



# BWDS NEWSLETTER

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*Website : <http://wildlife.var.fgov.be>*

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1. Meeting Report General Assembly 19 September 2008
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## VERSLAG / COMPTE RENDU **BWDS** VERGADERING/ RÉUNION 19 -12 - 2009

### *Aanwezig / Présents :*

Paul Heyman<sup>3</sup>, Pol Simons<sup>3</sup>, Marc Dispas<sup>1</sup>, Marc Govaerts<sup>1</sup>, Pascale Piro<sup>4</sup>, Pierre Wattiau<sup>1</sup>, Alexandre Dobby<sup>1</sup>, Stefan Roels<sup>1</sup>, Paul Tavernier<sup>1,2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> CODA / CERVA; <sup>2</sup> UGent; <sup>3</sup> RLVBD / Defensie; <sup>4</sup> ULiège

### *Verontschuldigd / Excusés :*

Leen Claes, Martine Vandenbroeck, Victor Luyasu, Jean De Borchgraeve, Jan Stuyck, Kristof Baert, Jim Casaer, Muriel Vervaeke, Koen Chiers, Claerebout Edwin, Deconinck Wouter, Bertrand Losson, Van Gucht Steven, Koen Van Den Berge, Marina Defillette, Benteyn Norbert, Daisy Van Rompaey.

### 1. Presentaties/ Presentations:

Er werden twee presentaties gegeven:

- (1) Korte update over het project Wildsurv (Paul Tavernier)
- (2) Anaplasmosis (Paul Heyman)

Deux présentations ont été donnés:

- (1) Court update du projet Wildsurv (Paul Tavernier)
- (2) Anaplasmosis (Paul Heyman)

### 2. Administratief gedeelte / Partie administrative

Voorbereiding/ Préparation BWDS Symposium 2009.

Het administratief gedeelte is dimaal zeer beperkt gebleven. De voorbereidingen voor het 3<sup>de</sup> BWDS Symposium gebeuren in « petit comité ». Iedereen die hierbij wil meehelpen is uiteraard welkom.

La partie administrative est resté tres limité. Un «petit comité » s'occupe des préparations du 3<sup>ième</sup> Symposium de la BWDS Il est évident que tout membre désirant nous aider est le bienvenu.

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## 2. Abstracts presentations 19 September 2008

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### **1) Update Wildsurv: Improvement of the organisation of wildlife disease surveillance in Belgium: The wildsurv project (P.Tavernier)**

In Belgium, like in other countries, surveillance in domestic animals used to be limited to agents with a known economic or zoonotic impact while pathogen surveillance in wildlife was little intensive to non-existent until recently. The scattering of expertise in wildlife disease surveillance among different institutes hampered the set-up of integrated surveillance schemes as well as the cooperation among private (nature and hunter associations) and public instances (regional nature and forest departments). The exception is the regional government funded “surveillance network of wildlife diseases” operating since 2001 in Wallonia.

Growing international awareness of wild living animals being a possible source of emerging diseases with zoonotic, veterinary and conservational impact boosted the interest in the study of pathogenic agents in wildlife. With the aim of improving the organisation of wildlife disease surveillance in Belgium, a federal government funded two-year project “WILDSURV” was started in March 2007. The main objective of this pilot-project is to suggest, specifically for Belgium, a basic structure for wildlife disease surveillance, suited to sustain a more complete integrated network in the future. Ideally this basic structure should permit to implement the first steps of a risk analysis, being “hazard identification” and “release assessment” as defined by the OIE, for a range of prioritized pathogenic agents.

First, a broad literature study will identify the relevant pathogenic agents and animal species for the Belgian context. Next, through an inquiry, the necessary resources for a surveillance network will be inventorised, including organisations and institutes competent in sampling, sample transport, and diagnostic procedures. This step will afford a view on the existing surveillance schemes and detect the most important gaps in wildlife diseases surveillance in Belgium.

