are taught that all life is precious, and are made to feel precious and priceless themselves do not feel compelled to commit acts of violence.

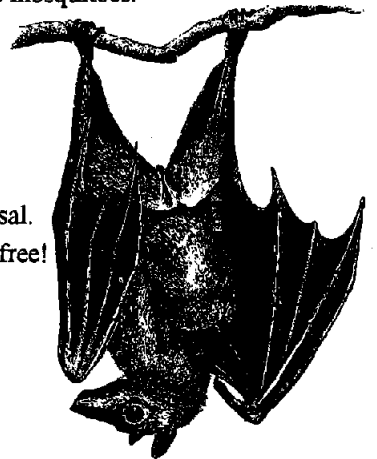
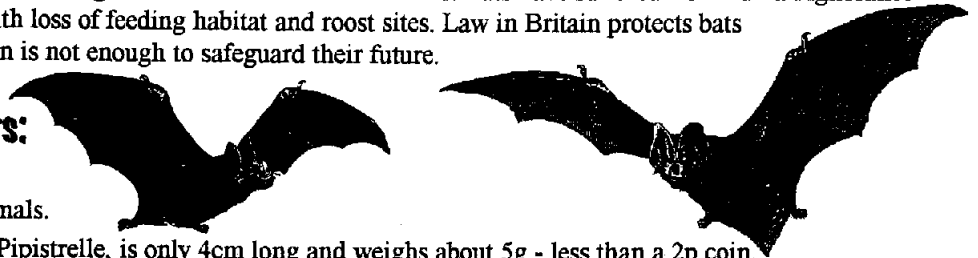


Bats - The Facts

Did you know that there are 16 bat species living in Britain? Tragically, the mouse-eared bat was declared extinct from Britain in 1991. Of the 16 left, 2 are endangered and 9 others are threatened. Bats have suffered from human ignorance and misunderstanding together with loss of feeding habitat and roost sites. Law in Britain protects bats and their roosts, but this on its own is not enough to safeguard their future.

Some facts about Bats:

- Bats are the only flying mammals.
- Britain's commonest bat, the Pipistrelle, is only 4cm long and weighs about 5g - less than a 2p coin.
- Bats are not blind. They can also 'see' in the dark by listening to the echoes of their high frequency calls. With this sophisticated sonar system called 'echolocation', they can pick up insects as tiny as mosquitoes.
- In Britain it is illegal to disturb bats or the places where they roost.
- Bats can live up to 30 years.
- Of about 4,500 different species of mammal in the world, nearly 1,000 are bats.
- Three quarters of these eat insects just as British bats do. In the tropics bats also eat many other foods - fruit, flowers, frogs, fish, blood, even bats!
- Bats are vital to rainforests, as many trees need bats for pollination and seed dispersal.
- Bats rarely live in belfries, they prefer somewhere quiet, not draughty, and cobweb-free!
- Bat populations are threatened not only by loss of habitat, affecting roosting sites and feeding grounds, but also by deliberate killing and over exploitation for food.



Information about Bats:

- ◆ Action Plan for the Conservation of Bats in the UK, by AM Hudson
- ◆ Conservation of European Bats, by RE Stebbings
- ◆ Bats in Scotland folder, (investigations for 5-14 year olds)
- ◆ Exploring the World of Bats folder, (folder of resources for teachers and pupils)
- ◆ Bats in Scotland - slides, (pack of 15 slides with notes)
- ◆ Enchanting Echoes, (15 minute audio tape introduction to bat calls)
- ◆ Bats in Scotland - full set, (folder, slides and audio tape)
- ◆ Exploring the World of Bats, (full set of folder, slides and audio tape)
- ◆ Exploring the World of Bats, (copy of the supplement to bats in Scotland)

These publications and resources, as well as interesting leaflets, factsheets and a quarterly magazine of activities and information for young people are available from:

The Bat Conservation Trust,
15 Cloisters House,
8 Battersea Park Road,
London SW8 4BG

ANIMAL LIBERATION PRISONERS

Arkangel gives its full support to animal liberation prisoners. We list only the names of prisoners and ask people to contact the ALFSG for up to date information, prison numbers and addresses.

UK: Barry Horne, Tony Humphries and Rodrigo Lopez.

Belgium: Justin Samuel.

Norway: Arild Eriksen and Aaron Rudra.

For further information contact:

ALF (Supporters Group)
BCM 1160, London WC1N 3XX
e-mail: 100302.1616@compuserve.com

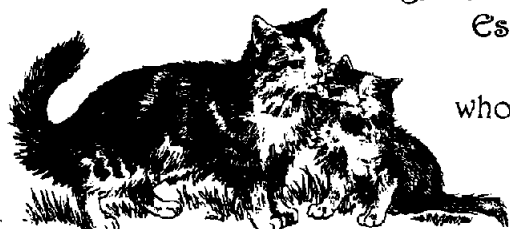
Vegan Prisoners Support Group
PO Box 194, Enfield, Middlesex EN1 3HD
Tel: 0181 292 8325
e-mail: hvpc@vpsg.freereserve.co.uk

Donations to Arkangel

We are extremely grateful to the following people who have made a donation of £4 or more to help us produce and distribute this magazine:

Dorothy Adams, Anne Ashley, Val Ardimento, Clive Bennett, R.D. Brizley, Peter Beck, Mrs. T. Burnett, Pauline Croxford, A. Chouteau, Edward Edwards A.D., Dzelanghe, Foodecoop De Bachende Lazuli, Christine Green, Ms. T. Housman, Ann Harris, Ginny Harris, S. Johnson, Sylvia Laver, Nicola McInnes, F & A Murphy, Glynné McRae, Susan Pzeny and Graeme Wotherspoon.

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to thank:

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Living Without Cruelty 2000

Animal Aid, the national animal pressure group, will be holding a Living Without Cruelty exhibition at:

**Kensington Town Hall,
Hornton Street, London W8
(Nr. Kensington High Street
underground station) on the
17th - 19th March 2000.**

Entrance costs:
£3.50 waged (£2.50 unwaged);
£10 family ticket (2 adult and 2
children).

The event will both confront and
point to solutions to the vital issues

facing humanity - from genetic
modification to globalisation; from
pollution to animal protection; from
human hunger to Third World debt
and fair trade.

In addition to the 50-plus stands
booked by pressure groups and
ethical companies, there will be
displays, games, lectures and film
shows. The exhibition will also
feature themed exhibits:

- **The Millennium Maze** will take visitors through the tangle of modern ethical dilemmas and invite them to sign the life-affirming Millennium Pledge.

- **Medicine in the Twenty-First Century** will allow visitors to explore some of the possibilities for replacing animal experiments with more reliable and compassionate methods.

For further information contact:

**Animal Aid
The Old Chapel,
Bradford Street,
Tonbridge, Kent TN9 1AW**

Tel: 01732 364546

e-mail:

**info@animalaid.org.uk
web: www.animalaid.org.uk**



Useful Addresses!



ARC News:

PO Box 339, Wolverhampton WV10 7BZ

Tel: 01902 711935 mobile: 0411 430446

e-mail: james@arcnews.co.uk

web: www.arcnews.co.uk

Magazine of the Animal Rights Coalition. £1

Justice & Freedom for Animals:

PO Box 2279, Hove, E. Sussex BN3 5BY

Info line: 01403 782925

JFA produce 'Animal Zone' which covers all aspects of animal abuse.

London Vegans:

7 Deansbrook Road, Edgware, Middlesex HA8 9BE

e-mail: londonvegans@bmijhr.easynet.co.uk

web: www.londonvegans.freemove.co.uk

London Greenpeace:

5 Caledonian Road, London N1 9DX

e-mail: lgp@envirolink.org

web: www.mcspotlight.org

Independent anarcho-collective; human/animal rights

Active Distribution:

BM Active, London WC1N 3XX

Anarchist/vegan magazine distributors, records, tapes, badges, posters, booklets.

Bite Back magazine:

Box 47, 82 Colston Street, Bristol BS1 5BB

e-mail: info@biteback.u-net.com

Bite Back is a highly informative animal rights magazine.



Mc.Libel Support Campaign: c/o London Greenpeace.

