

# EVPC Newsletter

## March 2008

European Veterinary Parasitology College



Supplement 1:  
Refugia for  
residents

Supplement 2:  
September EVPC  
meeting in Bristol

EVPC

### Number ten

# Contents page

<i>Feature</i>	<i>Page</i>
Presidents Editorial	3
EVPC Board meets again in Vienna	4
Gearing up for EVPC exam	5
Guidelines for non-EU veterinarians considering EVPC membership	5
Reaccreditation of EVPC members is getting closer	6
Veterinary Parasitology	6
Sabbatical story: Parasites with Altitude	7
In Memoriam: Peter Waller	8
Supplement 1: Refugia for residents including notices for residents	
Supplement 2: EVPC meeting Bristol 2008	

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# EVPC President's Editorial

## Congratulations to Johannes Charlier and Thomas Geurden!

The first examination of the European Veterinary Parasitology College for potential Diplomates, held in Liege on November 31<sup>st</sup> / December 1<sup>st</sup>, 2007, was successfully completed by Drs. Johannes Charlier and Thomas Geurden.

Drs. Charlier and Geurden had both carried out alternative resident training programmes



at the

University of Gent, under the guidance of EVPC Diplomate Jozef Vercruyse. Both candidates passed each part of the examination (general, clinical and diagnostic parasitology) with excellent results, demonstrating a high level of expertise and knowledge of Veterinary Parasitology. These new EVPC members are the first to receive EVPC Diplomate status through formal examination, and the success of these residents is yet another step toward our goal of training and certifying European specialists in Veterinary Parasitology and of achieving definitive recognition by the EBVS. The 2-day examination was conducted by myself, together with

Bertrand Losson and John Gilleard of the Examination Committee (whom I thank once again for their hard work). Dennis Jacobs acted as observer and kept everyone on track. As always, "thank you Dennis!"

Please take the opportunity to congratulate these young professionals who have, in distinguishing themselves, also distinguished their University and our College.

Claudio Genchi, EVPC President

EVPC website: [www.eurovetpar.org](http://www.eurovetpar.org)

## THE EVPC BOARD MEETS AGAIN IN VIENNA



The EVPC Board, including President Claudio Genchi, Past-president Philippe Dorchies, Secretary Dennis Jacobs and members Laura Kramer, Maggie Fisher and Anja Joachim, held its interim meeting in Vienna on January 19<sup>th</sup>. Key committee members Bertrand Losson, John Gilleard, Stig Thamsborg and Kurt Pfister also participated by invitation. The meeting began with an in-depth look at how the 2007 EVPC Diploma Examination had been conducted and how to assure the same high standards for the 2008 examination. Bertrand Losson, Examination Committee Chairperson, commented on the need for more diagnostic material for this year's exam (see appeal in this issue). The existence of Standard Residency Training Programmes is a prerequisite for definitive EBVS recognition. Stig Thamsborg, Education Committee Chairperson, lead a discussion on draft guidelines to assist EVPC diplomates wishing to start up residency programmes. These should be available soon on the EVPC website. Kurt Pfister, Credentials Committee Chairperson, discussed the procedure for re-accreditation (to be applied to over 100 members this year; see this issue) and stressed the importance, among other requisites, of attendance at EVPC meetings and participation in College activities. Other agenda items included new guidelines for the evaluation of applications from non-EU vets interested in sitting the EVPC Examination (see below), the 2008 EVPC meeting in Bristol (see this issue) and the venue for the 2009 EVPC meeting (Munich).

Board member Anja Joachim (left) hosted the meeting, for the second time, with her exceptional hospitality and we thank her again for a great day (and evening) in Vienna.



# GEARING UP FOR EVPC EXAMINATION



At the EVPC board meeting in Vienna this January, it was decided that the next EVPC Examination for potential diplomats will be held at the end of November, 2008 (the definitive date and location will be announced in June)\*.

In preparation for last year's examination, many EVPC members gave generously of their time by formulating and submitting MCQs, essay and short-answer questions. These were referenced, cross-checked, validated and archived. The Examination Committee has indicated, however, that there is still plenty of time to submit questions for the 2008 examination\*\*. **In particular, there is an urgent need for clinical scenarios and diagnostic material (blood smears, full mounts, histopathology, etc.).** Those members interested in submitting this material for the 2008 exam are invited to contact Bertrand Losson at [blosson@ulg.ac.be](mailto:blosson@ulg.ac.be).

**Remember: submission of material for the EVPC examination is worth points towards re-accreditation!**

\*Potential candidates are invited to visit the EVPC website and to read carefully the "Guidelines for potential candidates" ([www.eurovetpar.org](http://www.eurovetpar.org)>Membership by examination>Guidelines for potential candidates). Deadline for application to sit the exam is set at March 30th, 2008.

