



BWDS NEWSLETTER

2010/02

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

CONTENTS

1. Happy New Year
2. Meeting Report General Assembly, October 13th, 2010
3. Report One Health Symposium
4. Preparing the 4th BWDS Symposium
5. Award for the best student thesis on wildlife diseases
6. OIE notification of wildlife diseases: call for contribution
7. Announcements

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1. Happy New Year
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The BWDS board wishes you a happy, healthy and “wild” 2011 !!!

2. Meeting Report of the General Assembly, October 13th, 2010

The last general meeting was held at the Institute of Tropical Medicine, Antwerp on October 13th, 2010.

List of attendants: Leen Claes ¹, Paul Tavernier ^{2,3}, Luc Vanholme ⁴, Sophie Roelandt ^{3,5}, David Frétin ⁵, Stefan Roels ^{3,5}, Katrien Tersago ⁶, Hans Van Loo ⁷, Filip Barbé ⁷, Christel Cochez ⁸, Kristof Baert ⁹, Paul Heyman ⁸, Jean de Borchgrave ¹, Mihai Szalo ¹⁰, De Craeye Stéphane ¹¹

¹ ITM; ² UGent; ³ Wildsurv; ⁴ FAVV; ⁵ CODA/CERVA/VAR; ⁶ UA; ⁷ DGZ; ⁸ MHKA/ACOS-WB; ⁹ INBO; ¹⁰ ULiège; ¹¹ WIV/ISP

Excused: Bertrand Losson, Dominique Vandekerchove, Wendy Altobello, Edwin Claerebout, Annick Linden, Wim Van Bortel, Edmilson Oliveira, Patrick Butaye, Muriel Vervaeke, Lies Beernaert, Valerie Van Den Berghe, Wesley Tack, Alexandre Dobly

1. Presentations

-Stéphane De Craeye (WIV-ISP) gave a presentation about Toxoplasmosis and Neospora caninum. The slides and abstract of this presentation will be made available on the BWDS website. We refer also to a new publication on this subject:

Toxoplasma gondii and Neospora caninum in wildlife: common parasites in Belgian foxes and Cervidae? *Vet. Parasitol., In Press, Accepted Manuscript, Available online 21 December 2010*

S. De Craeye, N. Speybroeck, D. Ajzenberg, M.L. Dardé, F. Collinet, P. Tavernier, S. Van Gucht, P. Dorny, K. Dierick

Sera from Cervidae were tested for the presence of antibodies against Neospora caninum using ELISA; and against Toxoplasma gondii using SAG1-ELISA and a commercially available agglutination test. The T. gondii seroprevalence was 52% (38/73) in roe deer (Capreolus capreolus), 0% in bred fallow deer (0/4) (Dama dama) and red deer (0/7) (Cervus elaphus). We found 2.7% of the roe deer samples and none of the bred deer samples positive for N. caninum. Brain samples from wild roe deer, red deer and red foxes (Vulpes vulpes) were tested for the presence of T. gondii and N. caninum DNA using multiplex real-time PCR. We detected T. gondii in 18.8% (57/304) of the red foxes and in 1 of the 33 deer samples. N. caninum was found in 6.6% of the red foxes and in 2 roe deer samples. Twenty-six of the T. gondii positive DNA extracts from the red fox samples were genotyped. Twenty five were type II and only one was found to be type III.

- Guidelines about sampling in wild rodents (presented by Paul Tavernier)

As a result of the BWDS Workshop held in May 2010 on sampling in wild rodents, a draft was written including legal and practical information on working with wild rodents in order to collect samples for surveillance or other purposes. This document was presented and discussed. Participants in the workshop and in today's meeting were asked for their comments. The document will be updated in the future whenever it appears necessary, and the document will be made available on the BWDS website. Up to now, no comments were received but they are still welcome.

2. Administrative part

- 4th BWDS Symposium, October 2011. The one and only proposition received for the general theme of the next BWDS Symposium was "introduced wildlife" and the ecological and disease impact of this phenomenon, emphasizing disease outbreaks with wildlife population disturbances. At the end of the international year of biodiversity 2010, this topic appears a logical choice and offers opportunities for an important input from biologists, according to the BWDS objective of multidisciplinary exchange. In this context and in order to check the feasibility of this choice as a general theme, a number of possible

speakers have been contacted who yet gave their preliminary agreement to contribute. Starting from this list of possible speakers a preliminary program was drafted.

The choice of this subject was discussed and no major objections were made though the exact formulation of the “heading” needs refining. The venue this time will be at the CODA/CERVA/VAR site of Tervuren (Brussels). The date chosen is Friday October 7, due to the availability of the organisers (BWDS board) and to avoid interference with other conferences taking place later on in October.

All the practical arrangements will be worked out further by the board members (“in small committee”) and will be proposed to the general assembly for evaluation at the next meeting.