Captive Animals Protection Society:

PO Box 43, Dudley DY3 2YP

Tel: 01384 456682

e-mail: caps~uk@dircon.co.uk

web: www.caps~uk@dircon.co.uk



Campaign Against the Fur Trade:

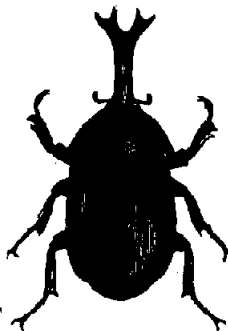
PO Box 38, Manchester M60 1NX

Tel: 07939 264864

Cetacea Defence:

PO Box 78, Shaftesbury, Dorset SP7 8ST

e-mail: cetaceadefence@zen.co.uk



The National Anti-Hunt Campaign:

PO Box 66, Stevenage, Herts SG1 2TR

Tel: 01442 240246

e-mail: nahn@nahn.freemove.co.uk

Pigeon Control Advisory Service:

Guy Merchant

Tel: 01234 340514

e-mail: enquiries@picas.org

web: www.picas.org

Uncaged Campaigns:

14 Ridgeway Road, Sheffield S12 2SS

Tel: 0114 253 0020

e-mail: uncaged.anti-viv@dial.pipex.com

web: www.uncaged.co.uk

Active anti-vivisection organisation.

Canine Health Concern:

PO Box 1, Longnor, Derbyshire SK17 0JD

Tel: 01382 320467

e-mail: aol.com

web: www.asr-svcs.dircon.co.uk/wwwchc/



The Ethical Consumer (magazine):

Tel: 0161 226 2929

web: www.ethicalconsumer.org

The Fresh Network:

web: www.easyweb.easynet.co.uk/karenk

Huntingdon Death Sciences Campaign (HDSC):

PO Box 325, Cambridge PE17 5PP

mobile: 0589 026435

Imaner Consultants:

Vegan internet consultants/website design

e-mail: web@imaner.co.uk

web: www.dspace.dail.pipex.com/imaner



Vaccination Awareness Network:

National Vaccination Information Centre,
178 Mansfield Road, Nottingham NG1 3HW

Tel: 0115 948 0829

Vegan News:

web: www.bury-rd.demon.co.uk



Vegan Village:

Imaner House, 14 Wynford Grove, Leeds LS16 6JL

Tel: 0113 293 9385

e-mail: postie@veganvillage.co.uk

web: www.veganvillage.co.uk

Vegan Anarchy:

web: www.vegananarchy.freemove.co.uk

ITEMS of INTEREST

Compiled by Martin Masterman Lister

A new form of European super-protection is on the way for some of Britain's loveliest and wildest landscapes, often because of the tiny examples of wildlife they contain. Windsor Great Park and Windsor Forest, the Royal family's backyard will be safeguarded because of the violet tick beetle. The New Forest will be protected because of the stag beetle. These and other sites will be protected under the European Union's Habitats Directive, a law with real bite, which offers the areas near absolute protection, making them safer than even the National Parks. In the past, environmental safeguards have been easily overturned. Twyford Down, near Winchester, was an unspoilt hillside in 1992, was bisected by the M3 in spite of five separate designations - it was doubly a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), doubly a Scheduled Ancient Monument (SAM) and part of an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB). But the new Habitats Directive's Special Area of Conservation, is about to make a repeat of Twyford Down very much less likely. There are 340 SAC within the UK, totalling nearly 1.7 million hectares, an area three times the size of Norfolk. They range from small ponds to vast areas of 100,000 acres such as Dartmoor, and will not consider the needs for tourism, recreation, or anything else, and will cover everyone including the Duke of Edinburgh, Warden of Windsor Great Park. In 1995 the Duke had 63 of the park's ancient oak trees cut down to improve the look of the landscape. Independent 21-6-99

Myxomatosis is killing rabbits again this autumn. Originally from South America, it was deliberately introduced in 1954 and wiped out 99 per cent of the loo million rabbits in Britain. Since then, some rabbits have

developed immunity. Transmitted by fleas, the symptoms are distressing: the rabbits, eyes fill with puss, swell up until they cannot see, they cannot find their burrows and, although they can eat, they eventually starve. Predators that normally live on rabbits, foxes, stoats, and buzzards - switch to other prey such as voles until the population builds up again. Independent 4-9-99

A firework display put on by women priests at Gloucester Cathedral to celebrate the anniversary of their ordination annoyed more than the Church's arch-conservatives. Hundreds of seagulls gave their own verdict when, startled by the display, they showered the shoppers with droppings. People ran for cover and an elderly lady fell. Police received a number of complaints from the public. Observer 27-6-99

The first polecat in Cheshire for 140 years has been spotted. Guardian 29-8-99

Applications to plant genetically modified poplar trees have been approved, the environment minister Michael Meacher disclosed. But the trees for two trials by Zeneca Limited in the Bracknell, Berkshire area were derived from female clones and would not produce pollen, he added. Independent 23-6-99

A list of 340 wildlife sites nominated for special protection has been submitted to the European commission. The list includes Northumberland coast mud flats, and sand banks around the Isles of Scilly. Independent 23-6-99

Work on a new housing development in Baldock, Hertfordshire was held up while new homes were found for 50 slow worms and common lizards

discovered on the site. Guardian 9-6-99

Australia is to build the world's biggest marine park. The 40 million-acre park will protect seals and birds from oil and chemical pollution, fishing nets and disturbance by aircraft and boats. Unknown.

Tony Blair ignored the pleas of animal rights activists by attending the controversial Palio horse race in Italy where many animals have been killed in a race on the cobbled square, where riders race bareback. Defence Secretary George Robertson also attended the race where riders whip the horses and each other. 43 horses have been killed since 1970 as a result of falls. Independent 17-8-99

Senior Government scientists will call for tough new curbs on antibiotics fed to chickens and pigs after research showed they pose a bigger risk to human health than BSE, and a real threat of resistant bacteria being transferred from animals to humans. The Advisory Committee on Microbial Safety of Food (ACMSF) will warn that diseases such as salmonella and E.coli will develop previously unseen levels of resistance. The Soil Association claims Britain is facing a major epidemic of diseases that have developed multiple resistance, and intensively raised chickens and many pigs are now being fed a potentially dangerous growth promoter, over-prescribed by vets. Some strains of salmonella now have a 95 per cent resistance to antibiotics, compared with 5 per cent 20 years ago, while the resistance of MRSA has risen from 2 per cent to 40 per cent since 1989. The EU banned four drugs in July, but the British Government has allowed farmers to feed chickens with a similar antibiotic, avilamycin, which critics

claim will undermine the drug used to combat MRSA. Independent 18-8-99

The Mallard duck is suffering a massive decline, down by 40 per cent in a decade, to its lowest level since recordings took place. Last winter a count found 140,213 mallards

from vaccines was greater than from eating beef. Sunday Times 8-8-99

A randy Pomeranian toy dog needed antibiotics after injuring his penis trying to mate with a hedgehog in an Ipswich garden. Guardian 18-8-99

finally ratified a 20-year-old Euro ban earlier this year. The hunters' defiance has raised fears of clashes with police and ecologists. Express 11-8-99

A naturalist investigating the mauling to death of six lambs believes a family of pumas could be responsible for the attack in west Wales. Independent 18-8-99

Thousands of British consumers were exposed to an experimental cancer-causing chemical, made by Monsanto, during the late 1980s after the Tory Government gave permission for its use on 38 farms in a clandestine experiment lasting three years in southern England. It now emerges that hundreds of animals were injected with Monsanto's genetically modified hormone known as BST, designed to increase milk yields by 10 to 15 per cent. The milk and some dairy products were sold to the public without any warning. This year the EU's scientific committee concluded that the hormone increased the risk of breast and prostate cancer, and also feared that it could lead to cancer of the colon. In 1985 Monsanto and another US company Eli Lilly were given licences by the Government to test BST. The hormone was banned in the EU in 1990 after being linked with udder infections and reproductive problems. Earlier this year Canada also banned the chemical. Monsanto claimed BST milk did not have increased levels of IGF, a hormone linked to some cancers'. But EU scientists have now demonstrated that BST contains up to five times more IGF than normal milk and Monsanto wrongly claimed that the hormone would be broken down before it reached the gut. Observer 20-6-99

Live Exports (Update)

A second ship, the Warde, is sailing daily from Dover to Ostend carrying sheep. We understand that this ship came from Africa and is an Italian ship with a Syrian crew. All instructions were written in Italian.

