ISAZ

CALL FOR ABSTRACTS

23rd Annual Conference of the International Society for Anthrozoology

July 19-21, 2014 – Vienna, Austria

Animals and Humans Together: Integration in Society

The International Society for Anthrozoology (ISAZ) invites submission of both oral (15 minutes total) and poster abstracts for its 23rd Annual Conference which will be held in Vienna, Austria on July 19-21, 2014. The conference will focus on the role of human-animal interactions (HAI) in society, including a range of empirical evidence for the effects of HAI on human, animals and society. We also encourage the submission of free papers on all other relevant topics in the field of HAI.

Research abstracts include: 1. A list of authors, institutional affiliations, and email address for correspondence; 2. An introduction to the study and its objectives; 3. Methodology – including a description of the participants (both human and animal), such as number (n), type, age, gender, and species, and a description of the study design, data collection, and data analysis; 4. Main results, including statistical test, significance levels and test value (e.g., $F(df) = ?$, $p < 0.05$), and 5. Conclusions and implications for the field. Only abstracts reporting results will be eligible for oral presentation.

Critical review abstracts include: 1. A list of authors, institutional affiliations, and email address for correspondence; 2. An introduction to the objectives of the review; 3. Key literature references that have been reviewed or re-evaluated; 4. Main findings, and 5. Principal conclusions and implications for the field.

Abstracts must be in English (UK or US spelling is both fine, please be consistent), concise, informative and no longer than **4000 characters, including references**. All abstracts need to be submitted via the online submission system at http://isaz2014.univie.ac.at
There you also need to indicate whether an oral or poster presentation is preferred. Abstracts for oral presentations that are not selected may be eligible for a posters. A sample abstract is provided for reference below. Please indicate in the online submission system whether you want to participate in the ISAZ Best Student Presentation/Poster Award.

Deadline for abstract submission: January 31st, 2014.

Further information about ISAZ 2014 will be posted as available on the ISAZ website and on Facebook:
http://www.isaz.net/conferences.html
https://www.facebook.com/ISAZ2014

Sample Abstract

Type: Oral Presentation

Title: Building trust between humans and rodents: The Vienna Third Man Project (VTMP)

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People generally consider rats (*Rattus norvegicus*) as destructive parasites and vectors for potentially dangerous diseases. Therefore, cruel eradication campaigns are waged against these highly social and intelligent rodents (Adam & Darwin, 1882). However, attempts of destroying rats are neither successful nor humane. In the interest of human-animal integration in society, the Vienna Third Man Project (VTMP) aims at appeasing humans and rats via a program of hand raising, release of tame rats and by standardized and regular human visits to these rats in extended and historic Vienna sewer system.

Since 1949, a total of 5 760 rats have been carefully hand raised by 777 human volunteers. After testing for gentleness towards humans, rats were individually marked with permanent fluorescent fur colour (Ratochrome ®). Subsequently, these rats were released in groups after socializing them with already existing tame rat clans at five strategic hot spots in the extended Vienna Sewer system. Rats are visited once a week (www.Dritteanntour.at/) by a group of volunteers (total of 5 813 since 1953) who walk through the Vienna sewer system along standard trails. Every rat they meet is checked for identity with a fluorescent lamp and its position in the sewer system is determined. Then the rat is slowly approached and contacted and its response rated on a 5-P Lickert scale (1: escaping at a distance .. 5: rat approaches for petting). Then a piece of food (1g of Wiener Schnitzel) is offered by hand. In addition, automatic video recordings are performed for 5 min per hour at the five release positions since 1983. Time series analysis was done in SPSS, supported by GIS.

Based on 732 533 rat encounters protocolled by the sewage system walkers and another 2 778 213 rats recorded by the camera system, we found that the frequency of hand-raised rats and their offspring increased within the Vienna sewer system from 0.05% in 1953 to 72.5% in 2013. Only hand raised rats approached human for petting. In their descendants, sociability with humans decreased steadily, but still rats of the "tame" clans were more tolerant to human closeness that rats from wild packs ($p<0.0001$) and only rats from tame clans took food from humans (in 66.6% of all cases when food was offered by hand). In contrast to occasional incidents with wild rats, no individual from a tame pack ever attacked a human volunteer. Individuals from tame rat clans were significantly more frequent than wild rats particularly at areas frequently visited by our friendly volunteers.

We conclude that by between-species socialization, millions of people have the potential of living in peace with millions of rats in any urban environment. Hence, VTMB made the world a better for humans and animals, the more as it also features a special Rat Petting Program (RPP), a Foster Program for Deserted Rat Pups (FPDRP) and a Human-Friendly Rat Feeding Program (HFRFP; for more information see www.VTMB.at). Funded by IHRA grant # P001; work conducted under University of Vienna R-Ethics commission license # 703 555.

Adam, FH & Darwin, C. 1882. Rat Pack in Paradise. Vienna: Sewer Press.