

HUMANE SOCIETY INTERNATIONAL™



Volume 12 • March 2006 • Issue 1

Ending the Dancing Bears' Misery

Thank you to all our members who generously donated to our appeal to help rescue the 'Dancing Bears' in India. Late last year Verna Simpson travelled to the bear sanctuary in Agra to see the project first hand.

Following is an account of her trip:

I cannot overstate how impressed I was. When you witness the bears that are still performing on the streets and compare it to the lives they are living in the Agra sanctuary, the contrast is almost overwhelming.

The rescue facility is designed to provide a natural environment for the rescued bears, with large free ranging areas, dens, water bodies and trees to climb. After clearing through quarantine and medical and dental procedures they can choose to be as free as they like within the large sanctuary, or if still too traumatised they can choose the protection and safety of the dens until they gain the confidence to move into the free range areas.

The pain and suffering they have endured

for years is replaced with love and care and a level of freedom that many sanctuaries cannot provide.

The holistic approach Wildlife SOS has taken ensures that not only will they alleviate the suffering of the bears on the streets, they will also stop the cycle of abuse and the continuance of this barbaric practice.

When they confiscate a bear they undertake to train the owner into a new career, of their own choosing. This results in an end to the cycle of poaching cubs from the wild ensuring that the horror of dancing bears will be a thing of the past. They also run very effective programs to preserve sloth bear habitat and conduct regular, successful anti-poaching patrols and raids.



A bear still performing on the streets of India. Image courtesy of Wildlife SOS

The first bear rescued by Wildlife SOS, 'Rani', came to the facility on 25th December, 2001. Now over 180 bears have been rescued and are enjoying their newfound freedom at the Agra Bear Rescue Facility.

In 10 days before Christmas they took on 31 new bears and have now had to establish a second sanctuary to cope with the growing numbers!

There are only around 600 bears still 'dancing' in India today so it is more than conceivable that we can stop this misery by the end of the decade. If funds were unlimited we could stop it by the end of the year.

We have added a facility on our web site for donations to be directed specifically to the bears (100% of this money will go to Wildlife SOS) and we will contribute what we can this year, but it is still not enough. It costs around \$2000 per bear rescued so you can see there is quite a task ahead of us. If anyone has any ideas or is in a position to give a large tax deductible donation please contact our office. ■



Freedom at the sanctuary. Image courtesy of Wildlife SOS

Message from the Directors

Dear Supporters,

Your response to HSI's recent National Survey has been absolutely amazing, not only in your generosity but in the number of supporters who filled in the survey. It has been extremely gratifying to read all of your written responses, ideas and concerns, and we are busy collating enormous piles of survey forms!

In this newsletter you will hear of our site visits to long-term HSI anti-poaching projects in Tanzania (with the Born Free Foundation), and a new Sloth Bear program with Wildlife SOS in India. One of the concerns that was expressed in many of the surveys related to providing monies to groups in Africa and South East Asia for animal protection work – and the potential for corruption and money being wasted away.

It is of course true that millions and probably billions of government aid dollars are lost through corruption and mismanagement in developing countries, but this is not the case at our level of non-government funding and co-operation. We partner with other NGOs in Europe and the US and with well known grass-roots organisations in developing countries. These are very small groups whom we know very well; where we personally know

the individuals; and where we have or will arrange site inspections. We do all that is possible to ensure that funds – all funds – are spent properly. But the ultimate proof is in the final product, and in the success and progress of the project in question.

All those involved in implementing programs that HSI has helped fund, are quite remarkable people, who work under extremely adverse conditions, and despite their daily traumas, including fighting off indifferent government authorities and many other pressures, get the job done. They really are at the coalface of wildlife protection, and we would hate to think what would happen without them.

You will also see that the outcome of our elephant court case has finally been determined, and while the judge declined to ban the import, he has imposed new conditions designed to improve the welfare of the elephants in Sydney and Melbourne zoos. We still await the outcomes of our court cases in relation to the Southern Bluefin Tuna and the Japanese company killing whales in Antarctica – but it should not be too long.

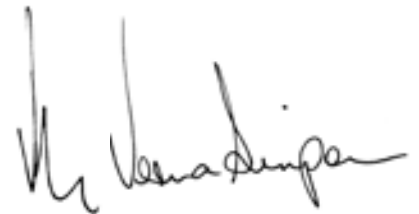
You will also see a book offer, which we would encourage you to take up. It is a wonderfully practical guide on how to live

in harmony with wildlife in your backyard. We also have a report on last year's successful HSI Art Show in Sydney, as well as news of a tour that HSI is organising – in co-operation with Minister Campbell – by Professor Norman Myers, the man who first told the world of the threat of mass global extinctions of wildlife.

Finally, there is a short piece on progress with HSI's campaign to see the introduction of a "Humane Choice" label for the benefit of farm animals and for discerning consumers, keen to avoid products that involve cruelty to animals. This is a truly exciting initiative which may revolutionise consumer markets in Australia.

Our grateful thanks to you all as usual for your support for all our programs on behalf of animals and the environment.