If you are unable to make the nightly sailings, please support the daily protests. Phone the KALE information line for times, etc. 01304 204688

compared with 192,100 the previous year. A weighted index shows a fall from 166 to 100, says the Wildfowl and Wetlands Trust. The birds migrate during winter to Britain from as far away as Russia and Iceland. The RSPB said the fall could be because the birds prefer it in Holland, or that they aren't breeding as well. Independent 16-8-99

Four of Britain's most senior scientists down-played the potential risk of the transmission of BSE to humans through vaccines, but insisted the serious warnings they gave to medical experts to make vaccines from non-BSE-infected cattle were not fully acted upon. The BSE working group set up in 1989, led by Sir Richard Southwood, published a report which changed a "relatively high" risk to a "remote" risk. Experts are now examining whether the BSE epidemic could have been caused by scientists trying to create a new breed of super cattle by injecting hormones from the brains of slaughtered carcasses into healthy animals. Experts are examining whether the pituitary gland could have spread mad cow disease and infected humans. The agent could have been used in thousands of measles, rubella and tetanus injections. Southwood said he thought the risk

The US food giant Monsanto has been found guilty of misleading the public on a £1m advertising campaign promoting the safety of its controversial technology. It misled the public over claims that the food had been safety-tested over 20 years and the technology was harmless, and was found guilty. It was also found guilty over claims that GM potatoes and tomatoes had been approved as safe in the UK when they had not. Daily Mail 11-8-99

The man responsible for overseeing the Government's GM trials, Professor Christopher Pollock, chosen for his impartiality, believes in growing GM crops, believing the benefits outweigh the risks, and it is in Britain's long-term interests. Independent on Sunday 15-8-99

Hunters have vowed to defy the law by continuing to trap the protected ortolan bird when the hunting season opens in France next week. More than 700 hunters are stringing up traps in trees ready to snare the birds, regardless of European and French laws. The small bird is captured alive throughout Gascony between mid-August and the end of September. It is then fattened up and drowned in armagnac before being eaten. France

A pet shop owner, Yvonne Goddard, 40, of Salisbury, left animals to starve to death after she hit financial trouble. She was banned from keeping animals for life, given a one-month suspended jail sentence and must pay £200 costs. She admitted 11 counts of causing suffering. Independent 10-7-99

San Diego zoo is celebrating the birth of a giant panda, the first in the US in

10 years. Zoo officials said the birth was only the second outside of China to result from artificial insemination. The US's four other giant panda births took place at a Washington zoo. Independent 23-8-99

A Viagra tablet may have triggered a fatal heart attack problem in an impotent man, an inquest was told. Melvyn Smith, 60, of Barry, South Wales, died of heart disease. Independent 9-7-99

Cinnamon has been found to kill 99% of E.coli 0157, and is the most effective remedy after cooking or pasteurisation. It may also be effective against salmonella and campylobacter. Clove and garlic are good at killing E.coli 0157 in raw beef and sausage. One teaspoon of cinnamon added to unpasteurised apple juice killed 99.5% of the bacteria within three days. E.coli 0157 was responsible for killing 18 people who ate food from a butcher's shop in Britain in 1996. Independent 7-8-99

Pollution and global warming are helping to turn the Mediterranean into a tropical aquarium, with native fish being threatened with extinction by up to 110 newcomer varieties. The first species of tropical fish arrived in the Thirties, since when 55 Red Sea species have made their way via the Suez Canal. This could lead to extinctions. Overall, the level of fish in the Mediterranean has increased by 20 per cent, but the 530 native species have been hit by over-fishing and pollution. Independent 7-8-99

Salmon that grow four times as fast as nature intended, pigs with oversize hams and cows with giant udders are all part of the nightmare scenario where animal welfare comes second to food production. Early attempts at genetic modification resulted in the notorious Beltsville pig which had a human gene inserted into pig embryos. The animals developed a number of deformities, suffered severe arthritis and suffered great distress. Another research project disaster brought us pregnant cows with oversized foetuses. For the fish, environmental concerns brought about its abandonment, rather

than animal welfare concerns. John Webb, a geneticist at the Cotswold Pig Breeding Company, said that altering genes could lead to benefits to animals and farmers. Pigs have already been selectively bred. Independent 30-7-99

Investigators in Sicily believe the Mafia is behind an unexplained rise in cases of the animal disease brucellosis among humans, 1,000 of whom contracted it last year. They believe the Cosa Nostra is marketing a vaccine, RB51 that prevents cows with the bacterial disease from testing positive. The undetected sick animals are passing the bacterium on to humans by direct contact or through dairy products. The Mafia had previously been allegedly linked to selling BSE infected meat. Independent 24-6-99

Safeway has issued a product recall of its own-brand processed ham after tests showed it was infected with salmonella bacteria. Independent 14-7-99

Dou Dou, 37, believed to be the world's oldest panda, has died after an epileptic fit in China. Independent 27-7-99

Breast-feeding prevents babies growing up fat; promoting breast-feeding may be a simple way of tackling obesity, the fastest growing health problem in Western industrialised countries. The study in Germany found the longer babies were breast-fed the smaller their chances of becoming fat later on. Breast-feeding is known to be superior to bottle-feeding, and bottle-fed babies had higher insulin levels in their blood, which stimulates the deposition of fat. A high intake of protein early in childhood may increase the risk of obesity later. Independent 16-7-99

The total number of Britons who have died from nv-CJD, the fatal illness caused by BSE, mad cow disease, remains at 40 according to the official monthly figures released yesterday. Last year a total of 16 people died of nv-CJD. Independent 5-5-99

A survey showed most Labour backbenchers want fox-hunting banned, but Tony Blair is unlikely to move before the removal of hereditary peers for fears the "hunting and shooting" lobby would block any attempted ban. Independent 15-4-99

Six red kites were released to freedom yesterday - more than 100 years after breeding pairs became extinct in England and Scotland. The birds were set free from the Harewood estate near Leeds in the hope that they will colonise an old haunt. They were fitted with radio transmitters and coloured wing tags. The birds died out in England and Scotland by the late 19th century, although a few remained in Wales. Independent 13-7-99

Hopes were fading last night for a man missing at sea after a boating accident on Saturday that left his twin brother

NEW VEGAN CAFE

A new cafe has opened in Derby, which is entirely vegan. There is secure bicycle parking for pedal-powered vegans and a permaculture garden.

Wild Thyme Cafe
The Rainbow Centre
88 Abbey Street
Derby DE22 3SQ
Tel: 01332 298185

e-mail:
wildthymecafe@hotmail.com

John Prescott is to chair a Cabinet committee to decide how to fulfil Tony Blair's commitment to ban fox-hunting with dogs. Ministers have to decide on an outright ban or whether there will be exceptions for areas which vote "no" to a ban in local referendums. Independent 27-7-99

dead. The two, and a third man, were out on a fishing trip when their engine failed. Independent 23-8-99

How many ways can you annoy an angler? Here are a few. Stand behind him so he cannot whisk back his rod to cast. You could talk to him in a loud voice to frighten the fish away. You could hire a canoe to churn the water up or even use extended bamboo canes to remove bait from his hook. If you can think of any others, the Fishing Saboteurs would like to hear from you. The fish lovers have begun a campaign now because yesterday was marked the start of National Fishing Week. They hope to persuade four million anglers that their sport is as cruel as to fish as hunting with dogs is to foxes and deer. They say that not only is it harmful to fish, but to birds and other animals injured by discarded hooks, line and lures. Tactics have been published in a leaflet from the Campaign for the Abolition of Angling, whose co-ordinator denied members would, as a last resort, push fishermen into the water, saying the members were opposed to violent action. Angling Times' Mark Sutcliffe said studies showed fish don't suffer pain in the same way. Independent on Sunday 22-8-99

European Union agriculture ministers yesterday agreed to keep a subsidy under which Britain gets £12m a year to reduce the cost of milk for 1.4m nursery and primary children. Ministers in Luxembourg were considering ways to cut the EU's farming budget. Independent 16-6-99

Animal welfare campaigners have issued a warning after a number of cats had to have their ears amputated due to sunburn causing cancerous growths to the ears. Vets say pet-owners should apply sun block of at least factor 35, putting it on shortly before feeding so the animals concentrate on their food, forgetting the ointment. Guardian 23-6-99

French wine thought to contain dried cow's blood is still on sale despite the process being illegal because of BSE. Thousands of bottles could be on the shelves in Britain. The alert follows

the seizure in France of 100,000 suspect bottles. The process is used to make them clearer, and could affect several million bottles. In a swoop on 14 vineyards in the Rhone Valley, more than a ton of dried blood was seized. Bottles marked VDQS are most at risk. Daily Mail 24-6-99

Special Millennium Wish

I have a wish for the millennium, it's a very simple one.

