

THE SHELLFISH NETWORK
NEWSLETTER, AUTUMN 2008

NO 49

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PLEASE NOTE NEW ADDRESS!!



Aims: 1) To increase public awareness of the fact that shellfish are living creatures capable of experiencing pain and stress.

2) To stop the cruelty involved in, and eventually to bring an end to, the slaughter of shellfish for human consumption and other abuses.



This is a photo of our stand at the wonderful Vegan Festival on 7 September. We had a very busy day, and made £55. All the children were fascinated with the creatures (papier mâché –not real! the creatures that is, not the children) and the stand was constantly crowded. We filled many more pages of our petition, which is now in the thousands. My other half arrived at four in the afternoon and had to queue outside because the hall was so full. What a day!

+You will be interested to know that I have been in communication with the Anglian Offshore Dredging Association (AODA), which is working on an assessment of dredging and taking opinions from all organisations with an interest in the effects of offshore dredging. The aggregate industry is vast and covers not only ornamental aggregates, but also those used in

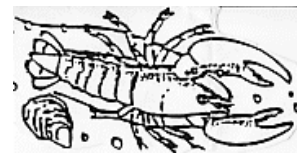
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cement and concrete making, road building and various other uses, all of which are using materials hauled from our seas with little or no concern for the wildlife and marine life affected, not to mention erosion of margins, sand dunes and sea beds. So I was delighted to be able to add our comments to the questionnaire provided by AODA which seems to be at least one company concerned about what we are doing to our seas. I have also answered a long questionnaire on the Scottish Marine Bill. As far as I can ascertain, there is no license system in Scotland for dredging, but there is in England. This is yet another area where human enterprises are affecting the planet. Not only is acid rain causing shellfish the inability to grow strong shells, but the bottom dwelling marine life is being scooped up and deposited on land, where it dies. This also affects the wading bird population and so on. So if your gravel gets weeds in it – tough!! Julie.



LOBSTERS, CRABS ETC.

+ There was a somewhat bizarre story in the *Telegraph Magazine* 26. 7. 08 concerning India's First War of Independence. This was according to WB Lord in his book 'Crab, Shrimp and Lobster Lore' 1867. During this war, a box of regimental stores fell into the hands of the rebels who, thinking they had come across a cache of deadly ammunition, packed the painted tins into their massive guns, aimed them at the British and with a 'thundering roar fired preserved lobster from Fortnum & Mason's far and wide over the battlefield'.



+ Lobster liberation front returns to the south coast

Ahoy there mateys, its been a while since we had some fun down on the sandy beaches, arrrr t'was fun, we found them using our treasure map, and x marked the spot of the animal abuse. Lobster pots were smashed to smithereens and we hope the owners timbers will be well and truly shivered after the many dubloons worth of

damage caused. We also hope that the scurvy sea dog is not a smoker as when he walks the plank back to his boat there is petrol and other chemicals spewing from the watery depths of his engine after our swords went to work smell rather like cannon fodder. Source: *anonymous communiqué*, 7. 10. 08

+ Yet another gastronomic article that shows the greed and lack of compassion and understanding of so many of the human race towards non-humans, and who seem to look on almost all non-humans as food. *In The Sunday Times* 17. 8. 08, Paul Croughton (who I'm sure would not consider himself to be lacking in compassion), writes of 'Lobster ... at its finest straight out of the sea'. He joined the trawlermen of West Sweden for 'the ultimate gastronomic adventure'. He adds that in Gothenburg 'there is a sea full of shellfish falling over themselves to prove that they're the freshest thing for miles'. (You see what I mean? Ed.) In Grebbestad, where the water is Sweden's deepest, saltiest and richest, the fishermen have got together with local tourism companies to put on crayfish, lobster and oyster safaris for curious natives and hungry (sic) tourists. Inevitably, the crayfish are put in boiling water to 'cook' them. He goes on to describe how to 'dismantle' them. I won't go into detail! He adds, 'There's no better way to eat shellfish – with your fingers, the juice running down your wrist and off your chin'. (I only hope his best shirt is forever stained! Ed.)