Best wishes



Michael Kennedy and Verna Simpson ■

Renowned biodiversity expert to tour Australia

Humane Society International's Extinction Denied Program and the Australian Government are sponsoring a speaking tour to Australia by Professor Norman Myers in March 2006.

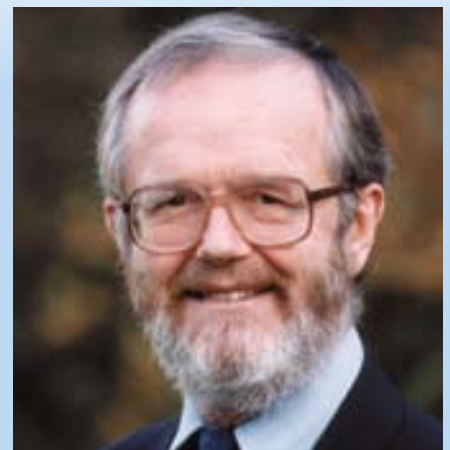
Professor Myers is one of the world's most renowned conservation biologists who gained international fame through his invention of the biodiversity hotspots concept, and was one of the first scientists to warn, back in the late 70s, of the threat to global security through the destruction of tropical rainforests and the mass loss of species that was likely to result. He is the recipient of a prestigious list of international prizes and has been an adviser on environmental matters to several Prime Ministers and United Nations bodies.

During the tour Professor Myers will be meeting with business leaders, politicians and key government policy makers, bringing an important message that what's good for the

environment is good for business. He will also be warning of environmental degradation and a looming wave of mass species extinctions and what it might mean for political and economic security in Australia and the Asia Pacific region.

The Australian Government is supporting Professor Norman Myers' speaking tour to build awareness of the importance of biodiversity conversation. Ours is one of the most diverse countries on the planet, and the Australian Government appreciates Professor Myers' longstanding commitment to biodiversity conservation.

Professor Myers will be giving lectures in Sydney, Canberra and Melbourne. ■



Professor Norman Myers, Honorary Visiting Fellow, Green College, Oxford University

Backyard Hazards for Wildlife



Image courtesy of Vivian Jones

HSI has been helping the Kuring-gai Bat Conservation Society (KBSC) bring about a ban on monofilament netting currently sold by retailers such as Bunnings and Flower Power to people wanting to protect their backyard fruit trees from flying foxes.

This type of netting, which is sold for this sole purpose, fatally entangles hundreds of flying foxes and other wildlife across Sydney every year. There are alternative types of netting available which do just as good a job of protecting fruit without killing animals. As a result of our joint letters to the Hon Bob Debus, NSW Minister for Environment, the Department of Environment and Conservation is developing an education strategy for the community and Bunnings

has agreed to distribute information on non-lethal netting and design. This is welcome progress, but HSI and the KBSC are still calling for a ban on the sale of monofilament netting and the Minister has said this is a possible solution. ■

ACTION REQUIRED:

Write now to:

The Hon Bob Debus
NSW Minister for the Environment
PO Box A 290
Sydney South NSW 1232

and ask that the NSW Government ban the sale of monofilament netting which is sold for the sole purpose of protecting backyard fruit trees from flying foxes, injuring and killing them in the process, including grey headed and black flying foxes which are listed threatened species.

Please send your replies to us.

SPECIAL BOOK OFFER

Wild Neighbours

The Humane Approach to Living with Wildlife by Ian Temby
 Illustrated by Elisabeth Bastian

Published by Citrus Press in association with Humane Society International

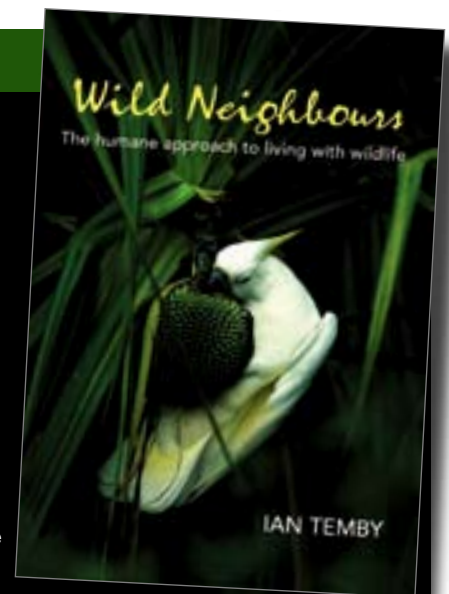
How do you deal kindly with possums on your roof, a snake in the grass, marauding cockatoos, rats in the rubbish, bats in the ceiling, ducks in the swimming pool or even a Tassie devil raising its young under the house? What can you do if a brush turkey or lyrebird decides to re-landscape your garden?

Wild Neighbours shows urban dwellers how to enjoy the experience of wildlife and offers some lateral thinking for humane, realistic and harmonious solutions to deal with the inevitable competition for shared space. As well, it provides interesting insights into how your wild neighbours live: their habits, favoured habitats, diet and 'training'.