I wish that all the animals will be free to skip and run.

Animals should not be used for fur and should not be used for meat,

Think of all the lovely fruit and veggies you could eat.

Animals should not be used for tricks and should not be used for fun.

So let my millennium wish come true, I'm sure it could be done.

by Jasmin Diamond (aged 9)

A more humane horse whip has been launched days after two jockeys were suspended for whip offences. The Aircush whip, modelled on air-cushioned training shoes, is unlikely to harm horses like conventional whips. Independent 23-6-99

Agriculture Minister Jeff Rooker is facing mounting pressure to disclose full details of secret experiments which exposed consumers to potentially lethal hormones in milk, following the Observer's revelation that nearly 40 farms had been involved in trials of a hormone to increase milk yields. The government has been forced to write to Monsanto seeking its permission to release the details. The tests, in the 1980s involved cattle being injected with a hormone to increase milk yields, but instead of discarding it, the milk went into the general milk supply without the public being informed. The

EU scientific committee has concluded that hormones found in BST milk increase the risk of breast, prostate and colonic cancer. Since the 1997 election, the Labour government has refused to reveal the location or timings of the trials. Biotechnology firms Lilly Industries and Cyanamid were also given animal test certificates to conduct the secret trials, which took place on 39 farms. Despite the secrecy, The Observer can reveal that one of the country's most influential dairy farmers took part in the experiment. Michael Lambert, who is now chair of the NFU's milk committee, injected cows on his Somerset farms with BST and allowed this milk to be passed on to the public. The NFU was then in favour of using BST, but changed its mind in the mid 1990s when the EU placed a moratorium on BST. The ban is due to end this year and could spark a trade war with the US which is demanding Monsanto's genetically engineered beef hormones be made available in Europe. Lambert is now vigorously opposed to the use of BST, having seen the effect in cattle, saying he saw severe swellings where the cows were injected, and they were clearly in discomfort. The Observer has also discovered that Grove Farm in Wendover, Buckinghamshire, took part in the secret trials. Observer 27-6-99

More than 5,000 fish have been killed by pollution in the River Tawe in the Swansea Valley near an industrial estate. Independent on Sunday 15-8-99

Biologists have identified an unknown species of striped rabbit with a red rump in Laos and Vietnam, an area which has already seen the discovery of previously unrecorded mammals, including a type of ox or antelope, four species of deer, a rhinoceros and a loris, and frogs, reptiles and birds. The striped rabbits were discovered as carcasses in a market. If the biologists find a live striped rabbit, they expect to discover a new species of flea living on it. Independent 19-8-99

The fabled Barbary lion, once believed extinct, may once again roam the

plains of Africa after the discovery of what some believe to be a female Barbary that could be mated with a male rescued from an abandoned circus where it had been left starving three years ago. The massive beast, which weighed up to 500lb and measured 10ft long, was hunted as a menace to livestock, the last wild one being shot in 1921 when it was certified extinct. Independent 30-6-99

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 McDonald's is banning GM ingredients from its burger buns,

was fatally injured at another Wiltshire event on 15 May. He is the 14th rider to sustain fatal injuries at a British event since April 1982. Independent 29-6-99

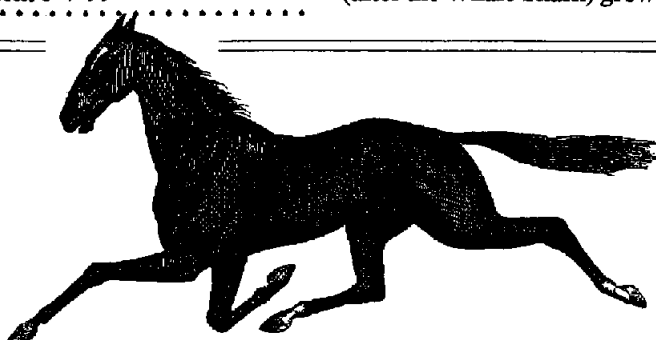
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 The Reptile Trust has declared an amnesty on illegally imported crocodiles because it suspects that at least 11 are being kept in Britain. On Friday, a 4ft South American crocodile was left in a box labelled, "His name is Bernard - beware it bites" at an aquarium in Tyne and Wear. Independent 5-7-99

Supermarkets, including Marks & Spencer, Safeway, and Tesco are selling home-grown and imported pears carrying traces of a banned pesticide, chlormequat, a growth regulator. Although not banned in the EU, some of the traces were well above the doses permitted for chlormequat in EU countries. Four out of the five samples recorded as UK grown contained detectable levels. Independent 1-7-99

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 Basking Sharks, the second largest fish (after the Whale Shark) grow up to 10

Rug Appeal

Hillside Animal Sanctuary
Hall Lane, Frettenham
Norwich NR12 7LT
Tel: 01603 891227



Hillside Animal Sanctuary are appealing for donations for outdoor winter rugs to keep donkeys and horses warm and dry during the winter. With 100 horses, ponies and donkeys in the sanctuary they now have several older, special care horses which will benefit from the extra protection a rug can offer. If you would like to contribute towards this appeal (any amount however small will be greatly received) please make cheques/POs payable to 'Hillside Animal Sanctuary Ltd'.

saucers and other ingredients. It will also be removing oil and lecithin, derived from soya, from sauces it uses. The chain serves 2.5 million customers a day at its 900 UK outlets. Pizza Express, Domino Pizzas, Wimpey, City Centre Restaurants which owns Caffe Uno, Garfunkels, Deep Pan Pizza Company and Cafe Metro, Perfect Pizza and Pret a Manger have or are removing GM ingredients from their products. The market for GM ingredients has collapsed. Daily Mail 12-6-99

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 Swiss researchers have found a 33-year-old male lesser mouse-eared bat in the eaves of a church at Fully, in south-west Switzerland. Independent 25-8-99

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 Robert Slade, a 30-year-old Australian, became the latest rider to sustain fatal injuries at a British event when his horse fell on him during the Wilton Horse Trials in Wiltshire. Peta Beckett

The success of a new insemination technique in choosing the sex of cattle and horses has provoked an ethical debate after suggestions it might be used on humans. It is illegal to choose the sex of children under the 1990 Human Fertilisation and Embryo Act. Independent 28-6-99

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 A family of swans was shot with a .22 rifle at a lake in Egham, Surrey, yesterday, killing four signets and seriously injuring other signets and their parents. They later underwent surgery. Independent 1-7-99

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 Proctor and Gamble will immediately end the use of animal tests for its current beauty, fabric, home care and paper products except where required by law, the management said. Animal rights activists have made the worldwide consumer company a target for several years. Independent 1-7-99

metres long and weigh up to five tons. The young measure up to two metres. They filter 9,000 litres of water an hour for plankton and take around 20 years to reach sexual maturity, probably living as long as 50 years, and their pregnancy is one to three years long. They now face extinction, their huge dorsal fins fetching £20,000 a ton. They can be seen off Cornwall hurtling six feet above the sea. Sightings have decreased by 85 per cent between 1985 and 1996. The WWFN and the Wildlife Trusts have set up Seaquest to monitor their numbers over three years. Environmentalists are hoping that CITES will cut back the numbers culled. Independent on Sunday 11-7-99

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 Scientists say they have trained chimpanzees to understand simple English sentences at Georgia University's Language Research Centre, near Atlanta. They reared a pygmy chimpanzee to communicate

using basic phrases using a basic keyboard. Primatologists showed in June that wild chimpanzees are capable of passing on learned inventions and culture to their offspring. Independent 26-7-99

The Government hardened its stance against fox-hunting yesterday when it announced plans for a nation-wide ban with no opt-out areas for hunting. Tony Blair recently announced plans to ban hunting with dogs, but there had been talk of opt-out areas following local a referendum. No opt-out will now be allowed, as it would cause chaos when hunts crossed boundaries. It would be like allowing child abuse in Bedfordshire, but not Hertfordshire. Legislation will be introduced in the next Parliamentary session, beginning in November, as a private member's Bill, but will ensure it gets the extra time, unlike Mike Foster's Bill. Scotland will decide on a ban in the Scottish Parliament. Independent 13-7-99

