

Book Reviews

Improving Animal Welfare. A Practical Approach. Edited by Temple Grandin. CAB International 2010. VIII and 328 p. ISBN-13: 978 1 84593 541 2

We live in an atmosphere of crucial social changes. A part of it is the new wave of attention aimed at living with animals, which have become our living companions. In the last decades care of their welfare has been the issue of interest of various cultural organizations. Not a single day passes that animal welfare is not mentioned in the media, to draw attention and activate public awareness. It is the concern of philosophers, scientists and professionals in various fields of interests. Many scientific and special magazines, even various books are published. In this flood of publications filling library shelves, sometimes appear publications which are worthy of specific attention. The publications stimulate, instruct and present new concepts. Among such books belongs the reviewed book edited by Temple Grandin.

In the concise preface the book calls to attention the OIE (World Organization for Animal Health, WOA), which in 2002 received an unanimous mandate from its 167 member countries to become the leading international organization in the field of animal welfare (*Holub: Acta Vet Brno* 76, 2007: 321-322; 77, 2008: 483-484 and 78, 2009: 187, 188-189), which OIE published in *Terrestrial Animal Health Code* for transport, slaughter and killing animals for disease control.

The text part consists of 15 chapters. Temple Grandin wrote 7. The rest are the work of 15 further contributors; from the USA 7, from Canada 5, from the UK 2 and from New Zealand 2. They have extensive experience improving animal welfare in both the developed and the developing world. In addition to their work in North America

and Europe, they have also worked in Brazil, Mali, western Africa, Uruguay, Chile, Australia, Philippines, Mexico, China, Thailand, Argentina and New Zealand.

The first five chapters are devoted to explaining reasons, why agricultural animal welfare is necessary, even in the social and ethical context, significance of good stockmanships and its benefits, implementing effective standards and scoring systems of assessing animal welfare. The other chapters discuss the broad spectrum of problems of painful husbandry procedures, euthanasia practices on the farm and slaughter plants not only of livestock, but also of poultry and fish, including the effect of the economic factors on the welfare of livestock, poultry and working draught animals in developing areas, and ways to successful technology transfer of behavioural (great attention is devoted to this) and animal welfare research on the farm and in slaughter plants.

All chapters have references, tables, figures and boxes, followed by several pages of useful web sites and instructive index.

The book is a very practical instruction of activity not only for those studying problems of practical application of animal welfare, but especially for those who are responsible for the preparation and instruction of future professional specialists in this field, mainly veterinarians, managers and animal scientists, to implement effective practical programmes to improve animal welfare.

We can only hope that this successful work gets to the hands of those in the field of today's multicultural world.

Antonín Holub

A.F. Fraser: The Behaviour and Welfare of the Horse, 2nd Edition. CABI, Wallingford, 2010 ISBN 978 1 84593 628 0

The horse, a close companion of the human species at times of peace and war, helper in moving loads and riders quickly over large distances, made much of our own history possible by its characteristics. This edition of the book summarizes the well-known life work and experience of the author, mirrors his enthusiasm and pioneer in science of applied animal behaviour. It presents the behaviour of the horse on 223 pages of text, and it is supplemented with a useful Glossary of terms, References and Index.

The Introduction deals with aspects of well-being, points out the close connection of veterinary medicine and welfare based on veterinary knowledge. Empathy and sentience along with rights and ethics and animal care are briefly analysed. The ability of the horse to care for itself under both natural conditions and domestication is mentioned, stressing our obligation to recognize and respect its sentience, pleasure and behavioural needs. The 16 chapters touch the specific areas of equine behaviour.

Their unconventional titles (e.g. Sensory Faculties and Behavioural Roots, Kinetic Behaviour and Racing, Mare/Foal Dynamics, Foal Function and Welfare, Equine Culture and Protection) promise new insights into the details of behaviour of the horse in view of long experience but also new research results.

In chapter 1, the development of equine behaviour is presented, dealing with evolution, different forms of learning and their importance, action patterns, homeostasis and needs. Explanation of the innate and genetically encoded behaviours points to the never ending delicate interplay of the two, it shows a sort of “eternal yin and yang” of behaviour. Here an especially pertinent view of animal intelligence is given. The chapter on sensory faculties and behavioural roots binds together the peculiarities of equine sensory systems and the logically ensuing behavioural outcomes. Both the periphery and underlying central mechanisms are treated. The neural substrate of behaviour (chapter 3) is presented in a brief and non-traditional way, including basics of neuroethology, and motivation explained in detail. In the chapter on behavioural homeostasis, based importantly on physiological homeostasis coined by W.B. Cannon, items such as reactive behaviours, including vocalizations, aggression but also ingestion and body care are discussed. However, emotional tensions and resulting impaired digestion can be found on p. 24 and again on p. 49. In chapter 5 on eating and drinking an enumeration of traditional food items contributing to nutritional welfare of the horse is included. There is another chapter (6) on body care (first treated in chapter 4) and evacuation with components of comfort behaviour containing also

types of motion, rest and play, forming associations between individuals; parts of social behaviour are dealt with here. Some of the information is thus overlapping. All types of gaits and other movements can be found in the next chapter. Spacial factors (chapter 8) deal with territoriality, needs of space, and cover several aspects of social behaviour, too. In chapter 9 we find analysis of rest and sleep, and other comfort behaviours (lying, standing, drowsing). Different types of equine work are presented next with transport of horses. The following chapters discuss all aspects of equine reproduction, and associated problems. Interestingly, the behaviour and welfare aspects of pregnant mares are not mentioned. Due attention is paid to the development of the most profound bond among animals – the mother-offspring bond. Development and social behaviour provides again descriptions of some behaviours shown earlier (saltation, play etc.). The closing chapters give an overview of the important issues of handling horses humanely, behaviour disorders and the human–animal bond.

Each book chapter has a Welfare Addendum. Nearly 120 photographs (though not all them of exquisite quality), drawings, graphs and tables illustrate and support the presented facts in an excellent way. The selection of references mirrors the most important work done in this area including older seminal literature and new findings. The book should find its way to the book shelves of university students of animal behaviour, veterinary students and practitioners, and all professionals working with horses.

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