The author, Ian Temby, has spent his working life resolving conflict situations with wildlife. As a 1999 Churchill Fellow, he investigated management of problems caused by wildlife in the USA, Canada and the UK. In Australia he has worked on problems with dingoes, cockatoos, flying-foxes, cockatoo damage, kangaroo management, silver gulls, snakes in urban areas and urban possum issues.

Wild Neighbours is beautifully illustrated by renowned artist and illustrator, Elisabeth Bastian, and covers a wide range of Australian wildlife including bandicoots, butcherbirds, flying-foxes, myna birds, pigeons, raptors, spiders, Tasmanian devils and wombats to name just a few.

The sale of this book will assist Humane Society International Wildlife projects. **RRP \$35.95, 265 pages 245mm x 175mm**



To purchase copies of Wild Neighbours you can:

buy from your local book retailer, order on-line at <http://www.australianbookgroup.com.au/Publishers/CitrusPress/> telephone the distributors, Australian Book Group on 03 5625 4290, or fax them on 03 5625 3756

Credit Cards Accepted

HSI continues Court Battles for Whales

With news that Japan has such a glut of whale meat it is using it for dog food, HSI is waiting on a judgement from the Full Bench of the Federal Court to try and stop the whaling company from slaughtering whales in Australia's Whale Sanctuary in Antarctica.



Last year Justice James Allsop refused HSI permission to bring the court case, but we are hoping our appeal to the Full Bench will be successful. With Japan expanding its phoney scientific research program to kill 935 minke whales and 10 fin whales this summer, HSI has calculated that this year approximately 450 whales have been killed within Australia's Whale Sanctuary in breach of Australian law. Next year, unless stopped, the company will start hunting humpback whales as well. HSI will be attending the next International Whaling Commission (IWC) meeting in St. Kitts in June. ■

HSI seeks heritage protection for WA's Ningaloo Reef and Barrow Island



Barrow Island. Image by Robin Chapple.

Ningaloo Reef is the largest fringing coral reef in Australia and one of the largest in the world. Every year the reef is visited by whale sharks, the largest fish in the sea, and it is also home to a myriad of other spectacular marine life.

Barrow Island is often described as Australia's Ark, being a last refuge for many wonderful marsupials now extinct on the mainland, including the Barrow Island burrowing bettong or boodie. Also endemic to the island are the Barrow Island golden bandicoot, Barrow Island spectacled hare wallaby and the Barrow Island mouse. The island also boasts some of the world's most important nesting sites for green and flat back turtles and best of all, it is the largest pest-free island in Australia. Alarmingly, all this is under threat from a massive gas processing plant to be built by Chevron Australia, Shell and Exxon Mobile. HSI is hoping Senator Ian Campbell will be vetoing the Gorgon Gas Venture and instead upping the island's protection with a National Heritage listing. ■

Elephants to have better lives in zoos, thanks to HSI and colleagues

Although we are disappointed that the transfer is being allowed, Humane Society International is pleased to have been able to improve the welfare conditions for eight Asian elephants coming to Taronga and Melbourne zoos.



HSI joined with the International Fund for Animal Welfare and the RSPCA to challenge a decision by Federal Environment Minister, Senator Ian Campbell, to allow the importation of eight elephants from Thailand to facilities now shown to have been inadequate. We brought the case because a) elephants suffer a long list of health problems in small urban zoos, b) we have well founded concerns that not all of the elephants are captive bred when there is an illegal trade in elephant calves from the wild in Thailand, and c) because there is no conservation benefit to stocking Australian zoos with elephants (neither zoo has intentions to return any elephants bred back to the wild, nor would it be feasible). While our primary position was for the elephants to stay in Thailand and be transferred to a reputable sanctuary, the Administrative Appeals Tribunal has ruled that the elephants can come to Australia, but only if a number of important welfare conditions are improved.

As a direct result of the case, the elephants will have more comfortable sleeping quarters, mandatory exercise programmes, and electric shock wiring will have to be removed from trees to allow the elephants to scratch and forage. In addition, both zoos will have to install larger mud wallows for the elephants to play in and Taronga Zoo has to install earth banks for them to recline on comfortably. CCTV will record the elephants 24 hours a day so that behavioural problems can be identified. Both Melbourne and Taronga zoos will now have to comply with elephant husbandry standards that were previously voluntary.

The elephant enclosure at Taronga Zoo is particularly small, and the judge has ruled that if the elephants cannot be satisfactorily exercised there, and if other contingency plans fail, the elephants should move to the

zoo's open range facility at Western Plains, Dubbo. The judge has also ruled that a male elephant to be housed in isolation at Taronga must retain social contact with the other elephants and, if this cannot be assured for nine months of the year, the elephants will also have to move to Western Plains.

Elephants have long life spans and very complex social and biological needs and there is an exhaustive documented history of elephants suffering serious health and welfare problems in zoos. Some more progressive zoos in the United States and Europe have closed their elephant exhibits recognising they simply cannot keep this species in good health or address their social needs. HSI is disappointed that Taronga and Melbourne zoos are bucking the trend by importing new elephants, but we are confident the elephants will benefit from the stronger welfare provisions our court case has brought them.

