

British Veterinary Zoological Society



Proceedings of the Autumn Meeting 2009

7th and 8th November, 2009

Park Inn, York

Sex- aspects affecting exotics and wildlife

BVZS GUIDELINES FOR MEETING ABSTRACTS

PLEASE NOTE: *From the November 2007 meeting all abstracts and extended abstracts will be linked to CABI. This is an important step in helping the Society and members' work reach a wider audience. While the society encourages authors to include as much relevant data as possible, it is the author's own responsibility to restrict their data as necessary in order not to prejudice any future peer-reviewed publications they may have planned. While previous humorous biographies have been included, inline with the links with CABI, please adhere to the biography guidelines and keep these to a professional nature. At present BVZS meetings and abstracts are NOT peer-reviewed.*

Submissions should preferably be in word (.doc) format, 12 font Times New Roman, single line spacing, not justified.

Biography: This should include the author's qualifications and institution/ practice/ affiliations, as well as a summary of any particular achievements, career, highlights, or relevant current projects. Please keep the biography to a professional nature. Maximum of 100 words.

Title: Submission should include a title of not more than 15 words, and the names, qualifications and affiliation/ institution of each author.

Abstracts: Abstracts should be a minimum of 200 words, and a maximum of 750 words. A reference list may also be included. Abstracts, with references should not be longer than 1 page.

Extended Abstracts: These should be in the format: SUMMARY, INTRODUCTION, MATERIALS AND METHODS, RESULTS, DISCUSSION, REFERENCES; or if this is a case report or case series: SUMMARY, INTRODUCTION, CASE REPORT, DISCUSSION, REFERENCES. Review articles should preferably be in the format: SUMMARY, REVIEW, CONCLUSION. This may be altered depending on the reviews nature, but must include a SUMMARY and CONCLUSION. The text should be concise and should be a maximum of 2000 words, and not exceed 4 pages in length, including illustrations and references. The summary should not exceed 200 words.

Tables and illustrations: Tables should be kept to a minimum and should be created in Word. The legend should clearly explain what data the table is presenting, without the need to refer back to the text. Tables should not duplicate information presented in figures. Digital images should be GIF, TIFF, or JPEG files, at a minimum resolution of 300 dpi. Please label them to correspond with the list of numbered figure captions; for example 'Figure 3.jpg' or 'Figure 7B.jpg', etc.

Style: Measurements should be expressed in the metric system or in SI units. Temperatures should be given in °C. Centrifugation speeds should be given in g. All abbreviations should be spelt out in full the first time they are used in the text. Medicines should be referred to by the generic name (Recommended International Non-Proprietary Name), as used in the sixth edition of The Veterinary Formulary (London, Pharmaceutical Press 2005) and listed on the website of the [Medicines and Healthcare Products Regulatory Agency](#), followed by the proprietary name and manufacturer in brackets when first mentioned; eg, fenbendazole (Panacur; Intervet). Parasitic infections should be referred to according to the Standardised Nomenclature of Parasitic Diseases (SNOPAD) guidelines, which are summarised by the [World Association for the Advancement of Veterinary Parasitology](#). Spelling should be in British English. Manuscripts should be written in the third person.

References: In the text, references should be cited as follows: Smith (1995) described.../...recorded earlier (Brown and Jones 1994, Smith and others 1997). Lists of references should be given in date order in the text, but alphabetically in the reference list. In the reference list, all authors' names and initials should be given followed by the date, title of the paper, full title of the journal, volume number and full page range, eg: SMITH, A. B., JONES, C. D. & BROWN, E. F. (1995) How to list your references. *Veterinary Record* xxx, 71-76. **Book references** should include the chapter title if appropriate, the full title of the book, the edition, the editors, the town of publication, publisher and page numbers of material referred to, eg: SMITH, A. B., JONES, C. D. & BROWN, E. F. (1993) How to list your references. In *Getting It Right*. 3rd edn. Eds S. Adams, J. Alexander. London, Society of Reference Publishers. pp 23-37. **Proceedings** should include the title of the paper given at the meeting, proceedings title, the editors (if applicable), town, country, month date a to b, year, and page numbers (if applicable), eg: MILLER, W. (1976) A state-transition model of epidemic foot-and-mouth disease. *Proceedings of an International Symposium: New Techniques in Veterinary Epidemiology and Economics*. Reading, UK, July 12 to 15, 1976. p 56. **Websites** should include the title of the page, website address and date accessed, eg: DEFRA (2001) Explanation of Foot and Mouth Restrictions. www.defra.gov.uk/animalh/diseases/fmd/disease/restrictions/explanation.asp. Accessed August 24, 2001. Personal communications should be cited within the text and follow the form 'A. B. Smith, personal communication'.