\*\*For instructions on how to formulate questions, please go to the EVPC website ([www.eurovetpar.org](http://www.eurovetpar.org) > Member's section > Guidelines for question-writers for the EVPC exam).

## Guidelines for non-EU veterinarians considering EVPC membership

The EVPC Board has clarified its policy on this issue:

Entitlement to sit the EVPC diploma examination is normally restricted to veterinarians licensed to practice in the European Union. In exceptional circumstances, the requirement to be licensed to practise in the EU can be waived at the discretion of the EVPC Board provided all other EVPC and EBVS requirements are fulfilled. Such exemption will be made only if the applicant has made a significant contribution to furthering the aims of the EVPC or has been resident in Europe for a minimum of three years at the time of sitting the examination. The decision of the EVPC Board is final. The EVPC diploma does not entitle the holder to practise veterinary medicine in Europe.

# REACCREDITATION OF EVPC MEMBERS IS GETTING CLOSER

Over 100 diplomates become due for reaccreditation in September,  
2008

According to the EVPC Constitution (Article 4.7), EVPC diplomates are required to send to the Credentials Committee each 5 years a summary of their professional activities in which evidence of continued activity within the field of Veterinary Parasitology is demonstrated. The Credentials Committee will then evaluate the achievements in terms of credit points. Accordingly, the number of credit points, together with other requirements (required attendance at EVPC-meetings and 60% of working time in the speciality) which will have to be fulfilled, shall determine the further status of the given diplomate. Publications, teaching activity, attendance at national and international scientific meetings and **CONTRIBUTIONS TO COLLEGE ACTIVITIES** are some of the criteria that will be used for evaluation.

In the next issue of the EVPC Newsletter, Kurt Pfister, Credentials Committee Chairperson, will outline in detail the points system and the procedure for submitting your self-assessment form.

In the meantime, any inquiries should be sent to [Kurt.Pfister@tropa.vetmed.uni-muenchen.de](mailto:Kurt.Pfister@tropa.vetmed.uni-muenchen.de)

## Veterinary Parasitology



Official  
journal  
of the  
EVPC

## New Feature!

# SABBATICAL STORIES

EVPC members are invited to share experiences gained while on sabbatical leave.

Contributions please to [laurahelen.kramer@unipr.it](mailto:laurahelen.kramer@unipr.it).

In the first of this series, Luca Rossi describes his project in Nepal.



### Parasites with altitude

I guess that several amongst the older EVPC members in academia have experienced that sense of void and frustration generated by the age-dependent increasing load of bureaucratic or simply public duty. If you feel the same, believe me, a sabbatical period can be a good therapy! On approaching my fifties, I told myself I had had enough of all that and started looking around for a break opportunity. Ideal parameters for election of the site were much wilderness, cold weather, no roads, no mobiles, no/few computers and the freedom to roam. The chosen compromise was the Sagarmatha (Everest) National Park, Nepal, to join a research wildlife conservation project supported by CNR, the Italian National Research Council. Within the framework of a long-term study started in 1992, the project leader (Prof. Sandro Lovari, University of Siena) had observed a demographic decline of the native Himalayan thar (*Hemitragus jemlahicus*), which is on the IUCN list of threatened species, and, in particular, a dramatic drop in survival of its kids. Several causes were considered ranging from the most

## SABBATICAL STORIES continued

apparent, namely the spontaneous return of a dangerous predator - the snow leopard, *Uncia uncia* - following decades of absence, to hypothetical depression of birth and survival rates due to pathogens. In 2005, collaborators of mine had already captured, ear-tagged and blood-sampled more than 30 adult thar. My task was to contribute to the sanitary part of the study by exploring the wildlife/livestock interface in more detail. In brief, I've been registering the winter range use of thars, yaks and zopkyos (the local name of yak x cattle hybrids, currently on the increase as load animals for trekkers) close to the village of Namche Bazaar, at 3,500 m on the track to Mount Everest, and the frequency, length and distance of their encounters, three obvious risk factors for exchange of a wide range of fitness and reproduction-impacting pathogens of infectious and parasitic nature. Later on, as soon as the weather became milder and I felt better integrated with the Sherpa community, I extended the ethological observations to the whole thar distribution area in the Khumbu valley up to remote huts as high as 5,000 m. During these short "treks", I also blood-sampled livestock (just in case, never take blood from below the tail in these agile animals!), analysed faeces, collected ectoparasites (but surprisingly no warble) and dragged for ticks (incredibly abundant in xeric spots up to 4,000 m, just after the snow melted and the frost started giving up). No veterinarian operates in the Khumbu (most people there don't even know what a vet is) but I was pleased to share these experiences with local friends and the usual "cloud" of smiling (sometimes astonished) Sherpa children. Finally two special encounters are worth mentioning: the rare snow leopard, which I was lucky enough to photograph on the way to Cho Oyu while it was scavenging a yak calf predated the night before; and maybe even more unexpected, our Secretary and friend Dennis Jacobs, who I "surprised" in a lodge while on his way to Everest Base Camp. How small is the world! I really look forward to sharing the results of this experience in future scientific meetings.