HSI, IFAW and the RSPCA are grateful to all the top elephant experts that provided testimony to support our case, to our legal team for representing us for a fraction of their usual fees and to the UK Born Free Foundation, the RSPCA UK and WSPA for providing financial

assistance. HSI, IFAW and the RSPCA will be closely monitoring the elephants' welfare once they arrive at the zoos and will alert the authorities to any problems. ■

ACTION REQUIRED:

Please write to Senator Ian Campbell and ask that he ensure Taronga and Melbourne zoos comply with the conditions handed down by the Administrative Appeals Tribunal. Ask that he make public all the reports the Tribunal has required the zoos to provide to him in meeting the conditions. Please also ask that he impose strict welfare and conservation conditions on the future approval of breeding programs for species listed on Appendix I of the Convention for International Trade in Endangered Species – his department is currently reviewing the Guidelines for such approvals.

Write to:

Senator Ian Campbell
Minister for the Environment and Heritage
Parliament House
Canberra ACT 2600
Fax 02 62 73 6101
Please send your replies to us.

Save Australian animals from deadly Thai zoo

Urgent letters are needed to Australia's federal Environment Minister to stop 40 Australian animals being exported to a new zoo in Thailand where 104 animals are reported to have died, since opening just one month ago.



ACTION REQUIRED:

Please write a polite letter to **Senator Ian Campbell**, Federal Minister for the Environment and Heritage, Parliament House, Canberra ACT 2600, fax 02 62 73 6101 or email senator.ian.campbell@aph.gov.au and ask that he refuse to issue an export permit for Australian animals to be sent to this disreputable zoo.

Please also write to the Directors of Taronga and Melbourne zoos urging them to rethink the deal over the elephants, koalas and possums and instead keep all the animals in their home countries.

Mr Guy Cooper Director & CEO, Taronga Zoo, PO Box 20, Mosman NSW 2088 Australia

Ms Laura Mumaw CEO, Melbourne Zoo, Elliot Avenue, Parkville VIC 3052 Australia

Please send your replies to us.

HSI has learned that Taronga and Melbourne zoos have sought permit applications to export Australian animals to the controversial Chang Mai Night Safari Park. It is part of a deal between the Thailand Government and Melbourne and Taronga zoos over the import of eight Asian elephants to the two Australian zoos. The Memorandum of Agreement for the elephant exports indicates that koalas and possums will be exported to Thailand as part of the agreement.

Prior to the reports of the mass deaths at Chang Mai Night Safari Park, the zoo was already dogged by controversy. Its director had initially planned for species such as tigers, giraffes, lions, kangaroos and elephants to be on the menu at a restaurant at the park. The Director is still seeking to stock the park with 175 animals rounded up from the wild in Kenya amidst loud protests from Kenyan and international conservationists. The park also wants to stock an orangutan cage with five orangutans that Indonesian authorities believe were illegally sourced from the wild. And if all this is not enough to highlight the park's dubious ethics and to convince the Minister this safari park is not the place to be sending Australian

animals, the park director has previously been investigated in relation to the illegal export of 100(!) tigers from Thailand to China with a Thai Government panel recommending disciplinary action.

Irrespective of any deal over the elephant imports, Senator Campbell should refuse to issue an export permit to send Australian animals to an uncertain fate. Local conservationists are corroborating the newspaper reports that deaths are occurring at the Chang Mai Safari Park due to poor standards of care. The exports of Australian native species to Thailand would serve no conservation purpose whatsoever and would place the health and welfare of the animals at serious risk.

Chang Mai Safari Park is a pet project of the Thai Prime Minister, Thaksin Shinawatra, and therefore lots of letters from the Australian public may be required to urge Senator Campbell to put diplomacy aside and refuse the export permits. We are also concerned that the zoos may put concerns over this safari park aside because they are worried if they renege on the Memorandum of Agreement it might jeopardise the elephant imports. ■

How can I help animals even when I no longer share their world?



Through your bequest for animal protection to Humane Society International, you can provide for animals after you've gone. Naming HSI in your Will demonstrates your lasting commitment to animal protection and strengthens the Society for this task. We will be happy to send information about our animal protection programs and material that will assist you in planning a Will.

Yes, please send more information on leaving a bequest to HSI.

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____

State: _____

Postcode: _____

PLEASE POST TO HSI, PO BOX 439, AVALON NSW 2107



Extinction Denied 2005: Fundraising for Animals

The HSI Extinction Denied 2005 fundraising exhibition was officially opened by the fabulous Erika Heynatz on Monday 17th October at The ArtHouse Hotel, Sydney. The venue buzzed with supporters, artists, celebrities and art enthusiasts – keeping our sales table extremely busy!

Photography by Robbie Newman.



Donating artist Reg Mombassa with his "Smoking Monkey".

Picture by Robyn Amadio.



HSI ambassador Erika Heynatz who opened the exhibition with HSI director Verna Simpson.