A prioritization of surveillance themes will be based on a choice of simple qualitative criteria referring to interfaces between pathogenic agents and sensitive species, known disease occurrences, known trends in disease occurrences, and available resources. These qualitative criteria will be integrated in “WILDTOOL”, a new database that is meant to manage the abundance of information in order to determine surveillance priorities. Taking into account the thus determined priorities, a basic surveillance network will be set up for a limited number of selected topics. Ultimately the usefulness of this network will be tested and evaluated.

WILDSURV should be considered as an exploratory and early architectural stage of a wildlife disease surveillance structure for federal and regional Belgium and, depending on policy decisions, as a base for further project proposals on specific topics.

### **2) Anaplasmosis (P. Heyman)**

Human granulocytic anaplasmosis (HGA) is a tick-borne rickettsial infection of neutrophils caused by *Anaplasma phagocytophilum*. Although the pathogen was known as a veterinary agent as early as 1932, the link with human disease was first established in 1990. In the past decennium, the involvement of HGA as an important and frequent cause of fever with a history of tick bite was increasingly recognized in many regions of the United States and many parts of Europe. A seven-year sero-surveillance (2000-2006) wherein 765 serum samples of 441 patients were tested and confirmation for HGA was obtained for 59 patients, suggests that Belgium is a hot-spot for HGA infection. Moreover, preliminary PCR results on tick DNA suggest a 5-10% prevalence of the pathogen in Belgian ticks.

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### 3. Announcements:

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#### 3.1. Dutch Society for Wildlife Health, 6<sup>th</sup> Conference



**6<sup>th</sup> Conference of the  
Dutch Society for Wildlife Health**  
Lelystad, The Netherlands  
Friday, May 8, 2009



### Tuberculosis and Wildlife

- 13.00 - 13.30** Registration and Coffee
- 13.30 - 14.10** **Tuberculosis - Human and Zoonotic Aspects**  
Dick van Soelingen, RIVM, Bilthoven, NL
- 14.10 - 15.10** **Tuberculosis in Badgers and Cattle:  
Managing Disease at the Wildlife-livestock Interface**  
Richard Delahay, Wildlife Disease Ecology Team, Central Science  
Laboratory, Nymfield, UK
- 15.10 - 15.40** Coffee break
- 15.40 - 16.20** **Approaches for Diagnosis of *M.bovis*/*M.tuberculosis* Infection in  
Wildlife in View of Disease Progression**  
Victor Rutten, Department of Infectious Diseases and Immunology,  
FVM, Utrecht, NL
- 16.20 - 17.00** **Development of New Tuberculosis Vaccines**  
Jelle Thole, TB Vaccine Initiative, Lelystad, NL

**Localisation:** Auditorium CVI, Lelystad, Edelhertweg 15, Lelystad

**Registration fees:**

Students: € 10.00 (includes membership)

Members: € 25.00 (includes membership)

Non-members: € 50.00

**Registration:**

Secretariaat DSHW: Wim.vanderPoel@wur.nl

Only valid after payment to: Vereniging Gezondheid en Welzijn

Wilde Fauna, Girorekening 9232805, Middenmolenlaan 149, 2807

EV Gouda, The Netherlands

Fees include coffee and drinks (17.00-18.00h)

**Dutch Society for Wildlife Health (DSHW): <http://www.dutchwildlife.nl>**

### 3.2. 15<sup>th</sup> VLA Conference 2009, United Kingdom

## VLA Annual Conference – Animal Diseases 2009 Royal Holloway College, University of London, Surrey, United Kingdom 2 - 4 September 2009

#### Details

I am pleased to announce the forthcoming VLA Conference 2009, providing a unique opportunity for workers in the veterinary field to interact and discuss areas of mutual interest. The format will be a three day congress with a number of substantial symposia complemented with smaller dedicated sessions and workshops. Topics will include: Wildlife infections : a reservoir (co-organised with the Central Science Laboratory) Towards TB vaccines (co-organised with the Centre for Environment, Fisheries and Aquaculture Science) Assessing stress Near pen/target testing Improving capability in less developed countries Exotics (co-organised with the Institute for Animal Health) Communicating with the public The conference will also host the inaugural Rooker Lecture. This prize will be awarded for outstanding contribution to veterinary science. Registrants will have the opportunity to submit titles for oral and poster presentations and participate in question & answer sessions with leading scientific and veterinary experts.