- BWDS Website. As discussed in the former general assembly, a renewal of the website is necessary. The main objectives of this renewal are on the one hand to create the possibility of updating the information on the website by ourselves without needing to contact a programmer each time and on the other hand to “streamline” the website including new interactive applications such as for registration of attendance to the BWDS Symposia. An intermediary software expert has been contacted who will transmit us the proposals from individual websitebuilders, based on our objectives and starting from a gross evaluation of the current website. However, other possibilities will be considered as well such as building a website ourselves, based on available and affordable systems on the internet. Here too, further practical steps will be worked out by the board members before presenting the most relevant possibilities to the general assembly.

- Announcement One Health Symposium. Leen Claes announced the One Health Symposium to be held at the Institute of Tropical Medicine in Antwerp on November 5, 2010.

3. Report One Health Symposium

Information, including presentations, pictures, video etc can be found on the be-troplive website :

www.be-troplive.be

(<http://www.be-troplive.be/betroplive/Default.aspx?WPID=142&MIID=230&MSIID=0&L=E>)

4. Preparing the 4th BWDS Symposium

Currently the list of speakers has been completed and the preliminary program has been compiled in a flyer draft (to be printed and distributed later on). During a board meeting on December 20th, the formulation of the general theme was discussed and the heading “Consequences of wildlife introductions” was retained. The suggested talks were classified in three chapters (1) a general part introducing the subject through both a biological and a “disease” approach, (2) a part about the impact of introduced exotic species on endemic pathogens and (3) a part about new pathogens carried by introduced exotics. It was further decided that the scientific committee and the moderators should include a representative number of biologists, regarding the chosen theme. The next step is to contact possible sponsors as soon as possible.

The organising committee calls for posters on the subject of wildlife diseases in its broadest sense. The best poster will be awarded during the Conference after evaluation by the scientific committee. The guidelines for poster submission will be mentioned on the BWDS website very soon.

5. Award for the best student thesis on wildlife diseases

An award for the “best student thesis” on wildlife diseases will be granted at the next BWDS Symposium. The masters theses sent in during the two year period between the 3rd and the 4th BWDS Symposium (i.e. between October 2009 and ultimately August 2011) will be evaluated by the scientific committee. The amount of this award has been fixed on 300 Euro.

The conditions and guidelines for thesis submission will be mentioned on the BWDS website very soon. (*see below*)

(Nederlandstalige versie)

De volgende voorwaarden worden vooropgesteld bij het toekennen van de prijs:

- *Enkel afstudeerthesissen (masters degree of equivalente graad) van hogere onderwijsinstellingen komen in aanmerking, dus géén PhD thesissen.*
- *Het onderwerp moet rechtstreeks verband houden met het thema “ziekten in de wildlevende fauna” in zijn breedste betekenis, waarbij dit verband niet van ondergeschikte orde mag zijn.*
- *Zowel literatuurstudies als eigen (origineel of voortgezet) onderzoek komen in aanmerking.*
- *Het onderwerp moet zich richten op informatie over het Belgische grondgebied of tenminste over diersoortpopulaties die in het wild voorkomen op het Belgische grondgebied.*
- *De bestudeerde diersoorten en -populaties moeten natuurlijk in België voorkomen ofwel op het Belgisch grondgebied geïntroduceerd zijn. De als huisdieren gehouden of door de mens in gecontroleerde omstandigheden gehouden diersoorten komen niet in aanmerking.*
- *Er wordt slechts één prijs uitgereikt om de twee jaar en voor het hele land. Alle afstudeerthesissen die binnen de betreffende tweejaarlijkse periode bij een Belgische onderwijsinstelling ingediend werden kunnen deelnemen. De prijs zal uitgereikt worden ter gelegenheid van het tweejaarlijks gehouden BWDS Symposium*
- *Het bedrag van de prijs wordt alleen door de algemene vergadering van de BWDS vastgelegd en bedraagt 300 Euro.*
- *De BWDS behoudt zich het recht voor om de prijs niet uit te reiken wanneer niet aan de hierboven genoemde voorwaarden is voldaan of wanneer het leescomité oordeelt dat geen enkele van de ingezonden thesissen voor de prijs in aanmerking komt.*

De auteur van de bekroonde thesis wordt gecontacteerd door het BWDS bestuur vóór het Symposium en dient persoonlijk aanwezig te zijn op het Symposium. Hij/zij verwerft automatisch voor twee jaar het lidmaatschap van de BWDS. De lijst van de ingezonden thesissen zal gepubliceerd worden op de website van de BWDS, evenals de titel en een korte samenvatting van de winnende thesis met de naam van de auteur. Indien de winnende auteur dit wenst dan kan hij/zij ook zijn/haar thesis kort mondeling presenteren tijdens het BWDS Symposium, hetgeen wij ten zeerste aanmoedigen.

