

IN

International News

THE RSPCA NEWSLETTER
FOR ANIMAL WELFARE
ORGANISATIONS OVERSEAS

Education, education, education

Since 2004 RSPCA International has run more courses on animal welfare education than on any other subject, in countries as diverse as China, Croatia, Czech Republic, Indonesia, Crete and Taiwan.

This commitment reflects our belief in the importance of the role of educators in developing informed, responsible and active citizens by helping young people build positive attitudes, values and behaviour towards animals and their environments.

Animals are used as a teaching theme throughout the school career of many young people and the Society believes that having an animal welfare policy in place in schools contributes to a culture of kindness in the classroom.

The immediate course aims are to develop an understanding of the concept of animal welfare and to find ways of incorporating animal welfare education into other subjects, such as environmental education, by identifying common issues.

Activities and materials that teachers can use in a fun and creative way are demonstrated, making the course highly practical, and teachers have the opportunity to share resources and

experiences. Finally, the course aims to develop ideas to ensure that schools or centres are animal friendly.

Courses were adapted to take into account local environmental factors, religion, curriculum demands and country-specific cross-curricular concerns, making each one unique. The following profiles showcase just some of the courses run by RSPCA International in 2008.

Animal welfare education, Crete

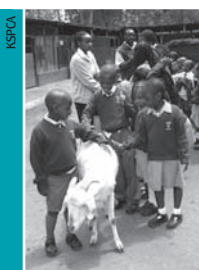
Almost 80 kindergarten and primary school teachers in Heraklion and Rethymno attended two, two-day welfare-education courses last October

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Cretian creations: Animal welfare education course participants in Rethymno making jellyfish out of carrier bags.

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Education, education, education



▲ Creative classrooms: mixing animal welfare and environmental education.

Anna Herrieven, education officer at the RSPCA's animal welfare, training and wildlife rehabilitation centre Mallydams Wood, ran these successful courses.

Most of the teachers felt they already had a fairly good knowledge of animal welfare issues, but wanted ideas on how to communicate these to their students. Anna helped the participants build bug homes, write seashore codes, create trails and make their own jellyfish out of used carrier bags, showing the teachers how to bring animal welfare education into their classrooms and incorporate it into environmental education.

RSPCA International had previously given local group Zoofilai Drasi and the Heraklion Humane Education Centre a grant to produce an animal welfare education kit containing more than 20 different tools for teachers, including games, plays, books and lesson plans. The kit was launched during the Heraklion course and will be sent to all 45 Greek schools to be used as a teaching resource.

The courses were extremely well received; the Heraklion course could have been filled twice over.

Animal welfare education, Indonesia

Educators, animal keepers, campaign officers and members of the charity ProFauna attended a two-day animal welfare education course, led by the RSPCA's Dave Coggan, in Surabaya, Indonesia in August 2008.

The course, run in conjunction with ProFauna Indonesia, combined presentation sessions, group work and activities such as designing nature trails. The 18 delegates were also shown how to design and promote a welfare education programme and how to cater for varied client groups including environmental educators, youth group and religious leaders, teachers, and other ProFauna members. This was particularly valuable – via feedback evaluations, many participants indicated that there was a lack of information on animal welfare, especially in Indonesian, making animal welfare issues hard for people to understand even though they may be aware of the concept. Their rating of their own knowledge of animal welfare before the course was very low but jumped significantly afterwards.

The religious dimension gave delegates the opportunity to explore the links between animal welfare and religion, and to understand how to approach religious leaders about the issue. One outcome was to establish a workshop to discuss how animal welfare and Islamic beliefs work together.

Animal welfare education, China

In partnership with the China National Institute for Educational Research, RSPCA International carried out two animal welfare education training courses in July and December 2008. The courses were part of a long-term project – part of the Institute's Ecological Experience Education programme that explores humankind's moral responsibility to protect the natural environment and promote a harmonious relationship between us and other animals.

