

(formal presentations)

**BEHAVIORAL INTERACTIONS RELATED TO THE HUSBANDRY OF MALE CALIFORNIA SEA OTTERS AT THE AQUARIUM FOR WILDLIFE CONSERVATION**

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Traditionally, public aquariums have exhibited female California sea otters (*Enhydra lutra nereis*) with a single male. Since more male than female pups have been recovered, more males are entering the rehabilitation program. Nearly all of the otters in captive programs were rescued from the wild as orphans. The inability to fully rehabilitate some of the orphaned otters has resulted in a general surplus of males. In response, the Aquarium for Wildlife Conservation has established the first all male colony of this species. A behavioral study was established to provide detailed information on the social relationships of male otters including shifts in social structure and how those shifts may effect other behaviors such as resting and grooming. The study was conducted on the Aquarium's male colony, which consists of four orphaned males ranging from two to five years old. Time budgets and activity patterns were examined and ethograms were established. Group observations were derived in accordance to a time sampling scoring system. Behaviors were recorded utilizing scan-sampling and random sampling techniques. Data was divided into three categories: pre-gating, gating, and post-gating. Pre-gating results showed an increase in aggressive interactions and intensity. Avoidance behaviors became increasingly evident and disruptive to "normal" activity patterns. Gating two of the otters in the adjacent pool resulted in an increased utilization of available pool space. Repetitive and/or avoidance behaviors decreased significantly and normal activity patterns were observed. Initially, reintroduction created a period during which shifts in social structure occurred, although avoidance behaviors did not occur immediately. As time progressed, avoidance behaviors became more evident in conjunction with increased aggressive activity that paralleled pre-gating conditions. Results indicate that the successful maintenance of male sea otter colonies relies on the ability to manipulate environmental conditions or group composition in a well controlled manner.

**DOLPHIN'S TRAINING FOR CYSTOSCOPY**

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In Zoomarine, Portugal, a 16 year old female *Tursiops truncatus truncatus* was thought to have a bladder tumor. Treatment required regular catheterization of the bladder and a cystoscopy was planned for further diagnosis. It was decided not to take the animal out of the water for all the treatments but instead to do it on medical behavior. Because we had few or no references about what is normal and what is not in the bladder of a dolphin, another dolphin was trained for the same procedure. The different steps of the training are shown in this paper.

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**TRAINING A TRAINER AT SEA LIFE PARK, HAWAII**

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This presentation examines the current process of developing new entry level employees into marine mammal trainers, from chicken training to cetacean and pinniped training at Sea Life Park, Hawaii. New trainers work through many different phases of training to gain competency at our oceanarium. Each major phase will be explored to uncover not only the operant conditioning techniques being imparted to the new trainer, but also the form of operant conditioning being used by senior staff to shape a new marine mammal trainer.