Mode, Gabriel **Ghazi**, Gav **Barbey**, Geoff **Harvey**, Geraldine **Roggiero** (aka Geraldine **Simmons**), Gerard **McKee**, Grant **Whiteley**, Hannah **Hall**, Hugh **Whittaker**, Janie **Fearon**, Jeanette **Korduba-Thompson**, Jimmy **Pike** (donated by Pat Lowe), Joanne **Mulcahy**, Linda **Dry-Parker**, Lucy **Culliton**, Maaret **Sinkko**, Margaret **Woodward**, Marguerite **Derricourt**, Mark **Rhodes**, Mark **Sofilas**, Mary **Shackman**, Matthew **Carney**, Michael **Golding**, Michael **Herford**, Nafisa **Naomi**, Nicholas **Harding**, Nick **Hall**, Olivia **Bolton**, Peter **Griffen**, Philipa **Veitch**, Reg **Mombassa**, Robyn **Caughlan**, Robyn **Collier**, Sandra **Nyberg**, Shaun **Clark**, Simon **Ives**, Stephen **Coburn**, Stuart **Rex** (aka Stuart **McLachlan**), Terezka **Beck**, Vic **Maloney**, Xavier **Ghazi**.

To our sponsors, we cannot express enough how grateful we are for your continued support - **The ArtHouse Hotel** for donating their fabulous venue, **Dome Restaurant** for the delicious finger food, **Croser** for the Sparkling White, **Bridgewater**

Mill for their Shiraz Voigner, **Tooheys** for the Hahn beer, and **Planet Earth Store** for the HSI staff t-shirts.

Thank you also to the amazing team of volunteers who helped out on the night – including **Robbi Newman** who took the opening night photos, **Karen Ryland**, **Andrew MacDonald**, **Gavin Hughes**, **Vicki Currie**, **Alexis Chapman**, **Lana Mossell**, **Craig Lumb**, together with the ArtHouse and HSI staff.

We'll keep you posted on the upcoming 2006 Extinction Denied exhibition. ■



**Bridgewater
Mill**
Adelaide Hills

CROSER



Funding for West Kilimanjaro Field Project

While in Kenya for the Convention on Migratory Species, HSI's Nicola Beynon took the opportunity to cross the border into Tanzania and visit the West Kilimanjaro field project HSI funds with the Born Free Foundation.



The project sees Masai warriors employed to guard a conservation area in the foothills of Kilimanjaro that is home to elephants, lions, leopards and oryx. The fieldmen monitor the level of poaching in the park and their very presence has done much to ensure that poaching has been significantly reduced. Nicola greatly enjoyed meeting the fieldmen who, through their English speaking coordinator, were able to let her know the challenges and successes of their work. ■



Nicola Beynon from HSI, Will Travers and Nick Martyn from Born Free with Masai fieldman.



Year 8 Society & Environment Students

Fundraising Project for HSI

Humane Society International acknowledges with heartfelt gratitude the wonderful efforts of these inspiring students to raise funds to assist its campaigns for animal protection and conservation. Here is their story...

After spending a considerable amount of the second term studying rainforests and the plight of the orang-utans in Indonesia, students from Reynella East High School in South Australia undertook a project aimed at supporting Humane Society International in their efforts to improve the circumstances of animals across the globe but specifically the orang-utans.

Students began the project with a few planning days during which they chose their proposed activity, decided on their group members, discussed what resources they would need and from whom they needed permission. In addition to these considerations was the need to access equipment and determine the practicability of their proposed activity.

The fundraising activities chosen included busking at a local shopping centre, holding a talent show, a jewellery stall and a games and jelly stall. Students had to work through any difficulties, therefore gaining valuable skills in problem solving and cooperation. The students were also hampered by time constraints and managed to plan, prepare and implement their chosen activity within just seven lessons.

The enthusiasm and dedication that the students gave to ensuring the success of the project was astounding. Their intrinsic, competitive nature ensured that the individual groups set about bettering each other's result, but no one lost sight of their goal, which was to raise as much money as

possible for Humane Society International.

Most activities took place in the school grounds during lunchtimes, however the group of musicians had organised a full day at Southgate Plaza. The stalls and talent show were very well attended and collectively raised just under \$200. The buskers were an absolute sensation at the shopping centre and had people of all ages complimenting them on their skill and surrendering some very sizeable donations. At the end of the day the musical group had raised just over \$430. However the success of the students' efforts cannot only be measured in monetary value, they have gained so much in the way of their maturity, knowledge and self-confidence. ■ ”

List of Conservation & Animal Welfare Ministers

Federal:

- **Prime Minister** The Honourable John Howard MP (Fax 02 6273 4100) www.pm.gov.au/email.cfm
- **Minister for the Environment and Heritage (conservation issues)** Senator The Honourable Ian Campbell (Fax 02 6273 6101) senator.ian.campbell@aph.gov.au
- **Minister for Forestry & Conservation** Senator, The Honourable Eric Abetz (Fax 02 6273 7096) senator.abetz@aph.gov.au
- **Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries & Forestry*** The Honourable Warren Peter McGauran (Fax 02 6273 4120) Peter.McGauran.MP@aph.gov.au