In the north-eastern city of Harbin, the RSPCA and education consultancy Humanebeing delivered a two-day animal welfare education course to 50 primary and secondary school teachers. In addition, a two-day materials writing workshop was held, involving 85 teachers. In December, in Haikou in the southernmost part of China, a three-day course was held for 120 teachers and education officials from 15 cities and provinces across China.

The focus of these events was the planning of age-appropriate lessons on animal welfare themes, such as responsible pet ownership, zoos and circuses, endangered species, minibests, litter and pollution, and being a good citizen. The Institute has also appointed a core team of the most experienced teachers to write animal welfare materials for children and guidance for teachers.

The Ecological Experience Education programme has now formally incorporated animal welfare education into its work and plans to make it the theme of the programme's next annual conference.

News from you

Association Profile

This issue, Jean Gilchrist, CEO of the Kenya Society for the Protection and Care of Animals (KSPCA), talks to us about the society's work.

What is the history of your organisation?

The origins of the KSPCA are lost in the mists of time. The first records available to us are from 1925. The Society started, so it is understood, in Mombasa in the early 1900s when some ladies took pity on oxen bringing goods into the town as there were no facilities to feed and water them. In the 1920s, according to minutes of meetings, the Society seemed to put most emphasis on rabies control and spent a lot of time shooting dogs in rural areas. However, over time the emphasis has changed to the protection and care of animals.

➤ School trip: Children on a school visit to the KSPCA.

✓ KSPCA Senior Inspector John Akumonyo visits school children to award the a prize for best essay about animal welfare.

What are the aims of your organisation?

The prevention of cruelty and promotion of kindness to animals.

What are the achievements of the organisation?

Our field inspectors investigate between 80 and 100 reports of cruelty, abandonment of pets or calls for help each month. They also attend to injured

animals involved in road accidents. Both the Nairobi and Mombasa offices have a shelter and run a rehoming service for cats and dogs, and occasionally donkeys and horses. When funds are available we carry out sterilisation and rabies vaccination campaigns for pets belonging to people on lower incomes.

We have a very successful donkey project, which is funded by the Donkey Sanctuary of Sidmouth, in the UK. The donkey teams provide free worming and other treatment throughout the country, wherever there are large numbers of working donkeys. Much emphasis is put on educating the owners and handlers – teaching them how to care for their donkeys and keep them healthy. We are also developing and demonstrating humane harnesses.

In the livestock industry, we have been instrumental in promoting humane slaughter using captive bolt pistols in slaughterhouses countrywide. One of our senior inspectors helps to train slaughterhouse staff on the proper handling and stunning of livestock. He also teaches them how to maintain the pistols.

One of our inspectors spends much of his time visiting schools. We also encourage school visits to our shelter so that pupils can interact with the animals. Increasing numbers of schools are now bringing their pupils to the shelter and we enjoy their visits very much. It is good to see the interest many of these young people take in the animals.

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KSPCA



KSPCA

News from you

What are the future aims and ambitions of your organisation?

Kenya is a big country and one of our regrets is that we cannot have more branches countrywide. Apart from the head office in Nairobi we have only one branch in Mombasa, with our staff visiting distant areas from time to time. Our ambitions are increase our field staff and create more awareness of the importance of animal welfare and the responsibility that keeping animals involves. We would like to expand our animal rescue and treatment work and to spend more time working with the livestock industry. It would be wonderful to have branches run by KSPCA-trained personnel throughout the country.

➤ From left to right: KSPCA Inspector Fred Midikila, groom Ndvati and Senior Inspector Ben Atsiaya.

Giving our all— a New Year's story

As Kenyans celebrated the New Year, our inspector-on-duty, Fred Midikila, was awakened at 3am by the phone ringing. Three horses were running up and down the road near KSPCA's office, and a car weaving its way home after a good party had almost hit them. Fred called Senior Inspector Ben Atsiaya and together with the watchman they went to catch the horses. Twice the horses ran into people's



compounds, risking being mistaken for robbers and shot. On the road, Fred and Ben had to deal with fast-moving post-party traffic until finally after an hour-and-a-half they managed to herd the horses safely into KSPCA's grounds. They stayed there until we had wormed them, attended to their feet, and negotiated their future with their owner.

