

**105**

**Summer 2020**

Price £2 (free to members)



# animalwatch

PUTTING ANIMALS ON THE AGENDA OF THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH



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Cover image courtesy of Lawrie Hills

## DORIS' DIARY

*Hello! My name is Doris, and I am a Border Leicester ewe with very large ears! I was rescued by ASWA secretary Sam Chandler, as I had outlived my usefulness as a breeding ewe.*

*Below are some great events we may enjoy!*

### **Wednesday 9 September**

ASWA AGM, via Zoom, 6pm. Please contact the Secretary for more information.

### **Sunday 4 October**

Animal Welfare Sunday.

ASWA Annual Service, St Botolph's, Boston, Lincolnshire, 10.30am (TBC). Preacher the Rt Revd Dominic Walker, OGS, ASWA President.

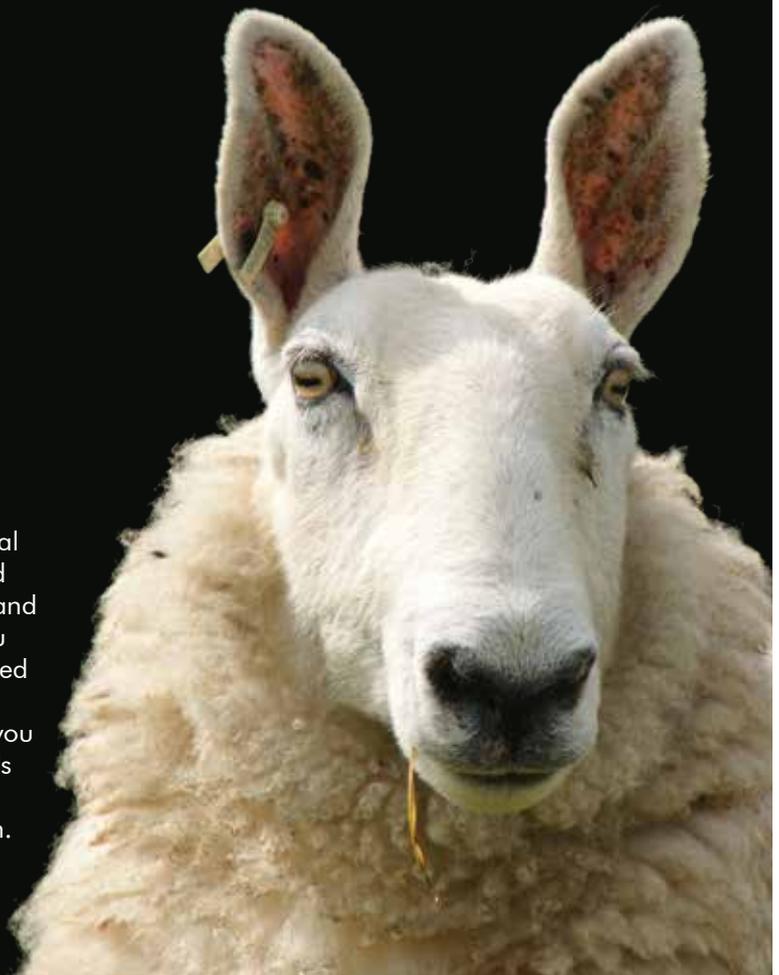
### **Saturday 10 October**

Animal Blessing and Thanksgiving Service for Pets, St Martin's Anglican Church, Mortimer Road, Kensal Green, London, NW10 5SN, 2pm. Led by the Revd Graham Noyce. All well-behaved creatures great and small are welcome but if your pet is nervous or you wish to remember a much-loved pet who has passed away, you may bring a photo to be blessed during the service. If you are unable to attend in person, you are welcome to send us the name and some details of your pet for inclusion in the service. For more details please email [animalblessinguk@gmail.com](mailto:animalblessinguk@gmail.com).

### **Sunday 8 November**

ASWA Remembrance Service for Animals in War, Animals' War Memorial, Park Lane, London, 3pm.

**For further details of events, please visit the website: [www.aswa.org.uk](http://www.aswa.org.uk)**



# HELLO AND WELCOME TO ANIMALWATCH

Welcome to *Animalwatch*. Due to the ongoing pandemic and the resulting changes in working practices, this issue is coming to you a bit later than it would have in 'normal' times. Please accept our apologies for this.

In this issue, we have some wonderful photos and reports from our members sharing their animal encounters during lockdown. We also have an interview with our Animal Friendly Church winners and the return of our Young Members' Page.

We hope that you enjoy keeping up-to-date with news and information on our website. Do check regularly for resources and information about upcoming events. Please do make a note of the dates in Doris' Diary and check out the important notices about our AGM and annual service.

Please send any items for consideration for *Animalwatch* to Revd Jennifer Brown, Editor, PO Box 7193, Hook, Hampshire, RG27 8GT. Email is even better – [animalwatch@jenbrown.org.uk](mailto:animalwatch@jenbrown.org.uk). Please note that, owing to space restrictions, it may not be possible to print all contributions. Please refer to the information about contributions to *Animalwatch* for further details and restrictions on submissions.

**Jennifer Brown, Editor**

The deadline for the Autumn magazine is **Monday 7th September 2020**.

## ASWA SPEAKERS AVAILABLE

If you have a group or service that would welcome an ASWA speaker, we would love to hear from you! We often travel a fair distance so please call to discuss it. We usually bring a stall and literature and always liaise with our hosts to ensure the talk is appropriate for their particular audience. Keep the invitations rolling in!

## A WARM WELCOME

**to our new members. We look forward to hearing from you.**

We are pleased to welcome five new members who have joined since the publication of the Spring issue.