All perfumes should be labelled with their contents to stop the widespread slaughter of musk deer for their scent pods, the WWF says. It says the number of musk deer has fallen by 50 per cent during the past decade and they could be threatened with extinction. The WWF is calling on the EU to stop imports of wild musk from Russia until more research is carried out into their decline, and wants all perfume products clearly labelled to show if they use natural musk. The deer's musk pods fetch £28,000 per kilogram. Independent 6-7-99

Norway has secretly built up a 500-ton "blubber mountain" from the carcasses of thousands of whales slaughtered in defiance of world opinion, as it has been flouting the international whaling moratorium. The blubber is cramming a warehouse in the Lofoten islands while the Norwegian government tries to get international law changed so that it can be sold to Japan. The Norwegians eat whale meat not blubber. The haul comes from about 3,000 minke whales harpooned since the whaling ban was introduced in 1986. Greenpeace said

Norway was lying when it said that whaling was only a traditional hunt done to support local people and meet local needs. This year they hope to take 753 minke, but they have been harassed by Greenpeace ships in violent clashes. The stockpile is so large that blubber is now being discarded into the sea. They will try to get minke released from Cites classification at the next meeting in Nairobi in 2000. Independent 7-7-99

Beware! - Built in Cameras!

Spy cameras are to be hidden in ordinary police helmets so they can film people on the streets. The equipment, which will be faithful to the traditional police helmet in its shape, is being developed as the latest weapon in the surveillance-led fight against crime and 'subversion'. The idea for the new helmet came after the redesign of riot helmets equipped with radio and a secret camera, which can relay live images to a base unit or record proceedings as they happen. The Metropolitan Police are one of the forces who have expressed interest in the new helmets. Mounted police officers in Cleveland have used the equipment at football matches and successfully used the taped evidence in prosecutions. Chief Superintendent Stephen French, of the Met's Public Order Branch, has said, "Intelligence-driven policing is the way forward and anything to be done to facilitate that should be welcomed."

In Britain there are 5,500 people waiting for an organ transplant and 2,500 transplants were carried out last year. The US investment bank Soloman Brothers estimates that worldwide there were 45,000 transplants in 1994, but that with an unlimited supply of pig organs, this would rise to 455,000 by 2010 with a value of \$6bn a year. In 1995, Imutran transplanted a pig heart into a monkey

which lived for 60 days. Then disaster struck. The Government set up the Kennedy inquiry into xenotransplantation, under Professor Ian Kennedy, professor of medical law and ethics, because of concerns about animal viruses and ethics. The Kennedy report concluded it was ethical only if the risks to patient and the population were reduced to "tolerable levels", and the pigs were looked after, and the costs were acceptable. The chief fears were viruses transferring to the human population in the same way that it is believed AIDS spread from monkeys. BSE had shocked scientists by spreading from sheep to cattle and then to humans. Research had identified four pig retroviruses and studies had shown two could potentially pass to humans. Independent 20-8-99

An advertisement featuring the late Linda McCartney which urged people to boycott fishing, has been banned by the Broadcast Advertising Clearance Centre for being too political, it was alleged yesterday. It was due to be shown on Sky Sports next week to coincide with national fishing week. PETA condemned the ban on the advert, which showed McCartney saying, "People say fish don't have feelings, but I say have you ever seen a fish gasping for breath when you take it out of water? Are they saying thank you for killing me, it feels great. No, they are in pain." Guardian 20-8-99

Giant hams up to four times the normal size could result from research into altering the genes of pigs to make their legs grow unnaturally muscular. Pig breeders in Britain warned that attempts may be underway overseas to breed GM superpigs. Scientists have found the genetic fault that could be used to produce pigs with shanks up to four times bigger than normal. Concern follows reports that attempts were made two years ago to produce GM salmon that could grow four times faster than normal. China is considered the most likely place for research, according to Dr John Webb, director of the Cotswold Pig Development Company in Lincolnshire. He said the Chinese have

a type of pig, a Meishan, which gives birth to 16 piglets rather than the normal 12. A superpig could result in pork that is 30 per cent cheaper. Last year scientists created mice with oversized muscles to order. Independent 30-7-99

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According to the US agriculture department, 44 per cent of soybeans and 36 per cent of maize in the US are grown from GM seed, only a few varieties of which have been cleared for sale in Europe. Independent 15-7-99

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Brian Davies, 64, has put enormous financial resources behind a ban on hunting, including the £1m he donated to the Labour Party to ban fox-hunting. He brought Canada's annual slaughter of baby seal pups to an end with a 20-year campaign. Since 1991 he has been channelling huge sums of money to the main parties in the anti-hunting cause. Between 1991 and 1996 he sent £365,950 to Labour, £117,578 to the Conservatives, £70,105 to the Liberal Democrats and £54,262 to other groups. He has met John Major, Chris Patten, Neil Kinnock and Paddy Ashdown. In 1996 he personally handed £1m to the Labour Party. His life was changed in the early Sixties when he witnessed the savagery of the Canadian seal hunt, where hunters clubbed to death Harp seals for their fur, concentrating on the young pups, whose coats for the first three weeks of their lives are pure white. He became a full-time campaigner. The hunt was eventually banned in 1987. Mr Davies set up the Political Animal Lobby (PAL) in 1990. Independent 13-7-99



Scientific experiments on genetically modified salmon took place in Britain three years ago. Thousands of fish were given an extra gene from Chinook Salmon to make them grow up to four times quicker. The fish were later destroyed. Daily Mail 29-7-99

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The Arctic, the world's last great wilderness is facing an environmental catastrophe, with melting ice destroying the natural habitat of polar bears, migrating whales, seals, walrus and seabirds together with sinking many cities and changing weather patterns thousands of miles away, including Britain. Once-great populations of sea mammals and several species of seabird could die out within 20 years. The polar bear and seal populations are thought to have halved, and the polar bear could be extinct by 2020. Land animals such as grizzly bears, caribou, Arctic foxes, wolves and muskoxen are also at risk, as warmer winters, drier tundra and freak cold snaps are killing off their food sources and disrupting migration patterns. Eskimos say they can no longer sustain their traditional lifestyles. The Arctic is the world's

thermostat - what happens there regulates the world. Observer 25-7-99

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Fishermen have been accused of mutilating dolphins after a number of headless bodies were washed up on the beaches of Southwest Britain. Trawler crews are believed to have decapitated the dolphins after the creatures became entangled in their nets. Worried about rising adverse public publicity from dolphins dying in nets, fishermen are cutting them to pieces in the hope they will sink rather than be washed ashore. But the tactics have backfired, with three being washed ashore, one with its tail sliced off. The discovery follows six decapitations off Cornwall last year. Fishermen consider the catching of dolphins an unavoidable industrial hazard, as replacing broken nets is time-consuming and expensive. However one dolphin which was washed up had slices of flesh removed, suggesting it was fishermen making dolphin steaks. The decapitations have highlighted the devastation wreaked on dolphin numbers by industrial trawling. Dolphin strandings, where dead animals are washed up on shore, are on the rise in the south-west. In Cornwall, 28 dolphins and whales

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"This is a superbly fresh and original collection of illuminating, thought provoking poems. They come from a place called compassion, they are written with love and very importantly they are uncompromising. These are not just poems for poetry's sake, these are poems about life, these poems are necessary"

- Benjamin Zephaniah.

Animal Rites - Liturgies of Animal Care - by Andrew Linzey

Christians believe that the Logos is the source of all life, yet Christian worship remains unashamedly humanocentric. The world of creation, and animals in particular, is almost invisible in our worship. The churches currently do not have the liturgical means of celebrating the life of animals, giving thanks for their companionship, praying for the relief of their suffering.

This new book provides ten new liturgies which are animal-friendly and animal-inclusive. They include services of celebration for animal companionship, services for animal welfare, healing liturgies, new eucharistic prayers 'for the whole creation', and animal burial services. Underlying all these new forms is a serious theological purpose: to help us to draw deeper into the mystery of God's work in creation and to affirm other sentient beings as co-creatures with us.