News from the EU

Ban on the trade in cat and dog fur

An EU-wide ban on the trade in cat and dog fur has been approved by European governments after a seven-year campaign. There are two very limited exceptions, for taxidermy and specific educational purposes, however, a full commercial ban is now in place.

The new law, which came into effect on 31 December 2008, prevents the production, marketing, import and export of feline and canine fur.

The RSPCA has been appalled to see the reappearance of fur as a fashion item over the last few years, with countries such as China producing goods made out of dog and cat fur. Shoppers often buy these goods unknowingly because exporters attach false labels or shoppers are not aware that it can be used to make stuffed toys or is even used within homeopathic aids for arthritis.

The RSPCA began a campaign against this growing trade back in 2000 when it was estimated that up to two million cats and dogs were being slaughtered in China every year to provide fur to be sold in stores in Britain and other EU countries.



It was often mislabelled as rabbit pelt or just given the generic title 'fur'.

The ban will encourage the sharing of information within the EU on how to detect cat and dog fur. The obligation on member states to carry out checks and test for cat and dog fur will provide a clearer picture of which products are made from it and where it comes from, making undetected importation far more difficult.

News from the UK



ANDREW FORSYTH/RSPCA PHOTOLIBRARY

New survey on animal welfare education

A new survey showing that nearly three-quarters of adults were not taught about animal welfare in the classroom has prompted the RSPCA to call on schools to become more animal friendly.

The results show that 73 per cent of British adults did not learn about animal welfare when they were at school, although 90 per cent still believe it is important to learn about this topic in the classroom.

Twenty-six per cent of schools revealed they still keep one or more animals, with fish being the most popular. Other animals kept at schools include a hermit crab, African land snails and a horse.

The RSPCA believes that children and young people can be taught about animals without keeping pets in the classroom, which can be noisy, frightening places for animals. Alternatives to using real animals in the classroom include having soft toys, encouraging role play and drama activities, using printed and audio material, and observing animals' behaviour in their natural habitat.

New education resources for schools

In a separate development, secondary school children in the UK will now be able to debate the use of animals in

circuses and consider the role of responsible pet ownership in society, as part of a new package of resources launched by the RSPCA. The resources are related to the introduction of the Animal Welfare Act 2006 and are linked to the national curriculum's citizenship programme in England.

Children are taught about animals' needs and the fact that all citizens have a legal duty to abide by laws, including those that protect animals, by creating their own teachers notes on animal welfare charters. Teachers' notes on *Campaigning for change* allow students to plan and carry out a campaign on an animal welfare issue, while *Circus animals – a debate* not only encourages pupils to take part in a discussion about the use of animals in circuses but also gets them thinking about the social, moral and political aspects of this issue.

Pupils will have the chance to actively explore the role played by agencies such as the RSPCA in encouraging people to become responsible pet owners. *Pets and the law – role play* focuses on the welfare issues of keeping non-domesticated exotic animals as pets.

Chris Holmes, the RSPCA's national education manager, said: "These resources provide schools with an excellent opportunity to consider the implications that animal welfare issues have for individuals, the communities within which they live, and for society as a whole."

Lesson resources are available to download from the RSPCA website: www.rspca.org.uk/education. Teachers can also find resources on topics such as farm animals, habitats and minibeasts.

Training RSPCA Mallydams Wood

Mallydams Wood Education and Wildlife Centre lies just outside Hastings in an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty on the south-east coast of England. Its location in a 55-acre wood, rich in wildlife, is ideal for an RSPCA education centre and wildlife unit. Mallydams takes in about 2,500 animals each year and each species

in the local environment. The emphasis at Mallydams is to have a go – to look, touch and experience – with children even recycling all their waste packaging and composting their food waste.