To all our new members we extend a warm welcome and we would ask that you, along with our existing members, encourage others who share your concern for animal welfare to join. Introductory leaflets are available from the Secretary.

## CONTRIBUTIONS TO ANIMALWATCH

We very much welcome contributions to *Animalwatch* from our readers. We are interested to hear about the positive things being done for animals in your churches and communities. We also welcome informed pieces on specific areas of animal welfare, such as items relating to animal welfare law, the history of animal welfare, and theology. Articles should be submitted to the Editor

either as typed manuscripts by post or by email as Word documents, with any accompanying photos sent as high-resolution jpg files. Items submitted as pdf files or email text cannot be accepted. Submissions must be the contributor's (sender's) own original work, and (unless otherwise agreed) not published elsewhere. Items may be edited for length, readability and

appropriateness of content. Publication of submitted items is at the Editor's discretion. In submitting an article, the contributor assigns copyright for the piece to ASWA. For items submitted by email, please assume your item has been received unless you get a delivery failure notice. The Editor is unable to acknowledge receipt of individual submissions.

## ASWA MERCHANDISE

**Available from the ASWA web site**

**ASWA literature:** a range of literature on a variety of animal welfare subjects available.

**PAWS for Prayer cards:** paw shaped cards with a prayer for companion animals printed on one side. £0.20 each.

**Egg Cards:** egg shaped cards with a prayer printed on one side. £0.20 each.

**ASWA bags:** handy cotton shopping bag with the ASWA logo. £4 each.

**ASWA badges:** show your support for ASWA by wearing a lapel badge with the ASWA logo. £1.50 each.

**Sticker sheets:** Activity sheet with stickers (ravens or bees), £2.00 each.



### ASWA Christmas card

Once again, Thea Olrog has created a unique design exclusively for the ASWA Christmas card. The card will be available to order from September, either on-line via our website or by sending a cheque made payable to ASWA. The price for this year's

cards is £5.50 for a pack of 6 (including postage). Made from good-quality stiff card with high-quality envelopes, each card is printed with a Bible verse and has ASWA's details on the back. Sending an ASWA Christmas card is a great way to help raise the profile of ASWA and the work that we do.



# GOOD NEWS

## Hope for pangolins

In June, the Chinese government announced that it has removed pangolin scales from its list of approved traditional medicine ingredients. That's great news for pangolins, one of the most trafficked and most endangered species in the world. If this change reduces trade in live pangolins, that will be good news for humans, too, as there is some evidence (although not yet conclusive) that the corona virus causing the current pandemic may have migrated from bats into pangolins before crossing to humans.



# NEWS & NOTICES

Don't forget, you can follow ASWA on Twitter – [aswaneews](https://twitter.com/aswaneews)



You can also keep up with what's new via our website – [www.aswa.org.uk](http://www.aswa.org.uk).

Check the web site for the latest resources, including those for youth & children.

## Animal-friendly Church awards

Is your church animal friendly? ASWA sponsors the Animal-friendly Church award to recognise those churches that take animal welfare seriously as part of their ministry and mission. Churches can apply at any time and those meeting the necessary criteria will be awarded animal-friendly church status. Information is available on the website or from the Secretary.



## ASWA AGM

The AGM Scheduled for May has had to be postponed as a result of the COVID-19 restrictions. The AGM will now be held on-line on Wednesday 9th September at 6pm. For full details, please see the notice elsewhere in this issue.

## ASWA Annual Service

At the time of going to press, we hope to be able to hold our annual service on Sunday 4th October, as planned. The service is to be held at St Botolph's Church, Lincoln, at 10.30am. Please see the notice elsewhere in this issue for information about alternative plans should this change.

## ASWA NEWS

### ASWA offers support in lockdown

As you may be aware, many charities have been suffering a loss of income during lockdown. As people have been furloughed or, in some cases, lost their jobs or businesses, they have been unable to support the causes that rely on their donations. Animal rescues have been no exception, and ASWA was pleased to be able to support Hillside Animal Sanctuary with a small donation. Hillside do very important work, rescuing horses, ponies, farm animals, dogs and small mammals, to name just a few. It's great to be able to team up with an organisation like Hillside to help keep vulnerable animals safe, well and loved.

## TALKING POINT

### All for our use?

Although it hasn't been confirmed, some scientists think that the corona virus that causes COVID-19 originated in bats, then jumped to probably at least one other animal species before infecting humans. Trade in wildlife for food and traditional medicines, as well as for the exotic pet market, brings human beings into close proximity with animals we wouldn't otherwise normally encounter. Human expansion into wilderness areas also increases the chances of human-animal encounters. These activities also stress the animals involved, making them more prone to diseases – diseases that can, in the right conditions, make the jump to humans. Do we have the right to assume that every corner of the earth should be open to our use? Are other animals ours to do with as we please? Do we consider the risks to ourselves, as well as the inevitable harm to animals, that result from the way we treat the earth and our fellow creatures?

## OBITUARY

### Terence Howard

It is with sadness that we announce the death of Terence Howard, a longstanding ASWA supporter.

### Meryl Tookaram

It is with sadness that we report the death of Meryl Tookaram, a longstanding friend and supporter of ASWA. She lived in Arundel and loved the Cathedral.

## ANIMAL FOODBANK

Founder of the animal foodbank (ALFS or Alfsherts) Tina, is passionate about animals and their welfare. This is how she came up with the idea for an animal food bank. "One day, walking my old dogs around the cemetery my house backs on to, I saw a Hertford Food Bank Vehicle supplied by Asda. If there is a food bank for people, why not for pets? So Alfsherts was born!"