British Veterinary Zoological Society

The BVZS, a non-territorial division of the BVA, represents professionals with interests in exotic, zoo and wildlife species. Benefits of membership include bi-annual *Bulletins* and *Proceedings* from meetings. Membership forms and all other details of membership are on the BVZS website (www.bvzs.org) or contact the BVA, 7 Mansfield St, London W1G 9NQ (ask for details of the BVZS Administrative Director).

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PROGRAMME

Main Sessions: Saturday (Parallel Sessions below)

08:00 Registration

08:45 Welcome by BVZS President Simon Girling

09.00 Plenary Speaker: *Managing the reproductive rate of some large carnivores using the GnRH super-agonist implant Suprelorin®*: Henk Bertschinger 45 min 12

10.00-11.30 Session One (Infertility) Chair Tai Strike
Nutrition of the avian egg: supply, demand and selective allocation: Brian Stockdale 18
Value of semen evaluation in a cheetah breeding program (20 min): Henk Bertschinger
Analysis of the most common breeding problems in captive and free-ranging female elephants: Thomas B. Hildebrandt, Robert Hermes, Imke Lueders, Frank Goeritz
Breeding Iberian lynxes – A story of understanding a unique feline reproductive physiology: Frank Goeritz

11:30-12.00 Coffee

12.00-13.30 Session Two Diagnostic imaging Chair Emma Keeble
An update on the diagnostic investigation of urogenital disease in rabbits: Brigitte Reusch 23
Endoscopy of the avian urogenital tract: Kevin Eatwell
Endoscopic vasectomy in immature Japanese quail: Richard Jones
Diagnostic imaging of the urogenital tract and semen assessment in the pygmy hippo: Hermes, R, Bouts, T, Saragusty J, Göritz F, Hildebrandt, TB
A Comparison of Radiography, Ultrasonography and Endoscopy in Pre Release Evaluation of the Reproductive Tract of the Badger (Meles meles): Molly Varga

13.30-14.30 Lunch

14.30-16.00 Session Three Dystocia and neonatology Chair Steve Smith
Dystocia in elephants: Jon Cracknell 28
Squamate dystocia: clinical aspects and therapy: Matt Rendle
Pallas' cat: kittens and toxoplasmosis: Jane Hopper
Neonatal and egg Post Mortems with respects to fertility: Imogen Comyn
Artificial Insemination techniques in turkeys: Victoria Roberts

16:00-16.15 Tea

16.15-17.15 Session Four Open Chair Fieke Molenaar
Diagnosis and Treatment of Atopic Dermatitis in a Roloway Monkey (Cercopithecus roloway): Hannah Rowland 37
Ovarian dysgerminoma in a pygmy slow loris (Nicticebus pygmeus): Ann Pocknell
Endometriosis in an owl-faced monkey (Cercopithecus hamlyni): Mark Stidworthy
Large animal facemasks: Blue Peter and anaesthesia: Jonathan Cracknell

Parallel Sessions

Back to Basics

12.00-13.30 *Diagnostic, surgical and medical aspects of chelonian reproductive disease:* Stuart McArthur 42

16.15-17.15 *Avian Reproduction:* Joanna Hedley and Livia Benato 68

17:30 BVZS AGM

20:00 Dinner and dancing to *Scarvolution* at the Park Inn, York

Main Sessions: Sunday (Parallel Sessions below)

09:30-11.00 **Session Five** **Contraception** Chair Yedra Feltrer
Successful contraception in a female giant anteater (Myrmecophaga tridactyla) using the GnRH analogue implant deslorelin acetate (Suprelorin®) as assessed by faecal progesterone monitoring: Tai Strike (ZSL) 70
Immunocontrol of reproductive rate and aggression in African elephants 30 min: Henk Bertschinger
The use of GnRH implants in the treatment of sexually derived behavioural abnormalities in birds: Neil Forbes
EGZAC update: Sue Walker