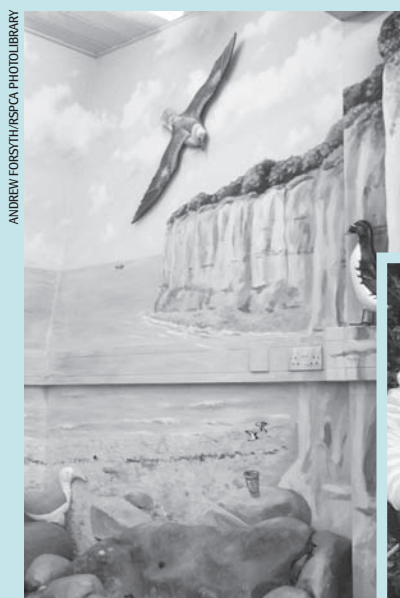
The discovery room is designed and hand-painted to represent local habitats with their associated animals. Different scenarios are depicted to spark discussion, such as litter washed up on a beach and fishing line floating in a lake. Outdoors, children become real-life nature detectives looking for signs of animals such as paw prints in the mud or a feather.

Mallydams Wood works with the Youth Development Service to provide monthly sessions for disadvantaged young people, focusing on outdoor exploration, survival skills, understanding animal needs and developing environmental awareness. The Wildlife Trusts' Forest Schools bring young people into the woodland environment to learn natural skills such as green woodworking and bushcraft.

Both schemes help build self-esteem, confidence, independence and social skills as well as forging links between ourselves, the natural environment, and our impact upon it. The Youth

Development Service started working with Mallydams in 2007 and has decided to continue the project until the end of 2009, suggesting that contact with nature is having a positive influence on the teenagers that visit the centre. Mallydams hosts numerous training courses for RSPCA inspectors, where they learn about the huge variety of wildlife they are likely to encounter, how to recognise, handle and transport animals, animal rehabilitation, and the legal issues involved.

The large amount of specialist knowledge accumulated by the RSPCA's wildlife officers attracts a variety of international visitors. In 2008 a researcher from the Dormouse Museum in Japan returned for a second year to record the vocalisation of dormice in Mallydams Wood and to observe their night-time behaviour.



▲ Wild room: Mallydams has a great education room.

has a specialist rehabilitation programme that is constantly being researched and refined. In 2008, the education centre had 6,251 visitors and ran just under 300 education courses were run. Over 2,300 of its visitors were aged between five and 11 years.

Many primary schools visit Mallydams Wood and take part in activities directly linked to the national curriculum by learning about life cycles, habitats, animal adaptation, and plants and animals



▲ Survival skills: groups of youngsters visit Mallydams to learn a variety of skills.

There are holes belonging to mice, shrews, bees, ants, badgers and birds. Animal fur, droppings and even animal highways can be found throughout the woods. Trails through the woodland habitat give a feeling of exploration and a sense of ownership over learning.

A Lithuanian vet spent four weeks in the wildlife rehabilitation unit and a representative from the Ostend seabird rehabilitation centre came to discuss the hosting of a combined Anglo-Belgian training course at Mallydams, with the hope of developing a joined-up European approach to the rehabilitation of seabirds. Mallydams wildlife officer Richard Thompson recently visited Finland to share his extensive knowledge on the specialist treatment and rehabilitation of oiled birds.

Mallydams Wood is a hive of activity and seeks to prevent harm caused to wild animals through the provision of knowledge, developing understanding, and fostering a positive attitude towards wild animals and the environment they live in.

Anna Herrieven has been the education officer at Mallydams Wood since 2007. She has also worked with RSPCA International, delivering courses on animal welfare education in Crete in 2008 (see front page story).



ANDREW FORSYTH/RSPCA PHOTO LIBRARY

▲ Working centre: Mallydams is also a very important wildlife rescue and rehabilitation centre.