ALFS is all about helping people that are struggling to feed their pets. The goal is to prevent those people having to rehome pets purely because they can't feed them. With the current climate, there has come a growing number of people that find themselves financially unstable. Giving up pets at this time would be heart-breaking, yet another thing that's lost. Pets are, as we know, part of our families and our support networks.

We have offered support to families struggling with mental health issues or that have found themselves in dire straits, having no money and children to feed. In one case, a teacher got in touch with us on a family's behalf and we gladly helped them. We have helped professionals who have lost their jobs, their life changed on a sixpence, and had a 14-year-old Staffordshire Bull Terrier to feed. They were referred by a food bank. We've also assisted a lady with a pregnant cat. We are now supporting the mum cat and five kittens with food and worming up until eight weeks. We will also assist in rehoming with full rescue back-up and neutering contracts, if needed. If we do ever have to re-home a pet, it is done only using our wonderful foster homes. We won't use kennels for any of the animals we help. These, and many others we are

happy to help, are just relieved that their beloved pets are able to stay put. We want to reach as many people as we can. We endeavour to turn no-one away, and have offered support to wildlife as well as domestic animals.

The larger we grow, the more food donations we will need to keep up with demand. It would be amazing if our community could come together in these difficult times and contact us if they need help or can donate pet food in whatever quantity. It all helps! We will take opened or split bags and Pets at Home in Hertford regularly

supply us with split bags, which we then divide up into clear bags for our bundles. ALFS also has a PayPal account and an Amazon wishlist to which people can donate if they are unable to donate pet food.

PayPal link: [https://www.paypal.me/alfsherts?locale.x=en\\_GB](https://www.paypal.me/alfsherts?locale.x=en_GB);  
Amazon wishlist link: [https://www.amazon.co.uk/hz/wishlist/ls/1LFKNMKE3KYTX?ref\\_=wl\\_share](https://www.amazon.co.uk/hz/wishlist/ls/1LFKNMKE3KYTX?ref_=wl_share);  
Website: <https://www.alfsherts.com>.

**Rebecca Hadgett**

**ALFS**



## THE VEGGIE TRAVELLER

Because of restrictions that have been in place to prevent the spread of COVID-19, there is no Veggie Traveller review in this issue. These reviews will resume when travelling can once again be done safely. In the meantime, we hope that all of our readers will keep safe and well.



# NEWS FROM AROUND THE WORLD

## AUSTRALIA



### Impact of the pandemic on animal welfare

I would like to tell you about a couple of important animal issues happening during the current corona virus pandemic.

Firstly, the impact on companion animals. The virus has led some owners, perhaps due to job loss or sheer panic about what is happening, to surrender their animals to animal shelters. This presents difficulties to rescue groups, with diminishing numbers of volunteers, due to lockdown, being available to drive, often long distances, to distant shelters and council pounds to collect animals suitable for rehoming.

I have been in touch with RSPCA NSW, and they tell me that between late February and early May this year, 17% of surrenders related to, "cannot afford basic care, food, vaccines, etc," due to the virus. In 2019 this figure was only 8%. However, since the beginning of March, 2800 animals have been adopted. It is hoped that the animals have found their forever homes and will not be surrendered when people return to work.

Another group of animals impacted are those in zoos and wildlife parks. The zoo animals are apparently getting bored without visitors to look at, and some have been taken round and about in zoos with their keepers. Some people may think that they shouldn't be in zoos at all, but I think it is better than several terrible alternatives.



Now to a big picture story. As I've often said in my news from Australia, live exports to the Middle East are much disliked by the community, though they continue. In wake of the Agassi Express scandal, when 2400 sheep died of heat stress, the Ministry of Agriculture decreed that from 1st June to 14th September, there were to be no live export shipments to the Middle East as it was far too hot.

In late May the Al Kuwait arrived in Fremantle, Western Australia, to pick

up 56,000 sheep, assembled for the trip to the Middle East. However, a number of crew members were found to test positive for Covid-19, and were put into quarantine. (Currently 21 crew members). There was no way the ship could sail by 1st June. The exporter requested an extension which was refused by the Federal Minister for Agriculture, who said he had considered legal, welfare and trade implications. As one would expect, Animals Australia and RSPCA Australia (the umbrella body for the various State RSPCA organisations) provided the Minister with plenty of information to help inform his decision. The plan was to slaughter the animals in Australia. This would have been a far better outcome for those sheep.

Unfortunately, the Federal Government Department of Agriculture has gone back on its own regulation of disallowing live exports to sail to the Middle East between 1st June and mid-September, and is allowing 50,000 sheep to sail. Animals Australia has lodged an Appeal in the Federal Court, which was to be heard as we go to press. Animals Australia says the decision reversal, "will not only subject sheep to inevitable suffering from heat stress, it also renders these new laws meaningless and undermines any government assurances that animal welfare is a priority in the regulation of the live export industry."

So, we await further developments. Keep safe everyone.

**Olga Parkes**

## SOUTH AFRICA



### SA.MAST: facing danger to keep animals safe

We have received a report about SA.MAST (South Africa Mass Animal Sterilization Trust) who, as well as providing sterilisation of pets, also provide emergency veterinary care and other services.

After facing a funding crisis, SA.MAST received sufficient donations to allow them to remain open during the pandemic and continue to provide help and emergency veterinary care. Loss of funding during the pandemic wasn't the only challenge that they faced, however. On 24th April, they were the victims of an armed robbery. Despite this, staff were performing an emergency operation only an hour later. Talk about keeping calm and carrying on!