+ Britain's first marine nature reserve, where fishing is banned, is around Lundy Island in the Bristol Channel. It was established five years ago as a prototype for sea-life reserves around Britain. The lobster population has increased so much that (every silver lining has a cloud! Ed.) it has spilled over into waters which can be fished, 'showing that conservation can strongly benefit fisheries'. (So says the article in *The Independent* 19. 7. 08. Obviously we do not want to benefit fish! Ed.). However, numbers of the velvet swimming crabs are showing a decline, which is thought to relate to predation from the lobsters. John Barbeary, a lobster fisherman, said '...we couldn't afford to have the zone made any bigger because it would completely ruin our business, and I think you'd find that with a lot of fishermen around the country – it would make it totally uneconomic.' Chris Davis, from Natural England which helped to set up the reserve, said the site is to protect the whole environment. The

(Westminster) Marine Bill, which is scheduled for next year, is likely to designate a series of conservation areas around Britain that will be representative of all types of marine habitats. However, it is unlikely that fishing will be strictly forbidden in all of them.



+ Marine experts believe that solving whether octopuses favour a left or right tentacle could help to relax the sea creatures. Staff at Sea Life Centres across Europe are using toys, including a Rubik's Cube and food in a month-long project. Visitors will be asked to observe which tentacles the octopuses prefer to use. Claire Little of the Centre in Weymouth, said the study could help to relieve stress among anxious octopuses. (I can think of a much better way of relieving their stress – I'm sure you can too! LET THE POOR THINGS GO Ed.) Source: *Daily Tel.* 7. 7. 08.

+ Eddy, a 3ft giant lobster, has a huge claw, about 18in long. When seafood supplier John Brannan saw the claw he decided to donate Eddy to the Blue Reef Aquarium in Newquay. Source: *Ind.* 12. 9. 08

+Thieves made off with more than 250 live crabs from a seafood processing plant in Lymington just after they had been landed. Source: *Daily Tel.* 29. 7. 08

+ The above little item is made all the more poignant when we learn from *PETA's* webpage on *FishingHurts.com* (captivating lives of crabs) about the lives and abilities of crabs. It seems that crabs are capable of learning and remembering information, just like other animals. A recent article in the *Journal of Neuroscience* concluded, 'Experiments with ...crabs demonstrate their remarkable capacity to learn and memorize visual features.' Crabs learn to avoid food that makes them ill and are able to adapt to changing cues in their environment. In one experiment, researchers moved a screen over the water above the crabs to mimic the flight of a seagull or other predator passing overhead. At first, the crabs ran into their burrows, but after they were 'tricked' a few times, they learned that the darkness didn't correspond with danger and they no longer fled. This proves that crabs' reactions are not merely rigid, unconscious reflexes – they react to

different stimuli based on what they have learned and remembered from past experiences. (The article is quite long and deserves a good read. Ed.)

+ Sadly, a giant crab weighing 17lb has been landed near Lyme Bay. It measured 2ft across and is thought to be the largest captured in British waters. Paul Worsley, who managed to haul the giant from the seabed, said it was big enough to feed at least 10 people. Source: *Daily Tel*, 3. 7. 08

+ There are, of course, various articles on eating these poor creatures and the gluttonous way people describe buying and killing them. For instance, in *The Sunday Times 'Style' Mag.* 6. 7. 08, under 'Buying live crabs', 'live crabs should move their legs when you disturb them.' (I think I would do more than move my legs when disturbed! Ed.) The article is called 'Grab a Crab' and the writer explained that he visited a shellfish company. 'It was like the waiting room at an open casting for Finding Nemo – tanks and tanks of crabs, lobsters and crayfish, all waiting for their big moment (sic). He adds that crabs are 'one of the joys of an English seaside summer.' (Funny, I enjoy seashores all year yet have never even caught let alone eaten a crab. But there, I obviously haven't lived, unlike the crabs, who make the summer so joyful! Ed.)

+ A bucket filled with 26 crabs was found dumped miles from their natural habitat in Shropshire. They were found by householder Jane Waine who contacted the RSPCA. Officers were sent round to pick up the crates and all but one of the crabs survived and are now in a quarantine unit at Birmingham's National Sea Life Centre. Source: *BBC News* 12. 8. 08

+ Anglers have been issued with a 'kill on sight' message to combat the spread of American Signal crayfish. This species has become increasingly common in Scotland, especially at Loch Ken in Dumfries and Galloway. The Signal has been blamed for eating young fish and destroying their natural habitat. Environment Minister Mike Russell branded the Signal as one of the most problematic, invasive species in the country alongside the grey squirrel, Japanese knotweed and American mink. (I could add one more species far more invasive than any he would consider!! One who is killing the entire planet. Ed.)