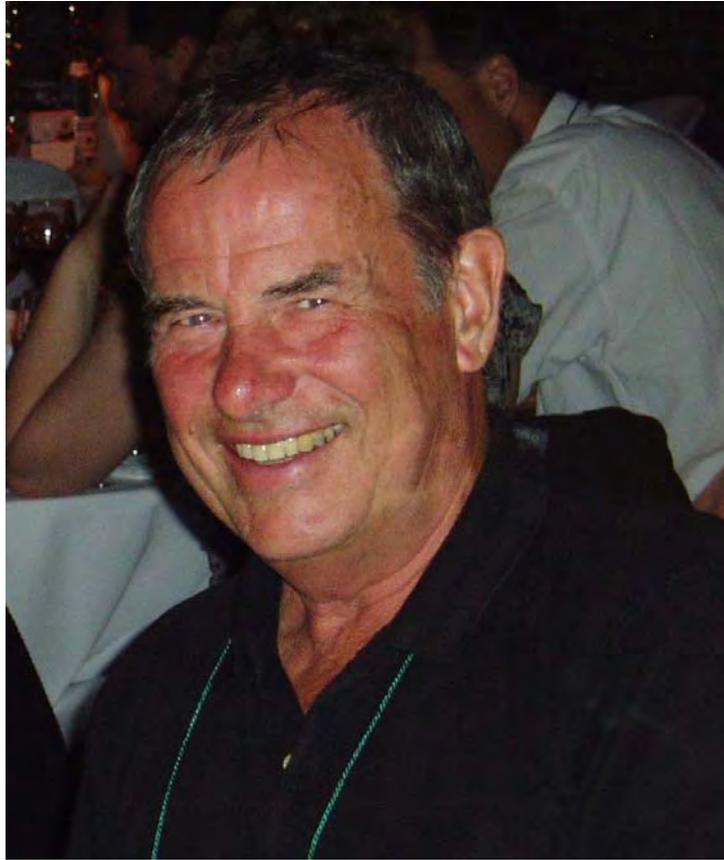
Luca Rossi

## *In memoriam: Peter Waller*

It is with great sadness that we report the death earlier this month of Peter Waller. Peter was a distinguished EVPC diplomate and a former WAAVP Vice-president. In 2003, he received the prestigious WAAVP Award for Excellence in Research recognising almost four decades of outstanding service to Veterinary Parasitology. He will perhaps be particularly remembered for his seminal work on anthelmintic resistance and his more recent investigations into sustainable parasite control in diverse animal management systems ranging from Scandinavia to the tropics. He was an impressive communicator, frequently used as a key speaker at international and local meetings to disseminate his knowledge and experience to veterinarians, livestock advisors, pharmaceutical colleagues and farmers, as well as advising international bodies such as FAO, ILRI, DFID, SIDA and ACIAR. Peter's easy-going good-humoured hard-working enthusiasm was infectious and he was always keen to promote and support the careers of young scientists.

Continued on page 9

## *In memoriam: Peter Waller continued*



Peter was born in Australia in 1942 and graduated with an MVSc from the University of Sydney. He did his PhD with Bob Thomas at the University of Newcastle upon Tyne, UK, providing important new insights into the epidemiology of sheep nematodes. He returned to Australia rising, in 1986, to Officer-in-Charge of the McMaster laboratory. However, he left the administrative track for research moving to the Pastoral Research Laboratory, Armidale. In 1990 he worked in close collaboration with the late Professor Peter Nansen as guest professor in Copenhagen. In 1995, he married his wife Karin, who was then working as a postdoctoral fellow in Armidale, and two years later they moved to Sweden to work at the National Veterinary Institute, Uppsala.

Peter made truly enormous advances to Veterinary Parasitology, not only as a researcher but by formulating sound practical advice appropriate to all levels of society from the poorest subsistence farmer to multinational companies. His sociable personality won him many close friendships and he had a large network of colleagues throughout the world. He will be greatly missed.