11:00-11.30 **Coffee**

11.30-13.00 **Session Six** **Urogenital medicine and surgery** Chair Brigitte Reusch 76
Is ovariectomy in female lizards necessary?: Sid Knotek
An overview of urogenital disease in small rodents: Emma Keeble
Uterine leiomyoma in a greater one-horned rhinoceros (Rhinoceros unicornis): a case report: Jo Dodds
Renomegaly with hyperphosphatemia in adult iguanas: Sid Knotek
Sexual differences of total and ionised calcium to phosphorous ratios and products in tortoises: Kevin Eatwell

13:00-14.00 **Lunch**

14:00-15.30 **Session Seven** **Open** Chair Sue Thornton 86
Regulation of animal experiments – challenges on the edge: Neil Watt (Home Office)
Invasive Non-native Species in the UK (and its Overseas Territories): Niall Moore (Head of the Non-native Species Secretariat)
Hypertension in Woolly Monkeys (Lagothrix lagothricha) - a case series: Nic Masters
Evaluation of Post-Mortem Examinations of Bird Eggs and Neonates: Imogen Comyn
The use of Zylkène in tigers: Melanie Dass, Intervet
Discussion: Managing Zoonotic risks in zoos and wildlife parks: Chair: Steph Sanderson

Parallel Session

Masterclass

11:30-13:00 *Remote Chemical Immobilisation: Considerations for technique and equipment:* Jonathan Cracknell (**delegates: bring a memory stick for this class for the notes**) 91

15:30 - Prize Giving and Farewell

CPD Certificates will be issued: one day=7 hours, 2 days=14 hours

SPEAKERS

Livia Benato

Livia graduated from Parma in 2002 and worked with rabbits and exotic animals in a referral clinic in Italy for two years before moving to the UK. Here she gained her General Practitioners' Certificate in Exotic Animal Practice, while working in exotic animal practices and wildlife hospitals. She started her residency in Rabbit and Exotic Animal Medicine at the Royal (Dick) School of Veterinary Studies in September 2008 where she works alongside the rest of the Exotic animal and Wildlife team.

Henk Bertschinger

Henk holds both South African and Swiss citizenships and qualified from Onderstepoort Veterinary University in 1965. He obtained his PhD in 1975 in Zürich, his thesis was "The hereditary occurrence of diploid spermatozoa in the semen of Brown Swiss bulls". In 1998 he attended the wildlife immobilisation course presented by Prof. D G A Meltzer and is a Diplomate of the European College of Animal Reproduction. Since 2006, Henk has been Professor Emeritus at the University of Pretoria. He serves on numerous committees, has many editorial appointments, organises many conferences and is internationally widely published. His hobbies include Italian cooking, wildlife and photography.

Imogen Comyn

Imogen is a final year student studying Veterinary Medicine at Glasgow University. She has been involved in many vet school activities including being former president of Glasgow University Veterinary Zoological Society, Final Year representative to Glasgow University Veterinary Medical Association (GUVMA), Treasurer of GUVMA Rodeo, and a member of the Glasgow University Veterinary School Football Team. Her interests in zoo medicine began with her childhood experiences growing up in Nigeria, South Africa, and Ivory Coast. She had the opportunity to participate in releasing vervet monkeys with the Riverside Rehabilitation Centre, volunteered for eight months at the Moholoholo Rehabilitation Centre involved in the conservation of endangered species and the rehabilitation of injured and poisoned wildlife, both animals and birds, and did farm management and conservation at the Makalali Conservancy. Imogen also completed a Game Ranger Course accredited by FGASA (The Field Guide Association of South Africa) which included tracking, identification of wildlife, dealing with dangerous game and animal behaviour. She has recently completed an externship at ZSL London Zoo where she worked with the pathologist performing *post-mortem* examinations on many zoo species and completing a summer project involving *post-mortem* examinations of avian eggs and chicks.