(Version francophone)

Les conditions pour pouvoir postuler au prix sont les suivantes :

- *Le mémoire ou travail de fin d'étude (de niveau master ou équivalent) doit avoir été réalisé dans un établissement d'enseignement supérieur belge (le prix ne s'adresse pas aux thèses de doctorat).*
- *Le sujet du travail doit être directement liée aux maladies de la faune sauvage au sens large ; ce lien ne doit pas être secondaire.*
- *Les recherches (originales ou confirmatoires) ainsi que les travaux bibliographiques sont acceptables.*
- *La recherche doit apporter des informations sur la situation en Belgique ou au minimum sur des espèces animales qui sont trouvées à l'état sauvage en Belgique.*
- *Les populations étudiées doivent se trouver à l'état naturel en Belgique même si elles y ont été introduites. Les animaux domestiques ou gardées sous conditions contrôlées n'entrent pas en compte.*
- *Nous n'attribuons qu'un prix tous les deux ans pour le pays entier. Nous acceptons tout mémoire défendu en Belgique lors de ces deux années académiques quelle que soit la session.*

- Le prix sera décerné lors du symposium de la BWDS qui a lieu tous les deux ans.
- La valeur du prix a été déterminée par l'assemblée générale de la BWDS et est de 300 euros.
- La BWDS se réserve le droit de ne pas décerner le prix lorsque les conditions ci-dessus ne sont pas remplies ou lorsque le comité de lecture juge qu'aucun mémoire reçu ne correspond au prix.

L'auteur du mémoire lauréat sera contacté par le conseil de la BWDS avant le symposium et devra être présent en personne au symposium. Elle/il sera automatiquement affilié à la BWDS pour deux ans. La liste des mémoires reçus sera publiée sur le site internet de la BWDS, ainsi que le résumé du mémoire ayant reçu le prix. Si elle/il le souhaite, le lauréat pourra brièvement présenter son mémoire lors du symposium de la BWDS, ce que nous encourageons fortement.

All further information about this thesis award can be obtained from the BWDS board members:
paul.tavernier@Ugent.be, stroe@var.fgov.be, paul.heyman@mil.be, leen.claes@itg.be ,
alexandre.dobly@var.fgov.be , kristof.baert@inbo.be

6. OIE notification of wildlife diseases: call for contribution

Once more we take the opportunity to ask your help for the notification of wildlife diseases to the OIE (Office International des Epizooties, World Animal Health Organisation). Notification to the OIE is the official task of the CVO (Central Veterinary Officer) in each country. He is assisted by a country responsible (called "focal point") for information gathering and communication on wildlife disease matters. Through the Belgian Wildlife Disease Society we have access to a network of scientists that are, at least for a part of their occupation, involved in wildlife disease diagnostics. This network allows the collection of information needed for the notification of wildlife diseases to the OIE. It is currently the only way in which we can collect this kind of information in a comprehensive way for Belgium, in order to meet with our international commitments.

If you have diagnosed any disease included in the OIE wildlife diseases notification form (format 2009) in wild living animals in Belgium during the year 2010, we would appreciate it very much if you could send us this information. Even the absence of a notifiable disease (and since when it is absent, if it concerns a disease that was observed in wildlife in Belgium before) is an important information. Although notification is now by semester, you can send information for the whole year 2010 because we did not contact you for the first semester of 2010. Please have a look at the different (Excell) sheets : a qualitative notification is OK, but if you have any additional information (quantitative information, method used for diagnosis, etc..) this would be very welcome as well.

You can download the notification form from the OIE website, http://www.oie.int/wildlife/eng/en_wildlife.htm , enter the information directly in the Excell file (different sheets) and send it back to Paul Tavernier (Email adress below) as a mail attachment. Please do not send your information directly to the OIE as they want a complete country report and the official notification has to go through the CVO.

Thank you very much for your highly appreciated help and for sending us the required information before January 20th .

Paul Tavernier
paul.tavernier@UGent.be

7. Announcements

Conferences:

- OIE Global Wildlife Conference , 23-25 February, Paris, France:

http://www.oie.int/fr/F_WILDCONF/intro.htm

- 11th EAAV Conference (European Association of Avian Veterinarians), 26-30 April, Madrid, Spain.

<http://www.eaavmadrid2011.es/>

- WAVES Conference (Wild Animals Vigilance Euromediterranean Society) , October 2011, UK

<http://www.wavesuk.org/>

- Fauna problematica, 3-5 February, Rome, Italy : http://www.faanaproblematica.org/Home_en.php

Topics include:

1. wind farms and wildlife
2. wildlife and land management (agriculture, forestry)
3. human activity, urbanization and fauna (land fragmentation, habitat erosion)
4. management of species in protected areas and possible interventions (e.g. selective hunting , capture,..)
5. invasive species and species in decline
6. genetic characterization of vanishing species
7. Introductions, reintroductions and restocking

- IMED 2011: Third International Meeting on Emerging Diseases and Surveillance, Vienna, Austria, 4-7 February 2011

<http://imed.isid.org/>

- 6th International Conference on Emerging Zoonoses. Cancun, Mexico, February 24-27, 2011

www.zoonoses2011.com

- InFER2011: Inference For Epidemic-related Risk. University of Warwick, Coventry, UK, 28th March - 1st April 2011

<http://www2.warwick.ac.uk/fac/sci/statistics/crism/workshops/infer>