

Free Wildlife Information for the Developing World

Wildlife Information Network (WIN), the charity that has for fifteen years published invaluable wildlife health and management information, is to make all of its information resources **Open Access** to the countries with anomalous currency.

This major move, the first step in WIN's Open Access initiative, will offer an ever-growing database of unique conservation information free of charge to every vet, wildlife decision-maker and student in 109 countries. Chief Executive Iain Boardman said, 'Considering the fact current resources of this kind have limited availability at low cost, the potential impact of this step on the lives of both animals and their conservators is huge.'

As of 15 March 2007, anyone who visits the WIN website – www.wildlifeinformation.org – from a low-currency country will be redirected to a free login page. From there, they will be able to access up-to-date and fully referenced information on species, diseases, treatment methods and husbandry guidelines without restriction. 'We have always offered our resources free to selected individuals so that until now this has only been possible on a much smaller scale,' said Mr Boardman. 'The feedback from those who have used it has been overwhelmingly strong, and thus we're absolutely delighted to finally be able to offer our information so much more widely.'

WIN is thoroughly supported by its current Western subscribers in this move. Director of Animal Health at Saint Louis Zoo, Dr Randy Junge, said "The donation of access to the WIN website to organizations in developing countries is a truly great service." International zoo vet Andrew Greenwood said "Educating people in how to help threatened species is a major part of the battle. This is a move that must not go unnoticed."

It is hoped that the initiative will also develop relationships between conservationists and academics in the eastern and southern regions and the West through WIN's membership directory. The launch of this landmark step will be celebrated at The Farmers Club, Whitehall on 15 March.

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The Wildlife Information Network (WIN) is a charity dedicated to saving wildlife and the environment through education. It is committed to making information on the health and management of captive and free-ranging wild animals and emerging infectious diseases available to wildlife professionals and decision-makers worldwide. WIN was set up in 1992 and became a registered UK charity (No. 1048059) in 1995. The Wildlife Information Network is also registered as a US Not-for-Profit organisation.

Wildpro® Multimedia is the software developed and used by WIN to provide information on re-emerging infectious diseases and the health and management of captive and free-ranging wild animals on its Electronic Encyclopaedia and Library. It is a living document, with new information being added constantly through the development of new modules. It is researched, developed and published by WIN to provide information to decision-makers worldwide, and users include wildlife managers, researchers, government officials, veterinarians, field biologists, zoologists, laboratory diagnosticians, zoological collections, conservation and welfare organisations, universities, and students of a wide variety of disciplines. Information is made available on the Internet and by CD-ROMs.

WIN CD-ROMs currently available:

West Nile Virus
Wildlife: Disease Investigation and Management (Birds)
Chronic Wasting Disease in Deer and Elk
Hedgehogs: Health and Management
Pain Management In Ruminants
Waterfowl: Health and Management
Foot-and-Mouth Disease
Wildlife: First Aid and Care
Elephants: Diseases and Treatment