Jonathan Cracknell

Jonathan graduated in 2000 from the University of Glasgow. Initially starting in general practice he moved to the Animal Health Trust to undertake a clinical scholarship in Veterinary Anaesthesia. Since then he has worked at the RSPCA's Stapeley Grange Wildlife Hospital, for Animal Asia Foundation's Chengdu Moon Bear Rescue Centre in China, and he has worked in the only exotics practice in Hong Kong. On his return to the UK Jonathan spent a period at Port Lympne and Howletts Zoo before being taken on as the RCVS Trust Resident in Zoo and Wild Animal Medicine at the Zoological Society of London. Jonathan also acts as anaesthesia consultant for International Animal Rescue, EEHV Advisor for the Global Elephant Management Plan, as well as being the BIAZA Elephant Working Group Veterinary Advisor. His interests are in wildlife and zoo anaesthesia and analgesia, conservation medicine, zoo pathology, and improving the welfare of captive zoo animals. Jonathan is currently employed as Zoological Director at Marwell Wildlife.

Melanie Dass

Melanie graduated from Cambridge University in 1997. She has ten years experience in general practice, and obtained the RCVS certificate in Small Animal Medicine in 2000. Her medical interests include diagnostic imaging, endocrine, cardiorespiratory and geriatric medicine. Melanie began her career at Schering-Plough as a veterinary adviser for the Companion Animal Business Unit and now works as a product manager in the speciality pharmaceutical division. Melanie successfully completed a professional diploma in marketing in 2008.

Joanne Dodds

Jo qualified as a veterinary nurse in July 1990 from Rodbaston College. She worked as head nurse for 3 years in small animal practice before taking up a veterinary nursing role in a wildlife hospital based

in the UK. From there she worked on a voluntary basis in a primate rescue centre, primarily gibbons, in Thailand. Since 1997 she has been working as a veterinary nurse at ZSL Whipsnade zoo where she is currently senior veterinary nurse. She is especially interested in the conditioning of zoo animals for veterinary procedures and has successfully, with the keepers, conditioned the chimpanzees to allow hand injection. She has 2 small boys who keep her busy in any spare time.

Kevin Eatwell

Kevin obtained his Certificate in Zoological Medicine in 2001 and his Diploma in Zoological Medicine in 2006 taking reptilian species as his specialist paper. He became an RCVS recognised Specialist in Zoo and Wildlife Medicine in 2007. He has lectured internationally about exotic animals, has published widely in peer reviewed journals, textbooks and magazines. Kevin has a wide base of experience covering exotic pets, wildlife casualties and zoological species. He joined the exotic animal and wildlife service at the University of Edinburgh in 2008 as the clinical manager and lecturer in exotic animal and wildlife medicine.

Neil Forbes

Neil qualified from the RVC in 1983. He gained his RCVS Specialist status in 1992, FRCVS by examination in 1996 and DipECAMS 1997. Neil has been instrumental in the creation of the European College of Zoological Medicine in 2009, being the current President. He is a part time senior lecturer at University of Bristol, but is based at Great Western Exotic Vets, as head of department. Neil is director of the only ECZM approved residency in the UK.

Frank Goeritz

Frank qualified in February 1992 and obtained his PhD at the Free University Berlin, Faculty of Veterinary Medicine with a dissertation entitled: "Ultrasonography in zoo and wild animals" in 1996. He then obtained Board certification for zoo and wildlife medicine in June 1997. Since January 1997, he has been the Head of Veterinary Services at IZW, following on from Senior Scientist at the same institution. He has many scientific awards including the Tony Bubenik Memorial Award 1998, International Deer Biology Congress Poster Award 1998, Intern. Symp. Physiol. Ethol. Wild and Zoo Anim. Heinrich Lüßen Award 1997, German Society of friends and sponsors of veterinary medicine Poster Award 1995, Congress for Physiology and Pathology of Reproduction Award of Excellence 1994, Swiss Society for Ultrasound and Biology. Frank is an Honorary Veterinary Fellow, Zoological Society London (ZSL) and holds fellowships and memberships of veterinary and zoological societies worldwide.