Like many charities, SA.MAST continue to face a funding shortage as people see their own incomes reduced and futures uncertain because of the pandemic. If you would like to support their work, you can visit their web site: [www.samast.co.za](http://www.samast.co.za).

## SWEDEN



### Turning to companion animals in lockdown

The COVID-19 pandemic has led to an hysteria concerning pets. People are finding it hard to deal with social isolation and are checking out shelters and internet sites for unwanted pets or even contacting breeders and getting one. Many shelters are now voicing an increasing worry concerning the safety of these pets in the future. Once the pandemic calms down they risk being faced with people dumping their pets as social isolation may not be as strict as it is now. For instance, there are already about 150,000 stray cats in Sweden. We do not need any more unwanted cats.

Anna Harenius, expert at the Animal Rights movement, says in a statement that it is imperative that people get proper information about the animals they adopt or buy. Dogs are social animals needing a pack and cannot be left alone all day. The fact that cats can deal with loneliness better than dogs does not mean they can be left. They still need to be taken care of twice a day, fed and given fresh water. She underscores that it takes a lot of time and commitment to take care of a pet. People need to understand that a vet bill costs money and if and when a pet becomes ill or injured their owners need to have that money ready. They also need to understand that the pets may live for 10, 15, 20 years or more.

The Animal Rights movement has a list of things to take into consideration before you get a pet for yourself or your family:

Do not buy – adopt! Give a homeless pet a forever home. Check out the shelter. Go to different shelters, find out about them, go see what it looks like and the conditions in which the animals live. The Animal Rights movement supply a list of shelters in Sweden as a help. Emergency home action means considering taking a pet in for a limited time to help a shelter that is overcrowded. This is a good way to get a feel of what it is like to take care of a pet. If you decide to adopt a pet, make sure that it is ID tagged and has been registered properly.

**Sandra Kinley**

# ANIMAL ENCOUNTERS IN LOCKDOWN

Alongside all the sadness and suffering that the COVID-19 pandemic has brought there have also been moments of joy. The lockdown we've been experiencing has led to a decrease in road traffic, human presence outdoors and noise pollution. As a result, animals have become a bit bolder and people have been having some amazing animal encounters, including some of our members. We wanted to share some of their stories and images.



I am the administrator at St Gabriel's church in Sunderland and am also a trustee at Binky Buns rabbit and guinea pig rescue. I have been so glad to find ASWA which combines my love of animals with my love of God.

During the lockdown a little bunny was abandoned under a car outside a vulnerable church member's house. Well, our inn was full, but we felt led to rescue this little guy anyway. It was a decision we have not regretted. A volunteer unexpectedly came forward to help the rabbit who is now called Chester. She says that in this terrible time of isolation he has brought her as much joy as she has given him. With the devoted attention she has been able to give him while she's had to stay at home, he has gone from an unwanted bunny who was left on the street like a piece of rubbish to one who truly loves life and people. It has been a beautiful transformation.

**Joanna Rodgers and Team BB**

On a weekday during lockdown, I accessed St Clement Church building to write an entry in the burial register. As I unlocked the porch door I was first struck by our usual vase of welcoming flowers, once bright blooms, but now withered and brown. 'How sad' I thought, until I noticed ladybirds sheltering in the withered petals.

When I opened the main door into church the stillness, the silence, was overwhelming. As I walked around

I saw a spider has carefully made a web on the cross behind the altar, our bats are obviously enjoying having the building to themselves, and in my mind's eye I imagined the church mice having a sing song around the piano of an evening.....I felt like an intruder and left as quietly as I could.

As much as I look forward to the time when we can once again join together in worship in our beautiful building, I take comfort that life continues within it, highlighting the fact that we only share our world, and perhaps nature survives better without us.

**Di Wiloughby**

The birdsong in Wimbledon has been wonderful since lockdown.

**Christine Denwood**



Some may say hooray and some lament, but there are only three species of indigenous snake in Britain. The one that most people are likely to encounter is the Grass Snake, quite often seen in gardens especially those which may have ponds, damp areas, or streams running nearby. The Grass Snake's colour varies from olive drab green to an almost bluey green in some cases and it has a yellow collar just behind its head. Occasionally in older specimens the colouration fades to a creamy white. It can grow up to 1metre or more in length and can be very swift in the summer sun. It is completely harmless to humans and is of a timid nature, quickly slithering off to cover if it perceives danger.

The rarest of the British snakes is the Smooth Snake, confined to the sandy southern dry heaths of Dorset,

Hampshire, and Surrey. The name derives from its very smooth scales that give it an almost shiny appearance, especially when it has just shed its skin. The basic colouration is grey with a black eye stripe. Some specimens have what appears to be a crown pattern on the top of their head, hence the Latin name, 'Coronella'. This snake is very secretive and unlikely to be seen unless one has a lucky encounter.

The most widespread of the three snakes is the Adder, which generally inhabits heathlands, field edges, and downlands. Males have a background colour of creamy white with a black zig zag stripe running the length of their back, females have a darker biscuit colour background with a brown zig zag stripe. Both have red eyes with cats-eye pupils. The Adder is Britain's only venomous snake. It is a timid, retiring animal unless cornered, when it will assume a 'strike' position to defend itself, but it is much more likely to hurry away to safety.

A small percentage of Adders are completely black (melanistic), melanism being an abnormal development of black pigment in their skin. These animals can look quite sinister with their black appearance and red eyes. Much more uncommon however is the example shown in the photo here, where the zig zag is replaced by a continuous black dorsal stripe. This specimen was noted in Kent during May of this year.

All three snake species are protected from persecution under the terms of the Wildlife and Countryside Act of 1981.