Victoria:

- **VIC Premier** The Honourable Steve Bracks (Fax 03 9651 5054) steve.bracks@parliament.vic.gov.au
- **Minister for Agriculture*** The Honourable Bob Cameron (Fax 03 9637 8930) bob.cameron@parliament.vic.gov.au
- **Minister for Environment and Conservation** The Honourable John Thwaites (Fax 03 9651 1188) John.Thwaites@parliament.vic.gov.au

New South Wales:

- **NSW Premier** The Honourable Morris Iemma (Fax 02 9228 3934) morris.iemma@parliament.nsw.gov.au
- **Minister for Agriculture & Fisheries*** Senator, The Honourable Ian MacDonald (Fax 02 9228 3452) ian.macdonald@parliament.nsw.gov.au

- **Minister for the Environment** The Honourable Bob Debus (Fax 02 9228 3166) bob.debus@parliament.nsw.gov.au

Queensland:

- **QLD Premier** The Honourable Peter Beattie (Fax 07 3221 3631) premiers@ministerial.qld.gov.au
- **Minister for Environment** The Honourable Desley Boyle MP (Fax 07 3221 9954) environment@ministerial.qld.gov.au
- **Minister for Primary Industries and Fisheries*** The Honourable Timothy Mulherin (Fax 07 3229 8541) DPI@ministerial.qld.gov.au

Western Australia:

- **WA Premier** The Honourable Alan Carpenter (Fax 08 9322 1213) wa.government@dpc.gov.au
- **Minister for Agriculture, Forestry & Fisheries** The Honourable Kim Chance (Fax 08 9213 6701) kchance@dpc.wa.gov.au
- **Minister for Environment** The Honourable Mark McGowan (Fax 08 9221 4665) mark.mcgowan@dpc.wa.gov.au
- **Minister for Local Government & Regional Development*** The Honourable John Bowler MLA (Fax 08 9213 6501) john.bowler@dpc.wa.gov.au

South Australia:

- **SA Premier** The Honourable Mike Rann (Fax 08 8463 3168) premier@saugov.sa.gov.au

- **Minister for Agriculture, Food and Fisheries*** The Honourable Rory McEwan MP (Fax 08 8226 0316) Minister.mcewan@state.sa.gov.au

- **Minister for Environment and Conservation** The Honourable John Hill MP (Fax 08 8463 5681) kauma@parliament.sa.gov.au

Northern Territory:

- **Minister for Primary Industries & Fisheries*** The Honourable Kon Vatskalis (Fax 08 8901 4134) electorate.casuarina@nt.gov.au
- **Minister for Environment & Heritage** The Honourable Marion Scrymgour (Fax 08 8901 4110) Marion.scrymgour@nt.gov.au

Tasmania:

- **TAS Premier** The Honourable Paul Lennon (Fax 03 6234 1572) paul.lennon@parliament.tas.gov.au
- **Minister for Environment and Planning, Parks & Wildlife** The Honourable Judy Jackson (Fax 03 6233 2671) judy.jackson@parliament.tas.gov.au
- **Minister for Primary Industries and Water** The Honourable Steven Kons MHA (Fax 03 6233 8013) steve.kons@parliament.tas.gov.au

ACT:

- **Chief Minister; Minister for the Environment*** The Honourable John Stanhope (Fax 02 6205 0433) stanhope@act.gov.au

All letters to Federal Ministers should be addressed: C/- Parliament House Canberra ACT 2600 * *Animal Welfare Minister*

Become a HSI regular supporter and spread your donations evenly across the year!

Although our campaigners have many specific targets each year there is also a great need to plan long term strategies for many of the major environmental and animal welfare issues we face. By supporting us with a regular monthly pledge, you empower us to budget with confidence for these projects.

As a regular supporter of HSI, your tax-deductible donations will be deducted from either your credit card (Amex, Mastercard, Visa, Bankcard) or a nominated bank account once per month, and can start with any amount that suits your budget! To receive further information please feel free to contact our office on free call **1800 333 737** or simply complete the coupon below to receive our regular pledge authorisation forms.

Thank you also to all our existing regular supporters - without your help our work for the animals would be greatly diminished.

Yes, please send me information on becoming a regular supporter of HSI.

Title: First Name: Last Name:

Postal Address:

State: Postcode: Contact Phone: ()

The following article appeared in *The Land* newspaper in February and has stirred up a considerable interest from farmers and industry. We look forward to working with all stakeholders over the next couple of months and hope to have 'Humane Choice' produce in stores by the middle of the year.

We would like to thank 'Voiceless' and the Berg Foundation for their help in getting this off the ground.

Shoppers now have the Humane Choice

CONSUMERS of meat and other animal products will be able to choose goods labelled "humanely raised" by mid-2006, following the signing of an historic agreement late last year.

The Humane Choice label is the result of negotiations between Humane Society International (HSI) and Australian and international organic certifying body, NASAA (National Association of Sustainable Agriculture Australia).