Joanna Hedley

Jo graduated from the Royal (Dick) School of Veterinary Studies in 2003, and has had a varied clinical background since graduation, having developed a first opinion and referral service in exotic pets in clinical practice, worked in wildlife rehabilitation and performed voluntary work for a number of wildlife charities abroad. She started her residency in Exotic Animal and Wildlife Medicine at the R(D)SVS in January 2009 where she works alongside the rest of the Exotic animal and Wildlife team. She is currently working towards her RCVS Certificate in Zoological Medicine.

Robert Hermes

Robert graduated in 1995 and his Doctoral Thesis in 1998 was "Ultrasound during pregnancy in European roe deer". His post doctoral studies from 1998 – 2000 at the Leibniz Institute for Zoo and Wildlife Research in Berlin resulted in him becoming a staff scientist in 2001 and this is his present position. Robert is also a Research Fellow at the ZSL, CRES, Smithsonian, Taronga Conservation Society and the Rhino TAG advisor. His hobbies are skiing, climbing, not running marathons.

Thomas Hidebrandt

Thomas graduated from Humboldt-University Berlin, School of Veterinary Medicine in 1992. His doctorate was awarded in 1993 at the Free University of Berlin with a dissertation entitled: "Studies on ovarian transplantation in golden hamsters, mice and African goats". He then obtained his Board certification for zoo and wildlife medicine (Fachtierarzt) in 1997. He has been the head of the Department of Reproduction Management from March 1997 to the present at the Institute for Zoo and Wildlife Research (IZW), Berlin. Thomas is a Fellow of ZSL and has been a visiting scientist to

China, Australia, Mozambique, USA, Mauritius and Moscow. He has lectured at 15 national and international universities and has papers published in numerous scientific publications.

Jane Hopper

Jane graduated from Cambridge University in 2002. After some years in mixed practice and locum work for several zoos including Howletts and Port Lympne Wild Animal Parks she became head of the Veterinary Department there in 2006. She is also responsible for the health of the Aspinal Foundation's 50 gorillas in reintroduction programmes in West Africa. She gained the RCVS Certificate in Zoological Medicine in 2007 and is a founding committee member for the veterinary charity Worldwide Veterinary Services.

Richard Jones

Richard graduated from Liverpool in 1995, completing an elective in avian medicine. After a couple of years in mixed and then small animal/avian referral practice he undertook an avian residency and masters programme at the Raptor Centre, University of Minnesota which he completed in 2001. Since then he has been working at Birch Heath Vets (small animal/avian referral practice) in Cheshire and at Stapeley Grange RSPCA wildlife hospital. A keen falconer since his youth, he is honorary veterinarian to the Welsh Hawking club and an active member of the British Falconers Club. Clinically his main areas of interest are raptor medicine, endoscopy and avian orthopaedics.

Emma Keeble

Emma qualified from Bristol University in 1994 and gained experience in mixed veterinary practice, as a wildlife vet for the RSPCA and in small animal exotic referral work. In 1999 she joined the Dick Vet, Exotic Animal and Wildlife Service. She holds the RCVS Diploma in Zoological Medicine and is a RCVS Recognised Specialist in Zoo and Wildlife Medicine. She has published widely in the veterinary literature and is co-editor of the new BSAVA *Manual of Rodents and Ferrets*. Her special interests include wildlife casualties, reptile neurology, rabbit neurology and *Encephalitozoon cuniculi* infection in pet rabbits.

Zdenek (Sid) Knotek

Sid graduated with honours from Brno Vet University in 1982. He is head of the Avian and Exotic Animal Clinic on University of Veterinary and Pharmaceutical Sciences Brno. His current focus involves medicine and surgery in exotic animals, especially in reptiles. Sid has part of his teaching activities dealing with reptiles at other universities (Utrecht, Vienna, Kosice, Ljubljana). He is currently president of the European Association of Zoo and Wildlife Veterinarians (EAZWV), president of the Czech Association of Zoo and Wildlife Veterinarians (CAZWV). Sid supervises the joint teaching projects at Brno and Vienna Vet Universities, clinically oriented programme for students and veterinarians - Summer School for Exotic Medicine and Surgery, and the intensive training course of European School for Advanced Veterinary Studies – Exotic Pets Medicine and Surgery.