Andrew Linzey writes: "*Already hundreds of parishes hold animal blessing services every year. These provide an opportunity for celebration, care, and preaching on the theme of Christian responsibility for creation.*"

Andrew Linzey holds the world's first post in theology and animal welfare - the IFAW Senior Research Fellowship at Mansfield College, Oxford.

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have been washed up on the county's beaches this year, compared with 65 for the whole of 1998 and 52 in 1997, according to the Cornwall Wildlife Trust. In Devon, around 30 were washed up last year. The vast majority of stranded dolphins, around 80 per cent, die after being caught up in fishing nets. Others die of pollution or accidental beachings. Most dolphins and their smaller cousins the porpoises, are caught in large industrial trawlers which have already scooped up over 1.5m mackerel and sea bass off the south-west coast this year, using nets up to a mile wide. Entangled in a net, a dolphin or a porpoise will shut its blow-hole and suffocate. The Whale and Dolphin Conservation Society says the porpoise is almost extinct in southern British waters. Independent on Sunday 4-4-99

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Campaigners dressed as foxes yesterday began a 24-hour hunger strike outside the constituency office of Conservative leader William Hague in Northallerton, North Yorkshire. The National Anti-Hunt Campaign said Mr Hague supported fox hunting and they wanted it banned. Independent 6-9-99

Lead shot is to be banned from the shotgun cartridges of Britain's wildfowling, the Government announced today. When shooting ducks and geese over the seashore, estuaries, lakes and other wetlands, wildfowling will have to use shotgun pellets of a different, non-toxic material, or risk a fine of up to £5,000. The ban is intended to end the lead poisoning of water birds, which ingest spent shot when taking in grit to aid digestion, and subsequently suffer a lingering and painful death. The action follows the successful ban on lead weights in angling in 1987, which has allowed mute swan populations to expand greatly. The ban should be in place in England in time for the new wildfowling season on 1 September. The timing of the ban in Scotland and Wales will depend on the new Scottish and Welsh assemblies. A similar ban is to be introduced in Northern Ireland. A typical 12-bore shotgun cartridge contains about 250 pellets of lead, weighing about 35g, and it is thought that about 2,000 tons of shot are used by wildfowling in Europe each season, much of which falls into wetland habitats. Birds suffering from lead poisoning tend to seek cover and die

isolated deaths, so there are no figures for how many are lost each year, but it has been estimated that 2 to 3 per cent of the United States' autumn wildfowl population (1.6 to 2.4 million birds) dies each year from lead shot ingestion, and according to the Wildfowl and Wetlands Trust, levels of ingestion of lead in northern Europe are similar. The ban will affect the 16,000 members of wildfowling clubs and up to 100,000 other shooters. The British Association for Shooting and Conservation said it accepted the ban. Independent 8-4-99

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Eagle owls, capable of carrying off dogs, cats, wild boar and even deer are now breeding in Britain. With its six-foot wingspan, standing over two foot high, it is one of more than a score of bird species that have escaped from collections of avifauna, with an expert warning they could become pests. They hunt by ambushing passing prey or pouncing on birds, or taking fish by plunge diving or hovering. Successful breeding of the birds has occurred for the past to years in North Yorkshire. The Rare Breeding Birds Panel has produced a report warning of the risks, focussing on the 22 species that are

gaining footholds, including Australian black swans, Asiatic bar-headed geese, Arctic-nesting snow geese, barnacle geese, and tropical rose-ringed and monk parakeets. Independent 12-4-99

At least 83 birds of prey were illegally killed last year, the RSPB said. The figure compares with 71 birds of prey which were illegally killed in 1997. Guardian 28-6-99

An attempt to outlaw fur farming was blocked by Tory backbenchers yesterday. The Fur Farming (Prohibition) Private Member's Bill, sponsored by Maria Eagle with cross-party support was halted by amendments drawn up by former Tory ministers Eric Forth (Bromley and Chislehurst) and David Maclean (Penrith and the Border) after a five hour debate. The Bill which aims to close England's remaining 13 mink farms by January 2002 and compensate farmers for their loss, now goes back down the queue and stands little chance of becoming law. The Bill proposed it be an offence to keep any animal for slaughter or for breeding where the sole or primary purpose is to obtain the value of their fur, punishable by a fine of up to £20,000. Up to 150,000 young mink are slaughtered on farms each year for their pelts. They are not domesticated,

but are forced to live in small cages. Independent 15-5-99

More than 500 hunt supporters who joined the RSPCA out-numbered traditional members at the animal charity's AGM, where they called for a rethink in its opposition to fox hunting. Independent on Sunday 27-6-99

Foxes are far from being the voracious predators that they are made out to be and probably do less damage to native wildlife than red deer, zoologists have found. They have little impact on populations of wild birds, yet over-grazing by red deer in Scotland has scarred the landscape and made it more difficult for other wild animals to survive. Professor of environmental sciences, Stephen Harris, a leading expert on foxes, said that just eight out of 60 studies into the predation of groundnesting wading birds have shown that the fox has an impact on bird numbers, and even that was low. A study on lapwings showed that foxes were their least important predators; crows were much more important. As for pheasants, they have not adapted to the wild so it is not surprising that they are vulnerable. Rabbits form between 70 and 80 per cent of a fox's diet, with voles, worms and insects making up the rest. Red deer have a devastating impact on local wildlife,

and have no natural predators, and eat young trees as soon as they appear. The solution would be to re-introduce wolves into the Highlands. "We can hardly expect other countries to keep dangerous animals such as tigers when we are unwilling to suffer much smaller problems, such as wolves. Red deer make life far more difficult for other animals; birds being more vulnerable to being found by predators such as the fox and eagles. There are currently about 250,000 adult foxes, producing 400,000 cubs a year, most of which die in their first year. Humans kill about 400,000 foxes a year, and a ban on fox-hunting, which kills 20,000 a year at most, would have little impact on fox control. Independent 18-9-99

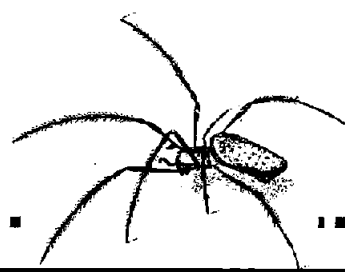
The Home Office refuses to release the names of scientists who have broken regulations in experiments on animals, although in one research project the breaches were so serious that the further use of animals was banned. A total of 17 infringements of regulations surrounding animal experiments were reported in 1998. The Guardian requested details of these infringements under the Open Government code introduced by the last government. The Home Office replied that identities of the researchers concerned had to be protected to prevent possible attacks by animal rights extremists. A

A HATFUL OF PAIN - A COMIC BUT POIGNANT MURDER MYSTERY *A NEW BOOK BY CRAIG BURTON*

Clark and Ann are members of a rock band / comedy troupe that is the financial lifeblood of the Animal Liberation Front. Clark uses comedy to maintain mental balance and win close debates with his therapy puppets. When a young woman dies during an ALF mission, Clark and Ann are bumped from life in the fast lane, to life in the oncoming lane. Parents, corporations, and professional thugs threaten things even Alfred Hitchcock never thought of. Danger escalates when a stalker begins playing a deadly game. The police investigate with near spectacular indifference. Read on...

- A quirky murder mystery that opens our eyes to the realities of using live animals for research.
- Laughter laced with a poignant message.
- A playfully serious look at a tragic social issue.