**Mike Preston, photo by Lawrie Hills**

## JUST LOOK AT ME NOW

It has been two years since we started the lengthy procedure to bring Betty, an African Basenji dog, over to the UK from Uganda. It has been quite a journey, but if you could see her now you would surely agree it has been worth all the effort and expense.

She may be “just a dog” to some people, but to those of us who love and care for animals, Betty is a creature who deserved a break and we were able, collectively, to make it happen.

It has not been easy at times. Before she arrived, I had to go to Amsterdam to collect her as she had to fly into this country accompanied. The KLM flight from Entebbe stopped off in Holland and she was transferred to a different plane for our flight to UK. We were met at Heathrow airport by Samantha and Henry Chandler. After checks at the Animal Reception Centre, we were kindly driven up to Derby where we introduced Betty to Margaret, her new “mum.” Fortunately, they bonded very quickly. Betty has a most endearing character and expressive face. She is easy to love.

There have, however, been bumps along the way. Due to her past life, she can be wary of men, especially if they have something in their hand (she was used to being beaten). She had been kept in squalor all day in a dark shed, released at night as a guard dog, when she had to scavenge the rubbish dumps and pits to find her own food. She had several litters of puppies and along the way had picked up a disease which had produced a huge tumour which was a TVT (Transmissible Venereal Tumour). Unfortunately, these are all too common in Africa.

When I found her, I persuaded her owner to let me have her operated on. This was done on a towel and bin liner in a back garden. After Betty arrived here, it became apparent that the tumour had re-grown, necessitating more surgery and several weeks of chemotherapy.

Thanks to ASWA support, Betty is now seemingly fully recovered. She is a great companion for Margaret and the two of them have recently moved into a retirement village bordering fields and woods which are ideal for her

daily walks. Betty is looking quite “fat and well-favoured”, is extremely well cared-for and is happy and contented. She greets me with huge affection and loves a tummy rub and lots of fuss.

A real “rags to riches” story, canine-style. With many, many thanks to

ASWA supporters – we couldn’t have done it without you! Betty is one of the lucky ones. I still grieve for the many other Bettys I had to leave behind.

**Mary Mills**



# INTERVIEW WITH ANIMAL FRIENDLY CHURCH WINNERS, ST JAMES'S, PICCADILLY AND ST JOHN THE BAPTIST, PENDEEN

We invited the two churches who were joint-winners of Animal Friendly Church 2019 to talk to us about winning the award. Here we share the responses to our interview questions from Deborah Colvin of St James's Church, Piccadilly, and Revd Karsten Wedgewood of St John the Baptist, Pendeen.

## **Congratulations on winning this year's Animal-friendly Church award. What does it mean to you that your church has received this award?**

*Deborah:* St James's has a long tradition of honouring all of God's creation and we try to translate this into concrete choices as much as possible. Our animal welfare commitment goes hand in hand with our eco-activity, which has resulted in a Gold Eco Church Award. The ASWA Award is very welcome for having recognised our attempt to serve God through care for all God's creatures.

*Karsten:* At St John the Baptist Church in Pendeen we are delighted to have won the award as we feel animals very much have a place in our church. The psalmist prayed, "Let everything that has breath praise the Lord" and we can only echo that. All of us, people and animals alike, are loved and cherished by God. The plaque by the main door is a celebration that our church is not just there for an exclusive section of God's creation. To have been recognised for something that is second nature to us has been a wonderful gift.

## **Is being an animal-friendly church something that is important to a majority of the congregation?**

*Deborah:* Being animal-friendly is seen as an integral part of SJP's commitment, although the level of active engagement naturally varies. Some proposals require longer analyses and conversations, but we do not encounter opposition to animal-friendly initiatives. Whatever new action we propose is discussed with the community in order to garner broad support. Sometimes this process may take a bit longer, but we believe that it is essential in order to grow together as a community in whatever we do. Most members of the congregation are very supportive of

our animal welfare work and we are proud to count Joey, the spaniel who lives with rector Lucy Winkett, among our supporters.

*Karsten:* Absolutely! As a Church of England priest I have known many churches and I can genuinely say most congregations wouldn't have been able to see the funny side of a cow having 'a bit of an accident' in the back of church during the pet service. Members of Pendeen Church are not just very accommodating of animals and their needs but also actively promote animal welfare issues and campaign against animal cruelty.

## **Has winning this award helped to raise the profile of animal welfare in your church? Has it had any impact on how your church is viewed in the community?**

*Deborah:* This award and our broader collaboration with ASWA, for instance through the hosting of last year's Annual Service, have helped various members of the congregation to develop more curiosity about what we were already doing on the animal welfare front. Many people enjoyed sharing in the lovely and plenteous plant-based lunches after the event with Tony Campolo and after the ASWA Annual Service, which offered great opportunities for conversations about animal welfare too.

*Karsten:* Yes, it has. I wrote about it in our parish magazine and it's been quite a talking point in the community. I think sometimes churches focus very much on young families and somebody who has a pet rather than a child in their life can easily feel left out, as if their love for their pet somehow isn't in the same league. This award has helped to make it very clear we honour all caring relationships not just between people but also with other species.

## **Can you tell us about some of the animal-friendly things that your church does?**

*Deborah:* Dogs are often present at our services, we regularly include animals in the intercessions, our shared meals are increasingly plant-based, we take care of our garden in a way that not only avoids harm to its inhabitants but actually offers a welcoming environment for all animals who live there or simply pass/fly through it. These are just a few examples, but the main point is that we try to consider the animal welfare impact in all we do.