Nicholas Masters

Nic is a Veterinary Assistant with International Zoo Veterinary Group (IZVG). He graduated from Cambridge in 1999 having completed an elective evaluating the use of a portable draw-over vaporiser system for anaesthetising wild animals in the field. After attaining the Wild Animal Health Master of Science degree at the Institute of Zoology and Royal Veterinary College, Nic joined IZVG in October 2005 and has since worked as the resident veterinarian at Twycross Zoo, one of the most diverse collections of primates in the world. Not surprisingly, apes and monkeys comprise much of the caseload. Nic recently completed the chapter on Primates in the latest edition of the BSAVA *Manual of Exotic Pets*. He spends the remainder of his time providing veterinary care for other IZVG clients across the UK and abroad, covering all taxa, but with particular interest in elephants and conservation medicine.

Stuart McArthur

Stuart qualified in 1986 and started work as a cattle vet. In the 23 years since then, Stuart has worked in all manner of veterinary environments including the PDSA and even a turtle hospital abroad, but his greatest veterinary pleasure is still to work as a GP as part of an effective nursing and veterinary team in a busy modern small animal hospital environment. That is why Stuart set up Holly House Veterinary Surgery, Leeds, 14 years ago and is currently building a veterinary hospital on this site. He

has written and contributed to several veterinary reference texts and has lectured at BSAVA, BVZS, NAVC (USA), ARAV (USA), in Europe, and various UK Veterinary Universities. In 2008 Stuart was given the BSAVA Melton Award for meritorious contribution to small animal practice. He remains active in veterinary research and publishing and is currently working on two online veterinary information resources (www.veterinaryformulary.com and www.wildandexotic.com).

Niall Moore

Niall Moore is the head of the GB Non-native Species Secretariat and is based at the Food and Environment Research Agency (an executive agency of DEFRA) in York. Niall has a PhD in Zoology from the National University of Ireland which examined dominance hierarchies and mating behaviour in fallow deer. Prior to his current job he has carried out extensive ecological research (working for MAFF and then DEFRA) on a range of species including fallow and muntjac deer, wild boar, several bat species and peregrine falcons.

Ann Pocknell

Ann qualified from the Ontario Veterinary College, Canada and obtained a Masters degree in Anatomical Pathology at the Western College of Veterinary Medicine, Saskatchewan. Following completion of an advanced residency in Zoological Pathology, she obtained the Diploma of the American College of Veterinary Pathologists and passed the Royal College of Pathologists diploma examination. She spent four years as pathologist for London Zoo. Having moved to diagnostic pathology, she now works for Finn Pathologists, Norfolk, sharing the zoo and exotic caseload with Chris Knott.

Matt Rendle

Matt has been a Veterinary Nurse since 1989 and has a special interest in all aspects of Veterinary Herpetology. He has worked at ZSL for the past six years and is a guest lecturer on herpetology at the RVC.

Brigitte Reusch

Brigitte graduated with honours from the Royal Veterinary College, London in 2002. After a period as an exotic animal locum and small animal assistant she joined the Royal (Dick) Veterinary School, in Edinburgh as a small animal intern. She was appointed the first RWF Rabbit and Zoo animal resident in the UK in 2004, based at Bristol Zoo and University of Bristol. She ran a Rabbit and Exotic Veterinary Referral service in the South West and returned to Edinburgh R(D)VS in 2008 as a lecturer in Rabbit Medicine and Surgery. She holds a RCVS Certificate in Zoological Medicine and is working towards her Diploma.

Victoria Roberts

Victoria graduated from Liverpool in 2000, with a previous life of over 30 years of breeding and judging exhibition poultry and waterfowl. She has taught poultry and small furbies at Liverpool Vet School for the past 12 years, and is Hon. Vet to The Poultry Club, edits the *British Poultry Standards*, has had published four books on pure breed poultry, including diseases, edits the BVZS publications and small animal locums in her spare time. She is currently Regions Co-ordinator for BSAVA and Junior Vice President of BVZS.

Hannah Rowland

Hannah is a 4th year student at the University of Nottingham School of Veterinary Medicine and Science (being one of the pioneering year) with a special interest in the Zoological field of veterinary medicine. Particular interest include African wildlife, she has spent the last two summers pursuing these interests on game reserves in South Africa. In her university life, Hannah is an active member of both the veterinary society and the University Guild and until recently was captain of the ladies football team. Other hobbies include Irish dancing and singing.