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Available in the UK for £12.64 (hardcover)



spokeswoman said researchers provided information in confidence to the Home Office, making the data exempt from disclosure. NAVS said if researchers had broken rules set up to protect laboratory animals, people have a right to know details. In Britain, 2.6m experiments a year are carried out on living animals. One licence was revoked to experiment, another was revoked but the ban was overturned on appeal; again, no details were given. Some 14 infringements occurred in universities, the other three in commercial labs. In 15 cases, experiments were conducted outside stipulated terms of licences. Seven project leaders were required to review controls to prevent further unauthorised tests. The committee is reviewing the question of disclosure. Guardian 22-9-99

Tesco, Britain's largest supermarket, and Unilever, owner of Birds Eye Walls, the world's largest food manufacturer yesterday both announced bans on GM ingredients, from their products. Tesco is working with Greenpeace to remove modified ingredients from its own meals and would label clearly all products that contained them, following customer pressure and criticism from environmentalists that it was the only one of the big chains to refuse to respond to public concern. Tesco now joins Safeway, Sainsbury's, Iceland, marks and Spencer and Waitrose in seeking GM-free products and boosting its organic range. Greenpeace said the spotlight was now on Nestle to phase out the ingredients. About 4.5 million hectares of land are in cultivation in the UK. Independent 29-4-99

Fresh fears of another E.coli 0157 outbreak grew after one in five butchers failed hygiene checks yesterday. Staff at 12 butchers - out of 64 checked by environmental health officers - were not washing their hands between handling cooked and raw meat. Cross-contamination of food is a key way of spreading E.coli, and hand washing was a key recommendation after the E.coli outbreak in 1996-97 that killed 21

people with meat from John Barr's butchers. Threats of legal action have been given to the butchers. Elsewhere in Scotland, an undercover investigation found staff were not reaching hygiene standards in 92% of butchers investigated. Independent 16-7-99

Animal rights activists said they liberated 600 guinea pigs stolen from a farm in Burton on Trent breeding them for research. The owner, Christopher Hall said the animals are kept according to Home Office regulations. Independent 7-9-99

The Post Office is fitting letter-box style bristle bars to post boxes as a solution to snails eating letters in post-boxes. In Truro last year snails damaged 100 letters. Independent 17-7-99

The Tansy beetle is blessed with exotic beauty, with legs and wings of iridescent green and bronze which the Victorians used as sequins. Only one plant, the tansy, can nourish the beetles and now the insect has stopped using its wings. There are only two colonies in Britain and one, with 130 beetles, has just been moved for flood-defence work. The tansy plant is vulnerable to drought. The colonies will be monitored in the hope of encouraging them to spread. Independent 11-8-99

The British Horseracing Board has released a statement stating that it will oppose a ban on hunting with hounds, in the interests of racing, as a ban would damage racing, and reduce the number of point-to-point venues and meetings, and thus reduce the number of horses and riders reaching the standards required for racing. The Jockey Club also opposes a ban. Independent 21-7-99

Dangerous levels of cancer-causing dioxin exist in meat from all industrialised countries, the EC said yesterday. The statement raised questions about the safety of meat in Britain, which, like most EU countries, has no systematic scheme to check farms close to industrial polluters. The alarm was raised from tests on Belgian beef, which contained more than the

COVANCE CAMPAIGN

During a national demo at Covance Laboratories on Saturday 25th September, an activist managed to climb a security fence and gain access to the company's beagle dog unit. They saw at first hand the depraved world of vivisection. A statement made by the activist afterwards reads:

"Upon entering the building I came across the monkey unit but I didn't go in as there was a Biohazard sign on the door and another mentioning rabies experiments. I entered the beagle unit and saw lots of dogs with no bedding at all and loads of excrement everywhere. Some of the dogs were cowering in fear and some were just desperate for attention...."

Video footage taken from the kennel unit revealed appalling conditions with urine and excrement covering the floors of the kennels and flowing out into the walkway between them. Animal feed had been knocked over into the urine rendering it inedible. The video footage has come as a major boost to the campaign against Covance. Photos and video footage are online at:

<http://web.ukonline.co.uk/miggi>

For further information contact:

**The Covance Campaign,
PO Box 323,
York YO9 1RR
Tel: 07977 637293**

permitted quantities of dioxin, from industrial sources. The news emerged with the admission that sewage sludge was used in Belgian animal feed until June this year. Similar revelations from France, Germany and the Netherlands have provoked alarm. There are no systematic spot checks of meat produced in farms near to industrial sites. The Belgian government confirmed reports that toilet and animal waste sludge had been mixed into animal fodder for years, but stopped in June. Independent 22-9-99

Florida's one million alligators are on the prowl for mates and food, posing a threat to people and pets, state wildlife officials said yesterday. Several alligators have been seen walking by ponds and on a golf course recently. Independent 28-4-99

Shops selling alternative medicines are up in arms against new government regulations, which, it is said, will sweep hundreds of herbal remedies and alternative medicines off the shelves. The EC is insistent; twice in September 1996 and again last year, it attacked Britain for failing to remove from the market products labelled as health foods, alternative remedies or even cosmetics which have an effect on the body. If a product is a medicine or claims to have medicinal effects, it must be put through clinical trials and get a licence from the Medicines Control Agency, which is unbelievably expensive. The official document, MLX249, proposes amendments to the Medicines for Human Use Regulations 1994, and the industry says it will give the MCA unacceptable powers to decide whether borderline products in the grey area between foods and medicines, cosmetics or medical devices, is a medicine or not. If the MCA decrees the presence of fluoride in some toothpastes makes them a medicine, then manufacturers will have to get a licence or stop selling them, or face prosecution. In the future, the MCA may be both prosecutor and judge. The MCA says it sees the rule change as a way of dealing with outrageous claims where they are made, for instance, bogus Aids cures. Guardian 3-5-99

Animal rights extremists caused £1m damage in an arson attack on a Unigate dairy in Oxford, completely burning out seventeen vehicles. Half an hour earlier, four vehicles were destroyed at Tadmartin Poultry in nearby Banbury. The attackers left incendiary devices under each vehicle, and were said to have been well made. All but one device went off. Unigate Dairies spokeswoman Tony Hensby said the incident was inexplicable and they were at a complete loss. Earlier, Thames Valley Police arrested 20 people during a sit down protest at the Hillgrove Cat Farm in nearby Witney. One man was charged with obstructing police, 19 others were released pending inquiries. Independent 2-8-99

Food hygiene inspectors are starting an investigation into French rendering plants following allegations that untreated water, blood and discharges from animal carcasses, and sewage have been used in making poultry and pig feed. Guardian 18-8-99

A small lizard-like animal whose fossil remains were found in an ancient lakebed may have been one of the first to live on dry land. The 15-centimetre specimen dates back almost 340 million years, and was found near Edinburgh. Guardian 8-4-99

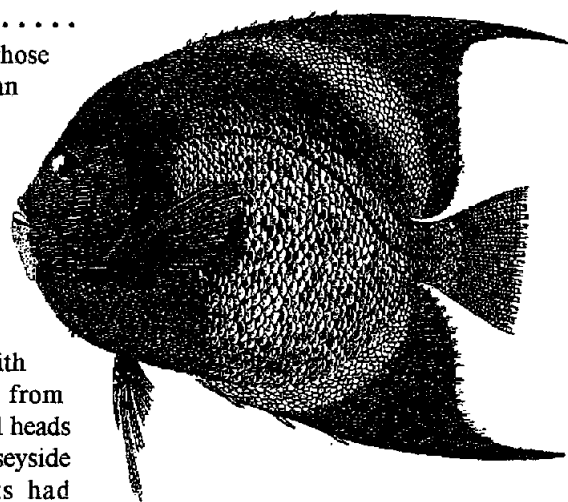
Commuters were confronted with severed pigs' heads hanging from railings yesterday. Police said 21 heads had been found on main Merseyside roads and similar incidents had occurred throughout the county. Officers are investigating but farmers' leaders denied involvement. Independent 17-9-99

A duck-billed platypus has been born in captivity for the first time since 1944, and only the second time in history, at the Healesville Sanctuary in Melbourne. The platypus an egg-laying mammal or monotreme, is another of evolution's great survivors. It catches prawns using electro-receptors on its bill. Independent 10-4-99

Despite its size, about a foot long, and a 200-million year history dating back to the Jurassic Age, the mantis prawn has only just been discovered at the bottom of Sydney harbour. It can strike its fish prey in five milliseconds and has the most complex vision of any invertebrate. If it were the size of a shark, it would be the most fearsome creature in the sea. Independent 10-4-99

Police had their hands full trying to manage the chaos caused by the introduction of hundreds of thousands of sheep into Egyptian households over the Eid. One man fell to his death pursuing a ram across a fourth-storey balcony. In another village, a sheep belonging to one family burst into another family's home, triggering a knife fight that left four injured. Independent 24-4-99

Police may carry out DNA tests on nearly 1,500 birds' eggs seized in raids



to try to match them to feathers from known nesting sites. The eggs were seized in raids in Brixham and Totnes in Devon on Tuesday. Independent 2-4-99