Mr Russell added that 'As well as competing with valuable (sic) native fish such as trout and salmon, the holes they bore into river banks for their nests can leave the land weak and lead to a greater risk of flooding'. (Well, let's shore everything up with concrete so that we can drive our powerful motor boats about without worrying. Ed.) He continued, 'Any angler who catches one is urged to kill it on sight and to contact the Scottish Government, Fisheries Research Services, Scottish Natural Heritage or the Scottish Environment Protection Agency.' (Wow, it must be some monster! Ed) My thanks to *Debbie* 16. 8. 08 for that juicy little item. +And here's another one! Thanks to *Bernie*, 9. 8. 08 All the creatures killed in the river Colne in Colchester are believed to be because of a deadly plague of Turkish crayfish (*Austropotamobius pallipes*)



(This is the British crayfish, obviously far more polite than the others. Lots of British reserve and all that, don't ya know.)

LITTLE ONES

Burry Inlet, a beach in Llanelli, west Wales, has been hit by the mass death of about 6,000 tonnes of cockles. Some people are blaming the deaths on pollution, but no cause has yet been pinpointed. Some cockle pickers have accused Welsh Water of emitting pollution. But a spokesman for Welsh Water said it had invested £50million in sewage facilities. Source: *Daily Tel*. 14. 6. 08

+ King prawns are on course to overtake beef burgers as the nation's favourite barbecue food after a string of endorsements from celebrity chefs. Middle-class tastes are also thought to be behind the trend, along with the belief that seafood is more healthy than red meat. Sales of king prawns have increased by 14% in a year. The M&S fish specialist said that 'another reason why they have become so fashionable is because they are quick and easy to cook.' However, environmentalists argue that prawn farming has destroyed a quarter of the world's mangrove forests. (Still, we can't let that interfere with our taste buds, can we, especially when we don't have to make any effort! Ed.) Source: *Daily Tel*. 2., 8. 08



+ I think I mentioned in the last letter that a plague of jelly fish had invaded beaches from Sardinia to southern Spain. They massed off the Côte d'Azur and immense swarms of *Pelagia noctiluca*, the 'mauve stinger' were detected off the Balearic Islands. Around Minorca, the jellyfish density reached 8-15 per square metre. The jellyfish have stingers up to 10ft long and beaches from Cannes to Antibes had already been affected, despite the use of nets and a vessel designed to suck the creatures from the water. Sources: *Daily Tel*, 14. 6. 08 & *Sunday Times Travel*, 27. 7. 08

However, inevitably, someone has decided that 'They have a wonderful flavour and texture, crunchy but tender (ugh!). A Catalan chef is planning to take advantage of the plague to add them to his menu! Source: *Independent*, 27. 9. 08.

+ For the first time a man has been prosecuted for damaging mussels. These are the freshwater mussels, *Margaritifera margaritifera*, or the pearl mussel, cousin to the saltwater variety *Mytilus edulis*. The freshwater mussels live in fast flowing rivers and their numbers have dwindled so much by commercial exploitation and pollution that they are almost extinct and protected by several Acts and schedules. Source: *Ind*. 26. 9. 08

+ An article in the *Sunday Tel. Mag.* 30. 8. 08 states that 'A new initiative aims to revive the glory days for a beleaguered seafood industry'. (Personally, I would have thought it was the 'seafood' that was beleaguered, not the industry! Ed.)

+ I think I have mentioned before that Andrew Lane of Loch Fyne's Oysters was most helpful to the Network in discussing how to avoid cruelty to shellfish. He helped to set up our Guidelines on Avoiding Cruelty to Shellfish. We feel that the more people who start to think about the cruelty inherent in using shellfish as food the better. He sent the Guidelines to every one of his restaurants. Five years ago the employees of Loch Fyne's Oysters bought the seafood business. Source: *Daily Tel*. 6. 6. 08

HEALTH WARNINGS

+ Following a health scare, Belgian's only mussel farmer had his 'harvest' banned and so

the Belgians are now totally dependent on Dutch imports. Mussels or *moules et frites* is now the Belgian national dish. Source: *Daily tel*. 5. 8. 08
 + And in France oysters have been mysteriously dying in the worst crisis to hit France's shellfish industry for 40 years. Experts are unsure if the shellfish are succumbing to a viral epidemic or to poor water conditions caused by global warming. Some people are blaming genetically 'improved' oysters. The culprit could be the triploid oyster, which is modified to give it three pairs of chromosomes instead of two as is the case with the common oyster. However, it is only the oysters aged one to two years old which are dying. The crisis will have no impact on current oyster consumption, as the ready-to-eat, (sic) mature specimens have not been affected. (However, what of the future, I ask myself? Are we to be plagued with juvenile oysters running amok with no adult to show them how to grow into succulent and edible adults? Or are the jaded palates of the greedy to be disappointed? Let's hope so and that the juveniles have learnt how to take care of themselves! Ed.) Sources:



+One of Spain's leading female chefs has been arrested for allegedly selling toxic shellfish in her restaurant. Along with nine others, she has been detained for allegedly selling produce from a contaminated river. Scallops were allegedly illegally harvested from Ferrol's busy estuary. These Shellfish were banned because they were thought to contain high levels of a toxin that can cause amnesic shellfish poisoning. (See our info. sheets on our website

www.shellfishnetwork.org.uk for details of this toxin. Ed.) If found guilty the accused face four years in prison. A scallop salad with balsamic and truffle dressing appears on the starter menu for £17.80 at the restaurant! Source: *Daily Tel*. 9. 9. 08

+ And once again, authorities have banned for up to two weeks the sale and consumption of oysters from Arcachon Bay in south-western France. In the past three years, Arcachon and other oyster-producing areas have suffered a series of similar closures as a result of a 'mouse' test introduced as the EU standard five years ago. Liquid from oysters is injected into mice.

If two out of three mice die, the local oysters are declared to be unsafe for human consumption. (I really do sometimes wonder at the incredible idiocy of the human race! How many of us feed our pet mice with a diet of oysters and where in the wild do mice find oysters? It simply beggars belief! Ed.)

AQUARIA

+ A £600million scheme to build a giant freshwater research and visitor aquarium in Sterartby is 'hanging on by its fingernails', according to Bedford's Mayor. This is the famed Nyrah plan and the credit crunch could force investors to pull out of the plans as it has been badly hit. Nyrah is at present trying to raise money in the Gulf states. (Now, let's remember that 30,000 children die everyday in the world from malnutrition and related diseases. So let's build an aquarium where we can feed mice with oysters until they all die. That really is the answer to global warming, hunger, poverty and disease! Ed.) Source: *Bedford Times & Citizen*. 7. 8. 08

Dolphins at a marine park in Japan are on a low-fat diet after developing pot bellies and failing tasks in their aquatic performances. All 19 dolphins at Kinohaki Marine World are on a weight loss and exercise programme. (Perhaps they are bored out of their minds? I tend to comfort eat when I am bored or stressed. And my aquatic performances failed years ago! Ed.) Source: *Ind. 1. 10. 08*

SCIENCE

Further news from Simon Buckhaven. In November 2007 Professor Robert Ellwood of Queens University Belfast along with Drs. Barr, Laming & Dick published a Report (following a peer review) available at www.sciencedirect.com which confirms that their results indicate a central involvement in the organisation of the awareness and dealing with noxious stimuli of decapod crustaceans such as the prawn which is similar to vertebrates and is consistent with the idea that these crustaceans are capable of experiencing pain and distress. (Members will remember the excellent booklet by Advocates for Animals which covers the larger cephalopods and decapod crustaceans and their ability to experience pain and suffering.) Many governments are interested in considering the introduction of legislation for the humane killing of these larger animals. Norway has commissioned a Report from their Veterinary

Dept. on the Crustastun. Simon adds that subject to a verification by Dr. Dave Robb (who did research at Bristol University), PETA have stated that they too would endorse the use of the Crustastun as the most humane way of killing crustaceans, according to Simons discussions with them. Of course the Network and I know that PETA do not support *any* killing of these creatures, but sadly the 'industry' will continue for a long time yet, and in the meanwhile we have to consider the welfare of these poor little things. If they are going to be killed anyway, then it should be quick and painless. The Crustastun is the *only* humane method of killing and we congratulate Simon on his incredible hard work in contacting and demonstrating to various companies and governments.