*Karsten:* People are welcome to bring their animal to church at any time, but we do have particularly animal friendly services. During Advent we have a 'Carols with the animals' service, a service with our primary school choir where we sing a few carols and say a special blessing over each animal present. The proceeds from this service then go to our local animal sanctuary. Also, our midweek Communion service is well supported by a strong canine congregation whose attendance is duly recorded in the service register. We include them also when it comes to receiving Communion and they receive a gravy bone each at the communion rail.

## **What advice would you give to other churches that want to be more animal friendly?**

*Deborah:* What we are doing is deeply rooted in the call of the Gospel to pay attention and take care of the needs of others, whoever they are. We are asked not to forget even a sparrow, and this mental habit naturally leads us to make some concrete positive choices. It is important to be clear and visible about what we do, because it shows what we are like. Welcoming dogs in church together with their human friends only requires a bowl of water in a corner. Our canine guests

tend to be well behaved, including when they join in the singing. If there are shared lunches, it is quite easy to challenge the congregation to focus on plant-based recipes, which helps both animals and the environment. Some decisions might require resources or deeper cultural changes, but if the church is clear in its commitment towards all creatures it is the sense of direction that counts rather than the timetable. Probably delegating one person to formulate proposals – and listening to them – would help, if there are members of the congregation who are particularly interested in animal welfare, linking ethical principles to the call of the Gospel.

*Karsten:* Just give it a go, you won't regret it, but here is one important piece of advice very close to my heart: I used to work as a Guide Dog trainer before I put on the dog collar myself and we would never have just thrown

a dog into a new situation. So just because we think it's lovely welcoming animals in our services doesn't mean they feel the same about it. In fact, to an animal the experience might be as stressful as a visit to the vet and therefore it's vitally important to build it up and familiarise them slowly (such as sitting in church alone during the day, taking them to a coffee morning or smaller services, etc.).

### **Does the church have any plans to expand what they do for animals?**

*Deborah:* We consider all our activities as a work in progress, to be constantly assessed and possibly improved. More could be done in the area of procurement of food, toiletries and cleaning products, but improvements can already be noticed.

*Karsten:* In West Penwith we have rare solitary mining bees and we're currently developing our churchyard into a flower-rich habitat for the bees to feed on.

We're also thinking about building a 'bug church', a smaller model of our church for wildlife to attend worship as and when they please. We have even come up with a name for it already: St John the Bugtist!

### **Is there anything else you'd like to tell us about your church?**

*Deborah:* Come and visit us when you are in London. Your four-legged friends will be welcome too!

*Karsten:* Come and say 'hello' if ever you are in the area. We are a very friendly bunch of people and animals and always keen to welcome visitors.

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## **HENS BEHAVING BADLY**

In the picture are my five rescued hens doing a little weeding, eating some of my plants, and enjoying their new-found freedom in my garden. There is such joy in seeing hens being happy and spirited, showing their natural characteristics.

Thousands of hens are still living in confined conditions on commercial farms and they are unable to express their natural behaviour because they are living in an unnatural environment. My rescued hens always come from the BHWT, (British Hen Welfare Trust). They are an extraordinary charity who have rescued and re-homed over 750,000 hens to date.

It was in 1995 that Jane Haworth, founder of BHWT, re-homed her first ex-battery hens, and her work has helped people like me become hen-keepers. There is nothing like having hens in your garden, but they need to be cared for just like any other pet. They may eat the odd plant or two, but it is so worth it to see my hens behaving badly.

**Janet Murphy**





## **ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF THE ANGLICAN SOCIETY FOR THE WELFARE OF ANIMALS**

Wednesday 9th September 2020 at 6:00pm  
to be held by Web Conference  
you may join on line or by phone

Due to the Covid 19 Pandemic, ASWA postponed the Annual General Meeting from 9 May 2020.

With the continuing special conditions, and in common with good practice, we plan to conduct our AGM on Wednesday 9th September 2020 at 6.00pm on line using Zoom! Members wishing to join may either join via the internet or hear the meeting by phone.

In order to 'attend' it will be necessary to pre-register your intention to join the meeting. Pre-registration can be by email to [angsocwelanimals@aol.com](mailto:angsocwelanimals@aol.com), putting "AGM ATTENDANCE" in the header, or if you do not have access to the web, by phone registering on 01252 843093 (answerphone).

You will receive a confirmatory email or message to confirm receipt and information will be sent to phone attendees seven days in advance of the meeting. Those attending via the internet will receive a browser link, meeting ID and password (please note – it isn't necessary to have zoom installed) by 4.00pm on the day of the meeting.

## **IMPORTANT NOTICE REGARDING ASWA ANNUAL SERVICE**

### **4TH OCTOBER 2020**

At the time of going to press, we are still unsure as to what Church of England guidance will be for Church services by October. We are still hopeful that we will be able to celebrate Animal Welfare Sunday together at St Botolph's Church, Boston. However, in the event that we need to cancel we will post a notice on our website and send out an email to our members. If you intend to make the trip to Lincolnshire, please check with the Secretary before you make your journey.

We are exploring a possible 'on-line' celebration in the event of cancellation.

Many thanks

The Secretary

# YOUNG MEMBERS' PAGE

Welcome to our young members' page. This page features in the summer issue of *Animalwatch* each year. We'd like to make this your space, and to do that we need contributions from our under-18s membership. We want to hear from you! And if you have a suggestion for a feature to add to this page, do let us know.

## SHACKLETON SEARCHES THE SCRIPTURES



Hi! My name is Shackleton. I'm named after a famous explorer, and I've been asked to help you explore the Bible to learn more of what it says about animals. As we look at the Bible passage, younger readers may want to read the story and think about these three questions:

1. What is this passage about?
2. What does it tell us?
3. Why is it special?

Older children and teenagers may want to dig deeper (I love digging!) and tackle the questions that follow the reflections on the passage. The important thing is to think about the story and what it means for your life and our life as a Church today.