SPAN A



▲ Pupils taking part in an animal welfare class at Akaki school, Ethiopia.

Special education feature

Setting up an education project

Diana Hulme has worked for the Society for the Protection of Animals Abroad (SPAN A) for nearly 20 years and is now education director. Here she talks to *International News* about SPANA's current education project in Ethiopia, run with support from the RSPCA.

Tell us a little bit about SPANA.

Education has been an integral part of SPANA's work since the time it was founded in the 1920s. Working in North Africa, SPANA's founders Kate and Nina Hosali laid the foundations of SPANA's approach to education. They taught owners about their animals' basic needs and care and educated children about animal welfare, with the aim of developing positive attitudes in the minds of the next generation.

Over the past 20 years SPANA has expanded its work into West Africa, East Africa, the Middle East and north-west China, with education at the heart of every new project.

How did the project in Ethiopia and your cooperation with the RSPCA come about?

In 2003 as a new project began in Ethiopia, SPANA's education committee decided to carry out an impact assessment to consider the long-term effectiveness of its education programme. Six teachers from three schools were nominated for the project, then three classrooms had to be built as the schools are so overcrowded, often with 90 children in a class. Financially, this proved to be quite a strain, with insufficient money left over to furnish and equip the classrooms.

One of SPANA's education committee suggested RSPCA International as a possible source of funding, and luckily our application was successful.

What does the project involve?

It is an educational project with school children, comprising a series of lessons. Ten lessons with accompanying activities were written, translated, and then adjusted to two different age levels – for children aged eight to nine and those aged 12 to 13. Six teachers were trained and lessons began in September 2008; 600 children will take part each year, 300 at any one time. The children will be invited to become members of SPANA's Animal Club, which, once it has the seal of approval from the authorities, will eventually expand into other schools.

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Special feature

What are the benefits of working with another organisation on this kind of project?

In the UK, SPANA is a relatively small organisation. It is our policy to work with minimal staff so most of our funds can go overseas. For this reason, I work mainly on my own, often isolated from others in the same field of work. It has therefore been extremely useful to take Coralie Farren, the RSPCA's international aid officer and a knowledgeable outsider, to see our work in Ethiopia, to listen to her opinions and receive her encouragement.

What outcomes are you hoping for?

The most obvious intended outcome rests with the hope that the children will know more about the animals they deal with, will treat them with respect, and are motivated to give them the care they need. In the long-term we hope the children will influence their parents, and as SPANA becomes better known in the community we will also influence

other animal owners. Once the series of lessons has been completed successfully, we will invite a representative from the Ministry of Education to see our work in the hope that some of the concepts might one day be included in the national curriculum.

Have you faced any particular challenges with this project?

Daily communication has been easy thanks to e-mails and the fact that most of the people we work with speak good English. However, I have found it very difficult to send out some of the larger items of classroom equipment, such as electrical goods and books. Even CDs cause problems with customs so photos and illustrations have had to be carried out by hand. This has slowed the production of the lessons quite considerably.

We then had to deal with a few delays owing to one of the classrooms being constructed the wrong way round and a termite infestation in the walls of another. Ultimately, however, the standard of work has been high and all three schools have buildings of which they can be proud.

◀ Pupils at Akaki School, Ethiopia, taking part in an animal welfare class.



▲ Teachers taking part in a training session on pond dipping at Debre Breton school outside the new animal welfare centre.

What advice would you give an organisation thinking of setting up its own education programme?

Good and thorough planning before the project begins is absolutely essential, and with a very clear time-line. Then stick to it! Should delays occur, for example to a building, avoid the temptation to forge ahead to the next part of the project or the whole plan becomes a muddle.

How the project will be monitored and evaluated is also extremely important, and should be included in the planning process from the start.

And above all, it's important to gain the respect of the authorities because without their cooperation nothing can be done. If possible, include them at the planning stage and invite them to any seminars or conferences that take place. Always send them examples of materials that are produced and ask them for their advice as it helps to flatter them!



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