+Scientists now think that rising sea levels were to blame for wiping out the dinosaurs. In a fascinating article in the *Ind. Extra*, 23. 7. 08, Sanjida O'Connell reports that 'Man is poised to become the most catastrophic agent since a giant asteroid struck the Earth 65 million years ago'. Scientists are also baffled by sea trout population collapse. In Wales, experts say the size of the fish has been steadily declining for the past five years. 'The fall in sea trout numbers is one of the great fishing mysteries of our time,' said Marcus Walters, who runs the Moray Firth Sea Trout Project. (Perhaps the two articles are connected? Ed.) Source: *Ind. 6. 10. 08*

+ Schemes to protect natterjack toads, fritillary butterflies and sharks are to receive funding as part of a £5.5m programme to help England's most threatened wildlife. Birds will also benefit from the cash as well as wetland landscapes and marine species, Natural England said. The Government's conservation agency will also fund projects which aim to preserve traditional orchards and moves to restore hedgerows in an attempt to help hazel dormice and halt the loss of biodiversity. The money will go to conservation groups. (It seems only a few years ago that the 'guardians of the countryside – hunter farmers – were grubbing up the hedgerows! Now we depend on the govt. to put

them back. Ah well, there's nowt sa queer as folk! Ed.) Source: *Ind.* 6. 10. 08

+ British scientists have discovered hundreds mor methane 'plumes' bubbling from the Arctic seabed, in an area to the west of the Norwegian island of Svalbard. Methane is 20 times more potent than carbon dioxide as a greenhouse gas and the latest findings suggest it is being released in significant amounts from within the Arctic Circle. Source: *Ind.* 25. 9. 08

+ Anchovies have joined cod on a list of threatened fish species which conservationists say should be avoided by shoppers. (I suggest the anchovies avoid the shoppers! Ed.) Source: *Daily Tel.* 5. 9. 08

+Runaway tourism is once again threatening the future of the Galapagos Islands. The islands were long host to whalers and colonists who left a series of legacies. These include the decimation of the tortoise populations and the introduction of many new species that have wreaked havoc on the native flora and fauna. Resolving the present problems will require strengthening governance, ensuring sustainable tourism, developing an island culture and continuing to restore the islands. Source: *Ind.* 25. 9. 08

ENVIRONMENT

+ The number of 'dead zones' in the world's seas, where little marine life can survive, has more than doubled in 20 years because of chemical pollution, scientists say. The Spread of areas of sea floor with so little oxygen that most marine life is suffocated is considered one of the most serious environmental problems of the 21st century. Some zones can now be found in waters around the British isles. Prof. Robert Diaz of the Virginia Institute of Marine Science in America has found that there are now 405 dead zones worldwide, an area of 95,000 square miles, about the size of New Zealand. He said that dead zones 'rank with overfishing, habitat loss and harmful algal blooms as global environmental problems'. They occur when excess nutrients from chemical fertilisers enter the water, helping to fertilise blooms of algae, a process called eutrophication. Source: *Daily Tel.* 15. 8. 08

+The Prince of Wales has criticised Britain's 'throwaway culture' and warned of the dangers to marine wildlife of dumping plastic bags and litter at sea. In a speech marking the 25th anniversary of the Marine Conservation Society, the Prince pledged his support for the new

marine reserves being set up and the rules to prevent overfishing. He said '...at sea, largely out of sight and thus out of mind, the remnants of our throwaway society are causing incalculable suffering to turtles, whales and seabirds...we simply cannot continue to treat oceans in this way.' Source: *Daily Tel.* 13. 9. 08

+ The world's largest tidal-powered energy farm could be built in British waters. Three sites are under investigation – two off Scotland and one off Northern Ireland – for up to 60 underwater turbines, generating 60 megawatts of power for 40,000 homes. Source: *Ind.* 29. 9. 08
+Native British wildlife, including seals and some species of sea birds, could be wiped out and replaced by invading foreign species as the effects of climate change increase, according to a new report. The rise in global temperatures, habitat erosion and more frequent and violent storms may force out many natives of the UK coastline, it is claimed. Species included are Basking Sharks, Celtic Sea Slug, Grey Seal, Lagoon Snail and Wading birds. Source: *Daily Tel.* 14. 4. 08



+ The Iron Curtain was festooned with mines, tripwires that triggered automatic guns, barbed wire, watchtowers and guards who were paid to shoot humans. But this no-man's land was also home to an astonishing variety of wildlife that flourished where the barrier separating communist east from capitalist west stood. Plans are being discussed to make this 'Iron Curtain Trail' one of the longest nature reserves on earth. Wildlife biologists say 'The finished product will be the most important environmental symbol of the 21st Century.' Black storks and otters are among the scarce species thriving in the Iron Curtain green belt in Germany. Source: *Ind.* 23. 5. 08

POLAR REGIONS

Once the South Pole was green and crocodiles infested the Arctic. When Shackletons' crew marched towards the South Pole in 1908 they came across seams of coal amid the snow and ice. The also found impressions of leaves in sandstone boulders and fossilised wood from a coniferous tree.