### Genesis 2.18–20

*Then the Lord God said, 'It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him a helper as his partner.' So out of the ground the Lord God formed every animal of the field and every bird of the air, and brought them to the man to see what he would call them; and whatever the man called each living creature, that was its name. The man gave names to all cattle, and to the birds of the air, and to every animal of the field; but for the man there was not found a helper as his partner.*

This story from Genesis can teach us some important lessons about how we are to relate to animals. Adam gives the animals names, recognising that each is an individual, possessing unique characteristics. Some people think that Adam's naming of the animals shows us human power over non-human creatures, but it could be showing us something very different. When parents give a new baby a name, or when we name a pet, it is a way of recognising another soul and creating a relationship. More than that, this passage points out that, although human-animal relationships can't be the same as human to human

relationships, it is possible for there to be companionship between humans and animals, and this was part of God's plan.

- What kind of relationships have you had with animals? Has an animal, maybe a pet, been your friend? Have you had an animal who has made you feel better when you were sad or afraid?
- Think about Adam recognising the individuality of each animal he named. Do you think we pay enough attention to animals as individuals or do we just think all animals are more or less the same?
- What sort of relationships do you think God wants human beings to have with animals? Relationships that use animals to do things for us or provide us with food but don't take care of their needs? Or relationships that pay special attention to what's best for the animal?

## HILDA'S HIGHLIGHT

### Rodents of unusual size

They may not be as big as the rodents of unusual size in the movie *The Princess Bride*, but Eurasian beavers (which readers in the UK may have seen featured on this year's *Springwatch* on BBC2) are the second largest rodent in the world. They grow to be nearly 1 metre long and can weigh up to 38kg!



# WORDSEARCH

While we humans have been in lockdown, some animals have been taking advantage and coming out into the open. Some people have said that they've had more time over the past weeks to get outside and enjoy nature, and the quiet has made it easier to hear the birds singing. We've hidden 20 British birds, mammals, amphibians, fish and insects in our wordsearch puzzle. Can you find them all? (Hint: some words are written backwards!)

A	X	D	O	T	T	E	R	Y	U
C	O	E	L	M	I	T	W	E	N
F	B	E	Z	P	Q	A	V	N	T
E	C	R	O	W	R	D	B	E	E
G	E	K	I	P	L	P	A	X	F
O	D	O	O	R	M	O	U	S	E
A	X	D	S	Q	U	L	L	T	P
S	Q	U	I	R	R	E	L	V	Y
O	U	Z	F	O	X	C	R	M	S
R	A	O	T	U	W	R	E	N	P
G	O	D	G	W	F	E	M	R	T
O	I	B	S	A	L	M	O	N	H
H	E	R	I	K	J	A	W	E	C
E	V	O	Z	N	A	R	L	T	I
G	Y	L	F	N	O	G	A	R	D
D	J	N	E	K	S	T	I	Z	S
E	T	P	H	E	A	S	A	N	T
H	B	A	D	G	E	R	E	M	E
A	R	G	B	Q	P	A	F	W	J
B	B	L	U	E	T	I	T	F	N

BADGER

CROW

FOX

OWL

SALMON

BAT

DEER

HEDGEHOG

PHEASANT

SQUIRREL

BEE

DOORMOUSE

NEWT

PIKE

TADPOLE

BLUETIT

DRAGONFLY

OTTER

ROBIN

WREN

# DOMINION AND HUMANITY'S RELATIONSHIP WITH CREATION



As has been highlighted elsewhere in this issue, it is well-known that new human pathogens, particularly viruses, can emerge by transferring from other species to us, and that this is most probably the source of the novel corona virus causing COVID-19. This animal-to-human transmission is called zoonotic transmission, and it appears to be driven by humans encroaching on previously wild areas, leading to increases in human–animal contact, and by the trade in wild animals.

What should we, as Christians, think about this? First, we should not be surprised by it. We ourselves are part of the animal kingdom, one of many primate species, and like other animals, we are subject to infection and disease. The creation narratives of both Genesis 1 and Genesis 2 remind us that we are a part of the creation, connected to the earth and caught up in the vast web of life that it sustains. It's all too easy to focus on Genesis 1.26, which says that human beings are made in God's image and have dominion over the rest of creation, and think that we are somehow separate and above all other creatures. But if we look at where in the story that verse sits – in the midst of the sixth day, when all land animals are called into being – it

should serve as a reminder that while we do have a special calling, we don't have a separate existence or state of being from that of other animals.

If we are still in need of a dose of humility, then the opening of the second Genesis creation narrative should do the trick. In Genesis 2.7, we're told that God created the first human out of the dust of the earth. We are made of nothing more magnificent than dirt. But what we should really take away from this verse is that we have a fundamental connection to the planet on which we live – it is part of us, just as we are part of it. It's worth remembering that. What harms the planet harms us also. One manifestation of that harm is the emergence of zoonotic diseases.