Mark Stidworthy

Mark has run the pathology section of International Zoo Veterinary Group since 2003, providing dedicated full-time anatomic pathology services (*post mortem* examinations and histopathology) for zoo, exotic and wildlife species including fish. Cases derive from collections and aquaria served by IZVG's clinical veterinarians and by referral from specialist practitioners and other pathology laboratories. Mark graduated from Cambridge in 1996 (taking pathology as his intercalated degree);

received pathology residency training and diagnostic experience at Liverpool and Cambridge Veterinary Schools and holds a Cambridge PhD for experimental studies on repair in the central nervous system. He is a Fellow of the Royal College of Pathologists in the specialty of veterinary pathology.

Brian Stockdale

Brian hails from the edge of the North Yorkshire moors and qualified from Edinburgh in 1977. He has spent the last 30 years in private practice, initially in mixed general practice where he gained expertise in bovine embryo transplant work and latterly in a small animal/exotic practice where the majority of his time is now spent with birds. Aviculture features highly in Brian's life, especially breeding passerines, and he is currently Honorary Veterinary adviser to the National Council for Aviculture.

Taina Strike

Whilst studying veterinary medicine in her native South Africa, Tai volunteered at the National Zoo, Pretoria and in various national parks. After 8 years in general practice, she completed her MSc in Wild Animal Health based at the Zoological Society of London (ZSL) London Zoo in 1999. She has worked for ZSL at both London and Whipsnade Zoos as a Veterinary Officer since 2000. Her duties include treating all creatures truly great and very small – from ants to elephants - as well as teaching post graduate veterinary students undertaking the MSc in Wild Animal Health and undergraduate students at the RVC where she is also an honorary lecturer. ZSL's involvement in re-introduction of endangered species to the wild is well known and Tai is particularly proud to be part of the team involved with this work. Her clinical research work ranges from various aspects of wildlife reproduction to dietary modification of cholesterol in captive meerkats; investigating the use of cardiac troponin in zoo species and serological testing for haemochromatosis in Ramphastids. She has presented papers at many national and international conferences. Tai is the TAG veterinarian for ramphastids and hummingbirds. When not at work Tai tends to her zoo at home which includes two children, a husband and numerous pets. She is a keen horse rider and open water swimmer, and is preparing for next year's triathlon season.

Molly Varga

Molly graduated from the Royal Veterinary College in 1992. She got married, emigrated and proceeded to spend the next 4 years working in small animal and exotic medicine in Canada, with her husband Tom. These varied experiences included working in multicentre urban practice in Toronto and a small exotics practice in rural Ontario. Her case load included a lot of native wildlife such as racoons, skunks and red-tailed hawks. After returning to the UK in 1996 she has worked in both London and the North West. Molly gained her Diploma in Zoological Medicine (Mammalian) in 2007 and is currently working on building up a new exotics first opinion and referral centre in East Cheshire.

Sue Walker

Sue is currently based at Chester Zoo and is the acting chair of the EGZAC group. She is originally from Canada where she obtained her BSc and MSc in wildlife animal science. She completed her PhD in the field of stress and its effect on reproduction in dairy cattle here in the UK. She has been working in the field of wildlife endocrinology for over 15 years and has worked for the Toronto Zoo and Smithsonian Institution establishing endocrinology laboratories in several countries around the world.

Neil Watt

Neil qualified from Glasgow in 1977. He was in LA practice and MAFF (SVD etc.) for 2 years then did his PhD on calf respiratory disease, when respiratory syncytial virus was first coming to our notice. He did various post docs on pathology and immunology topics at Glasgow and Edinburgh vet schools and then he became a lecturer in pathology at Edinburgh. He spent time teaching, doing diagnostic pathology and research on Maedi Visna (during which time a very good ELISA was developed) until 1996 when he joined the Home Office. He is now involved in the regulation of animal experiments, with a special interest in biotechnology, genetically altered animals, stem cells and the inevitable management issues. Interests outside work are the 5 'G's - gliding, gardening, golf, gluttony and grog.