The two organisations have signed off on the Humane Choice standards, and aim to have poultry, pork, lamb and beef cuts bearing the label in all major supermarkets, including Coles, Woolworths, and specialist butchers, by the second quarter of this year.

The standards will allow farmers to be recognised as a certified supplier of humane produce, and also provide consumers with the opportunity to buy a full range of humanely reared produce.

By MELISSA LANG

The Humane Choice label denotes the animal had the best life and death offered to any farm animal.

Director of HSI, Verna Simpson, said it would reflect the fact an animal had basically lived its life being allowed to satisfy its behavioural needs; to forage and move untethered and uncaged, with free access to outside areas, shade when hot, shelter when cold, and with a good diet.



Ms Simpson said HSI and NASAA encouraged farmers to become part of the new labelling system, and said although NASAA

would certify farms for the labelling scheme, producers didn't have to be certified organic to become involved.

"Organics have a good set of animal husbandry, but we've come up with a set of standards, and NASAA

will certify to our standards and specifications for the label," Ms Simpson said.

"We are hoping this new label will attract many farmers who are already treating their animals with the respect they deserve to come forward and be recognised as a certified supplier of humane produce."

Initially, Humane Choice will apply to fresh meat and eggs, but will expand to include other animal products, including milk, cheese, leather and wool.

Ms Simpson said consumer demand prompted HSI and NASAA to establish the new label.

"We have so many people contact our office to ask which products they should buy if they are concerned about animal welfare," Ms Simpson said.

"This label will take the guesswork out of it for those consumers, and give people a choice."

Ms Simpson said farm specifications for the "Humane Choice" label were now available and farmers could be sent a checklist of standards.

STOP PRESS

Live Trade to Egypt Halted!

After the disturbing footage aired on *60 Minutes* on 26th February showing the horrific conditions in an Egyptian slaughterhouse, the Australian Government has suspended live animal exports to Egypt pending an investigation by Egyptian and international animal welfare organisations.

The minister is waiting for a response to the allegations from the Egyptian authorities.

Although in May 2005 the world animal health organisation, the OIE, established global standards for farm animal transport it is clear that these standards have not been adopted uniformly by all countries.

Organisations in Australia have worked hard to improve the welfare standards for farm animals within this country to what is perceived as an acceptable level of care. It

becomes a nonsense if we accept the cruelty they suffer once they have left our shores. ■

ACTION REQUIRED:

We congratulate the Government for suspending live trade to Egypt but urge you to write to federal Agriculture Minister, Peter McGauran, Parliament House, Canberra 2600 thanking him for taking action but also let him know that all live trade is unacceptable.

Please send your replies to us.

Regional Natural Heritage Programme (RNHP)

PROJECTS FOR 2005

In the last half of 2005, project applications under the second round of the RNHP were assessed by the Commonwealth's RNHP Taskforce, particularly for their potential to achieve direct on-ground outcomes in the second year of the programme's implementation.

In 2004, HSI worked with Senator Meg Lees and the Prime Minister's office to secure a \$10 million program to help fund NGOs working in South-East Asian and South Pacific biodiversity Hotspots. HSI also serves as a member of the Taskforce advising Minister Campbell. The third round of RNHP grant applications are now being assessed.

In the second round announced last year by the Minister, fifteen projects were funded for a total of \$4 350 911. The projects are as follows:

Continuing projects from round one:

- Developing local partnerships in environmental education and training at Tam Dao National Park, Vinh Phuc Province, Vietnam. Education for Nature Vietnam - \$75 500

- Stopping poaching, and gaining public support for new and expanded protected areas in Sumatra, Indonesia. Conservation International - \$400 000
- Conserving coral reef hotspots in the Bismarck Sea, Papua New Guinea. Wildlife Conservation Society - \$134 990
- Mondulkiri elephant conservation project, Cambodia. Fauna and Flora International - \$73 230
- Conserving Vietnam's critically endangered primates: community-based initiatives to safeguard two critically endangered primates in Northern Vietnam. Fauna and Flora International - \$106 700
- Integrated human and conservation development at Tanjung Puting National Park, Indonesia. Yayasan Pecinta/Friends of National Parks Foundation - \$38 138

New projects:

- Transboundary conservation of the Annamite Range (Laos, Vietnam). IUCN Asia Programme - \$285 000
- Protecting the heart of the Coral Triangle:

strengthening marine protected areas in eastern Indonesia. The Nature Conservancy - \$500 000

- Building partnerships and conservation priorities for East Timor's first national park. Birdlife International - \$193 000
- Saving Fiji's Forest Hotspots. Birdlife International - \$180 000
- Orangutan protection units: Bukit Tigapuluh, Sumatra, Indonesia. Australian Orangutan Project - \$62 756
- Saving Samoa's critically endangered Ma'oma'o and Manumea. Wildlife Conservation Society - \$200 000
- Local Action, Local Results: CEPF invasive alien species program for the key biodiversity sites of the Polynesia and Micronesia hotspot, Pacific Island Nations. Conservation International - \$1.5m
- Establishing the Sovi Basin Nature Reserve (Fiji). Conservation International Foundation - \$399 500
- Cat Ba Langur Conservation Project (conserving the critically endangered Cat Ba Langur and its habitat) Hai Phong Province, Vietnam. Australian Foundation for the Peoples of Asia and the Pacific Pty Ltd - \$202 097