The Government refused to back down on its plans for farm-scale GM trials despite evidence released this week that the plants' pollen can travel further than thought - 2.5 miles. Yet only three sites will be planted this year to investigate their effect on the surrounding ecology. Michael Meacher said up to 20 sites are planned

and the trials will take up to four years. Independent 17-4-99

Criminal gangs who smuggle endangered species are to be the subject of a British-led drive to stamp out the trade. Police and prosecutors in impoverished countries in the Caribbean and the Commonwealth will receive specialised training in environmental and criminal law to capture the traffickers. The programme aims not only to tackle the smuggling of tigers, birds and parrots, but the illegal movement of environmentally damaging chemicals such as CFCS. Independent 6-4-99

Scores of animals are close to extinction because the cloud forests of Central America are being destroyed through climate change. Rising temperature is causing the moisture-laden mists to disappear; since 1987, 20 out of 50 species of frog and toad are believed to have perished, with one species endemic to Costa Rica, the golden toad, has not been seen for more than 10 years. The frequency of the mists occurring over the mountains over the past 20 years has declined, forming on higher slopes. Monteverde has become cloudier but drier. Estimates put the mists at 200 metres higher, enough to destroy the delicately balanced habitats of cloud-forest animals. Rising sea-surface temperatures are probably behind the change. Populations of birds and reptiles and lizards have disappeared too. Independent 26-4-99

The bittern, a rare bird that makes a distinctive booming noise, is on the verge of extinction in the UK, according to the RSPB. It said that the bittern's boom had been reported only 14 times this spring. Independent on Sunday 25-4-99

The RSPCA has issued a warning over the latest craze, owning a chacoan monkey tree frog. The charity said there was a disturbing increase in the number of exotic animals kept as pets - an estimated one million now own pet reptiles. The monkey frog comes from northern Argentina and Paraguay, and its natural habitat is desert. It must be fed live insects, such

as three or four crickets two or three times a week, and have its accommodation kept at 30C to 35C. Independent 12-4-99

The KLM airline apologised for using a poultry industry shredding machine to kill 440 live Chinese squirrels shipped illegally to the Netherlands, but said it could not find a home for them. Times 16-4-99

The one-horned rhino lives. Seven months after 39 of the highly endangered animals were swept away by catastrophic floods that forced

started in 1908. Thirty years ago, rhinos seemed on the brink of extinction, poached mainly for their horn, with numbers down to 366 in 1966. Poachers are shot now, not taken to court. Independent 12-4-99

Wildlife is encroaching on the suburbs of America, even New York. Last week a wandering coyote was apprehended in Central Park, where it was caged and removed to a more conventional habitat. In Washington, a red-tailed hawk swooped on the White House to feast on presidential duck. Washington

And finally....

For those readers who have not obtained a copy of Arkangel magazine before, we hope that you will find it informative. We apologise to our regular subscribers for the lateness of this issue.

We would also like to take this opportunity to thank Lyn & Maggie Allen for their invaluable help and for their amazing Arkangel covers - issues number 10 to issue number 20.

With the closure of Consort Kennels and Hillgrove Farm, the strength of the animal liberation movement has been fully realised. We must build upon that strength, teach by example, use our resources to the best of our abilities, promote a vegan way of life and spread the vegan message far and wide.

The Animal Liberation / vegan movement must break down the barriers of prejudice, ignorance, bigotry, discrimination and hatred which keep animals caged, abused, exploited, used, insulted, made fun of, humiliated, tortured and finally, murdered. This movement must remain consistent in its fight to free animals from oppression by not embracing racism, sexism, homophobia or intolerance of religious beliefs as part of the struggle. The systematic abuse of animals relies on a fascistic doctrine of brutality and repressive policies. We congratulate London Animal Action for taking a stand against racists and sexists in the Animal Liberation movement and hope other groups will follow their lead...

hundreds more to flee, a census revealed an increase in numbers of more than 40 per cent over five years. Elsewhere in Assam where the rhinos are less well protected from poachers, numbers are up. Saturday's census found 1,649 rhinos, while the rest of the state has another 120, the best figure in Assam since the census

has hundreds of Japanese cherry trees, and the park service admitted last week that the sacred cherries had been felled by a beaver. Now a save-the-beaver group has been set up, and an opposing save-the-cherry-trees group set up, and other beavers have been sighted. The other trees have been protected with

netting, and offers have come in from people offering to re-home the beavers. Independent 14-4-99

Wild chimpanzees have a rich cultural tradition on a par with human societies, and pass on traditions to each other. Chimpanzees were able to match a face of a male chimpanzee they had never met to his mother, although not match daughters to mothers. Independent 17-6-99

A lioness from Edinburgh Zoo will be put to sleep because keepers think she has the feline version of BSE, despite the concern of animal campaigners. Her partner, Lumpy, 12, died of FSE. Independent on Sunday 11-4-99

The Government's most senior scientist, Sir Robert May, the Chief Scientific Advisor, has contradicted Tony Blair's policy on GM crops with a call for a four-year ban on their commercial release, not before 2003 at the earliest. Mr Blair and his ministers have repeatedly refused demands for a four-year ban from English Nature and other environmental groups. But in a letter to the RSPB, Sir Robert makes it clear he agrees with its view that no releases should occur until farm-scale trials are completed at the end of 2002. Independent 20-5-99

One of Britain's biggest sweetcorn farmers admitted spraying potentially lethal pesticide on crops later sold to supermarket chains. Colin Boswell, 47, who ran an 850-acre farm on the Isle of Wight, pleaded guilty to 10 breaches of health and safety laws and was committed by Portsmouth magistrates for sentencing. Independent 5-6-99



The Animal Liberation Front said it was absolutely confident that its members were responsible for a firebomb attack on a meat firm's lorries on Monday in Exeter, Devon. Robin Webb, a spokesman, said he had not received any claims of responsibility from members but it was the type of action undertaken many times over the years. Independent 12-5-99

The European Union's Scientific Steering Committee scientists called yesterday for antibiotic use to be cut back because bacteria are becoming increasingly resistant. They recommend steps to reduce immediately "inappropriate use" of antimicrobials including antibiotics. Independent 1-6-99

The celebrity killer whale Keiko, the five-ton star of the film Free Willy, could be freed into the wild in mid-2000, according to the organisers of a campaign that returned him to a floating pen in his native Iceland from the United States a year ago. Independent 23-9-99

American doctors are preparing to ban blood donations from people who have visited Britain for as little as six months, to guard against the spread of human BSE. There are fears that visitors may have absorbed the BSE agent through food. A survey of its donors found that 22 per cent had visited Britain since 1980. Independent 3-6-99

Fresh concerns have been raised over the safety of human cloning with the findings that suggest Dolly the cloned sheep may be ageing faster than normal. Tests on Dolly's genetic material have revealed the chromosomes resemble those of a six-year-old sheep. Independent 27-5-99

The Government will pledge to fight any moves to lift the world-wide ban on whaling. Elliot Morley will tell the International Whaling Commission that Britain will not support the lifting

of the 1982 international moratorium. Independent 24-5-99

23,000 tonnes was the average amount of sturgeon caught every year in the Caspian Sea at the start of the 1980s. The average amount of sturgeon caught every year in the Caspian Sea at present is 3,000 tonnes. Independent on Sunday 30-5-99

An Ilkley supermarket has withdrawn ostrich burgers, sausages and steaks because the meat has proved too exotic for Yorkshire tastes. Guardian 5-5-99

A red setter was back to normal after a paediatric cardiologist performed key-hole heart bypass surgery on the dog in a 70 minute operation. Heart valve complications can be a problem in red setters. Independent 11-5-99

One of the world's richest jockey clubs is to shoot 200 racehorses because they are no longer winning money for their wealthy owners. The Hong Kong Jockey Club, with revenues last year of £7.3bn, is planning a cull of about a fifth of its stock, to be shot before July. Some 100 horses are put down each year in Hong Kong due to health problems. While the club does offer to make a payment towards the £3,000, its elite owners must pay to have their horses flown abroad. Many owners, as well as the club, are taking the cheaper option of shooting the retired animals, even though the club's five annual international races carry stake money of £2.5m, enough to ship more than 800 retired horses abroad. Independent on Sunday 9-5-99

The owner of a fur farm near Rome attacked British animal rights activists linked to the pressure group PETA. Nine people were injured, including two journalists. Independent on Sunday 9-5-99

European wolf cubs have been born in Britain for the first time in 250 years. Three females and one male were born to wolves owned by the Wolf Conservation Trust in Beenham, Berkshire. Independent on Sunday 9-5-99