#### Contact

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Email events@vla.defra.gsi.gov.uk

Website [http://www.defra.gov.uk/vla/news/new\\_conf\\_vla2009.htm](http://www.defra.gov.uk/vla/news/new_conf_vla2009.htm)

**15th VLA Conference 2009**

Royal Holloway College,  
University of London, UK

2-4 September 2009





<p>The conference is organised as a series of symposia complemented with some smaller dedicated sessions and workshops.</p>	<p>Topics will include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Wildlife infections – a reservoir</li> <li>● Towards TB vaccines</li> <li>● Assessing stress</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Exotics</li> <li>● Near pen/target testing</li> <li>● Improving capability in less developed countries</li> <li>● Communicating with the public</li> </ul>
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A number of these symposia will be organised jointly with the Institute for Animal Health, the Central Science Laboratory and the Centre for Environment, Fisheries and Aquaculture Science.

The conference will also host the inaugural **ROOKER LECTURE**  
This prize will be awarded for outstanding contribution to veterinary science.

### 3.3. Ninth EWDA Conference, September 2010

#### **Preliminary announcement for the ninth EWDA conference**

##### **On the Dutch island of Vlieland:**

##### **‘The interface between wildlife diseases and public health’**

The next EWDA conference will be held from 6 to 10 September 2010 on the island of Vlieland, The Netherlands. Vlieland is a sparsely populated island of 12 x 2 km that lies between the North Sea and the Wadden Sea. The Wadden Sea is famous for its rich flora and fauna, and is a major stopover location for migrating waterbirds. Its landscape is made up of dunes, salt meadows, mud flats, beaches, polders and forests. Cars are forbidden except for the islanders, but the island is best explored by bicycle anyway.

Zoonotic wildlife diseases threaten not only wild animals, but through these also domesticated animals and humans. Emerging infectious diseases are known to arise for 75% from the animal reservoir, in which wildlife plays an important role. The conference central theme, ‘The interface between wildlife diseases and public health’, bridges animal and human health, and will therefore be of great interest for people from many different disciplines, ranging from both public health professionals and wildlife diseases specialists, to ecologists, biologists, epidemiologists et cetera.

The scientific committee is currently working on a programme that will cover different aspects of wildlife zoonotic diseases. Topics that will be addressed include the different pathogens (and their vectors) of present and future interest for wildlife, domestic animals and humans, and also related topics such as climate change and its impact on the ecology of certain species, human behaviour and altered risk for contact with reservoir/vector species, the impact of import of exotic species and migration of wildlife species.

Next to plenary sessions, different workshops will be organised. And of course, ample time for meeting friends and colleagues is scheduled, be it during the breaks or during excursions. Vlieland is the right place to get a breath of really fresh air. After this conference, your heart will be free of troubles while your head will surely be full of interesting new scientific knowledge.

Please, note this date in your agenda and watch the EWDA website, further information and the possibility to register and send your abstracts will follow soon!

For touristic information you can look at:

[www.waddenzee.nl](http://www.waddenzee.nl) or [www.vlieland.nl](http://www.vlieland.nl) , push the button for English text.

#### **Opportunity for workshops at EWDA 2010**

The next EWDA conference will be held from 6 to 10 September 2010 on the island of Vlieland, The Netherlands. We have left Monday 6 September free for people who would like to organize workshops in conjunction with the EWDA conference. At the conference hotel, Hotel Seeduyn, which is perched on the dunes overlooking the North Sea, we have reserved six rooms with a capacity ranging from 30 to 112 people. People who are interested in organizing a workshop should apply to Thijs Kuiken ([t.kuiken@erasmusmc.nl](mailto:t.kuiken@erasmusmc.nl)).