Full details can be found at the following web address: www.deh.gov.au/heritage/programs/rnhp/index.html ■

Freshwater Turtle Trade in Vietnam - Finding solutions by Doug Hendrie

While the focus of conservation efforts rests squarely upon protecting turtles and other wildlife before it is hunted and collected for the trade, the issue of how and what to do with confiscated wildlife has remained a dilemma for the authorities. Due to budget limitations, lack of knowledge and expertise, and other factors, most confiscated wildlife is simply either released locally or auctioned off under an odd legal loophole that encourages wildlife protection officers not to release "sick and dying" wildlife, but allows the animals to be auctioned off to registered traders.

However the issue of releasing wildlife is not a simple solution. Major problems associated with current release practices include: risk of introducing disease, undermining the genetic integrity of existing populations of the species

in the habitat, introducing species outside of their native range, and releasing the animals into habitat that is not suitable for the species. Sadly, most wildlife that has been released probably does not survive in their new strange and unfamiliar habitat.

Humane Society International has financially supported efforts in Vietnam to improve practices relating to the release of confiscated turtles. Since 1999, a number of releases have been carried out, moving animals from where they were confiscated in the north of Vietnam back to appropriate habitat within the species' range in the south. Turtles that are confiscated are transferred to the Turtle Conservation Centre at Cuc Phuong National Park (TCC), Vietnam's only turtle-focused rescue centre, where they are quarantined and cared for before determination



Project staff at work

is made as to whether they can be released. The lucky turtles that get a second chance are loaded into much friendlier crates than they came in, and shipped by train back to the south where they are then moved by truck to the designated release site, traditionally a national park or protected area where the turtles have some level of protection in their new habitat. ■

Grey Nurse Shark Update

For many years HSI has kept you up to date with our tireless campaign to stop the grey nurse shark becoming extinct on Australia's east coast.

At last we have some progress to report. After HSI lobbying, Senator Ian Campbell refused to accredit the NSW Ocean Trap and Line Fishery, which kills grey nurse sharks, as ecologically sustainable. Senator Campbell gave the fishery three months to fix the grey nurse shark problem before giving a three year permit for the fishery to continue exporting its products overseas. The NSW Government has already been planning to protect the tiny grey nurse shark critical habitat sites at Byron Bay, Montague Island

and Bateman's Bay. However, we hope Senator Campbell will be able to persuade them to make sure these sites are protected as full sanctuaries and to also protect essential sites at South West Rocks. HSI has also had assurances from Senator Campbell that he will finally announce protection for the Cod Grounds, the last remaining unprotected site in Commonwealth waters. ■

ACTION REQUIRED:

Write to Senator Campbell and congratulate him for his promise to finally protect the



Image courtesy of North West Rocks Dive Centre

Cod Grounds critical habitat site for the grey nurse shark. Ask that he makes sure the NSW Government protects the South West Rocks critical habitat site before he accredits the NSW Ocean Trap and Line Fishery for export under the EPBC Act. **Please send your replies to us.**



Many thanks to



BIO DISTRIBUTORS BIO-DYNAMIC & ORGANIC WHOLESALERS OF TASMANIA

who sponsored the printing of this newsletter

PO Box 12, Sheffield, Tasmania 7306 Phone/Fax: (03) 6491 1439 Email: biodistributors@microtech.com.au

www.biodistributors.com.au



All DONATIONS TO HUMANE SOCIETY INTERNATIONAL ARE TAX DEDUCTIBLE

HERE IS MY TAX DEDUCTIBLE DONATION OF :

\$500 \$250 \$100 \$50 \$25 \$ _____ other

I am paying by: Cheque/Money Order Bankcard
 Mastercard Visa card
 Amex

Card No _____

Card Name _____

Signature _____ Expiry Date _____

Postal Address _____

_____ Postcode _____

Phone No _____

Please send me _____ (quantity) Counter Packs (50 leaflets plus stand) to distribute locally.

You may also donate by telephone (02) 9973 1728 or via our free call 1800 333 737.

*Your support is vital to the work we do.
Thank you*

I WOULD LIKE TO MAKE A REGULAR MONTHLY DONATION OF:

\$25 \$50 \$100 \$ _____ other

Per month until further notice. I understand that this payment can be stopped by me at any time.

Please debit my Bankcard Mastercard Visa card Amex

Card No _____

Card Name _____

Signature _____ Expiry Date _____

OR Please send me information on DIRECT DEBIT from my bank account.

Postal Address _____

_____ Postcode _____

Phone No _____

Please send to : HUMANE SOCIETY INTERNATIONAL
 PO Box 439, Avalon NSW 2107
 Phone (02) 9973 1728
 Email: enquiry@hsi.org.au
 Website: www.hsi.org.au