Looking specifically at the issue of trading in wild animals for meat, the first Genesis creation narrative also has something to say. It says that we have been given plants and fruit for our food (Gen 1.29). Perhaps it is time to consider the benefits of a plant-based diet in protecting us from zoonotic disease. And this brings us back to the concept of dominion, or rule, set out in Genesis 1.26. What, exactly, does that mean? The fact that the instruction to eat only plants comes just a few verses

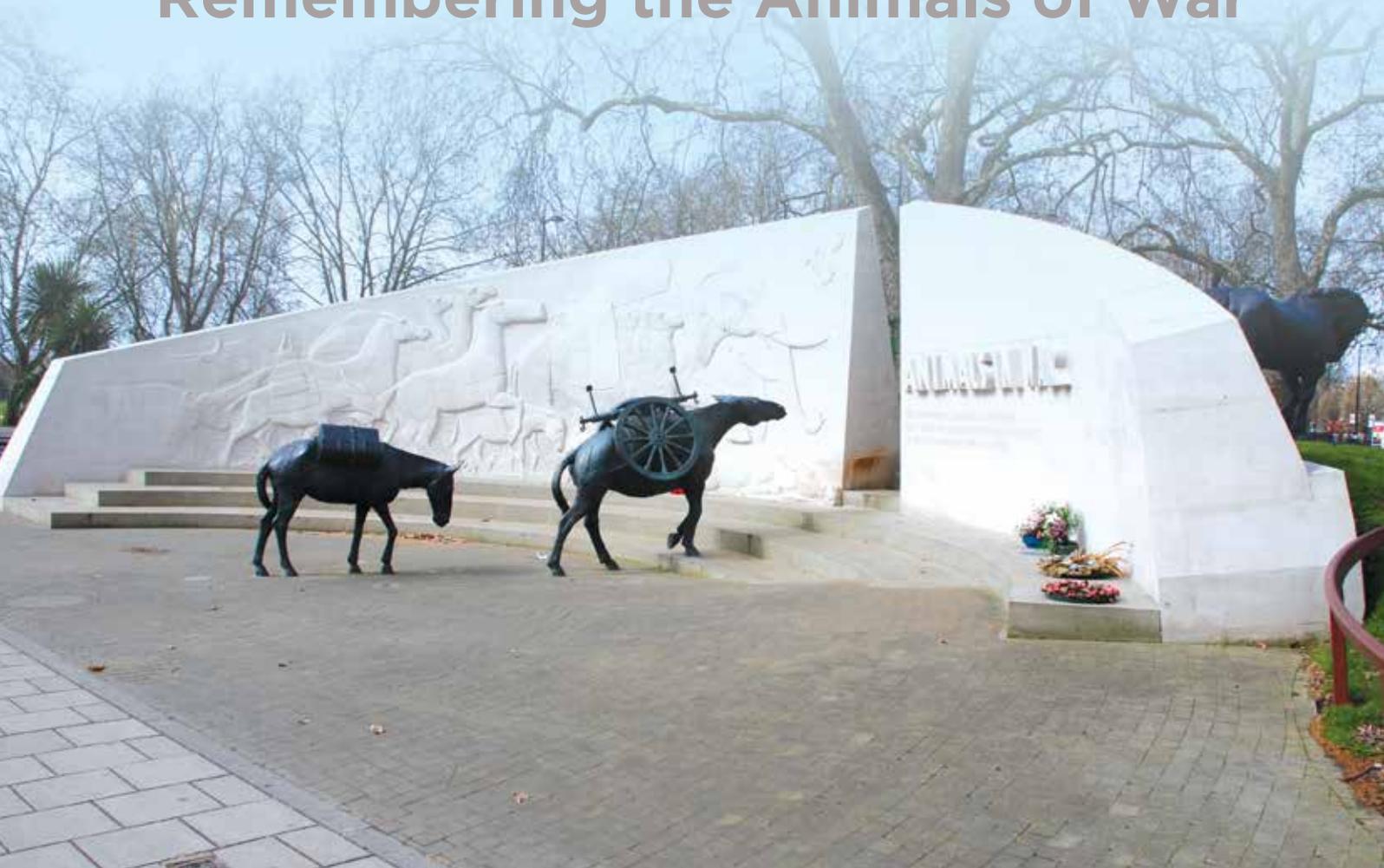
after the statement about dominion suggests that human dominion over the rest of creation is not limitless. There are boundaries. Not everything is for our use. Dominion is not domination. It is not about exploitation. As the psalmist noted, "The earth is the Lord's and everything in it." (Ps 24.1). We are not the owners of this world. When we rule over creation, we do so on God's behalf. And if we rule on God's behalf, we should rule in a way that reflects God's own rule. God's rule is one of nurture and care. God's power is displayed in love and service to his creation, as exemplified by the life and death of Jesus. Where God reigns, life is given, as is most clearly seen in Jesus' resurrection.

As we look at the state of the natural world today, Christians should bear these simple principles in mind – that we are part of creation, not separate from it; that we have a deep connection to the earth; and that, however we interpret it, our dominion is not without limits and is exercised on God's behalf. Those principles should shape our thinking about and our actions towards the planet and our fellow creatures.

**Jennifer Brown**

# THEY ALSO SERVED

## Remembering the Animals of War



Join us at the Animals War Memorial,  
Park Lane, London

**Sunday 8th November – 3.00pm**

Speaker: PC Dave Wardell and Finn

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Further details:

Anglican Society for the Welfare of Animals

**Tel:** 01252 843093    **Email:** [AngSocWelAnimals@aol.com](mailto:AngSocWelAnimals@aol.com)

**[www.aswa.org.uk](http://www.aswa.org.uk)**

# ANIMAL WELFARE SUNDAY 2020

## Sunday 4th October 2020



### Is your Church remembering animals on this special Sunday?

Free information packs including order of service and sermon suggestions on a variety of animal welfare topics plus ideas for young people and children.

All resources available to download from our website

[www.aswa.org.uk](http://www.aswa.org.uk)

or by post PO Box 7193, Hook, Hampshire, RG27 8GT, UK.

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