The Arctic Ocean was a gigantic freshwater infested with crocodile-like reptiles. Today

crocodiles are found no further north than the lower Yangtze and North Carolina. Source: *New Scientist*, 21. 6. 08

+The permafrost belt stretching across Siberia to Alaska and Canada could start melting three times faster than expected because of the speed at which the Arctic Sea ice is disappearing. A study found that the effects of sea-ice loss extend almost 1,000 miles inland to areas where the ground is usually frozen all year. Last September, the sea ice of the Arctic shrank to more than 30% of its average extent for that time of year. Air temperatures over the Arctic region rose by about 2C above the long-term average of the period 1978 to 2006. Melting permafrost threatens the region's wildlife as well as triggering the possible release of the greenhouse gases locked in the soil, exacerbating global warming. Source: *Ind.* 14. 6. 08

+Inuit groups have led calls for an international treaty to protect the Arctic. Source: *Ind.* 28. 5. 08

+The first polar bear to swim to Iceland in 15 years has been shot dead by police, sparking an angry row about whether it should have been spared! Source: *Daily Mail* 5. 6. 08 (Thanks to Daphne)

GERNERAL

+ James and dink are the only survivors of 23 loggerhead turtles stranded on British and Irish coasts this year. They were nursed back to health at the Blue Reef Aquarium in Newquay, Cornwall and have been set free off a beach in Las Palmas, Gran Canaria. (Brilliant – one of the few good uses of an aquarium! Ed.) Source: *Daily Tel.* 1. 7. 08



+There is now an organisation called Sea Turtle Restoration Project, www.seaturtles.org. They are leading international efforts to protect sea turtle populations worldwide. Sea turtles are a window into how we treat our oceans and the environment. The same factors that are causing declines of sea turtles – unsustainable fishing, coastal habitat destruction, pollution and overconsumption of natural resources – are the same ones contributing to the decline of our oceans. My thanks to Jules for that article 30. 7. 08

+ The largest known colony of sea horses in Britain has been discovered off the south coast. Forty of them have been spotted off a Dorset bay and about 20 males are pregnant. The Seahorse Trust has said that the colony will not survive unless action is taken to protect them. They said that Britain's native breeds are under threat from anchors destroying their habitats of eel or sea grass. Natural England is in discussion with the Seahorse Trust about what protection measures to put in place. Source: *Daily Tel.* 10. 9. 08



+A submerged reef of delicate pink sea fans, yellow sunset and ross corals and sponges lies three miles off Lyme Regis. A decision has been agreed to protect this reef of 60 square nautical miles from damaging fishing activities and this is significant, because it amounts to the creation of the largest marine national park in Britain. Source: *Daily Tel.* 20. 6. 08

+ However, in July, scientists issued their latest, grim assessment of the world's coral reefs. But a report by Steve Connor from Florida, extraordinary new ocean 'reseeded' techniques mean there may still be time to halt – or even reverse- the destruction of these marine marvels. Source: *Ind.* 17. 7. 08

+Britain's coasts are home to many exotic creatures, including leatherback turtles, grey seals whales and sharks. Much of this is due to the rise in temperatures in the past few years. Source: *Ind. Extra* 26. 6. 08

+And hundreds of new species of animals including 130 corals, have been discovered off Australia. Researchers for the Global Census of Marine Life are studying coral reefs around the world in an effort to understand how pollution and climate change are affecting the 'rainforests of the ocean'. Source: *Daily Tel.* 19. 9. 08

CETACEANS

+ A spy plane designed by NASA is to help track whales in the Mediterranean in an attempt to prevent collisions between the mammals and ships. About 10 whales are hit by ships every year in the channels around the Cetaceans Sanctuary which stretches from the west coast of Italy to Toulon in the south of France. Source: *Daily Tel.* 21. 6. 08

+Scientists have reported a surge in the number of dead whales, dolphins and porpoises washing up on Cornish shores after lethal encounters with nets and other fishing gear. The number of cetaceans found dead has increased fivefold since 2000 and this is likely to be only a tiny fraction of the total deaths as tides carry most carcasses onto French shores or out to sea. All Britain's cetaceans are under legal protection, but are being killed far faster than anyone had realised, at least in the southwest. At least 250 dead dolphins and other cetaceans are washed up on Cornish beaches every year. Source: *Sunday Times*, 6. 7. 08

+ *The National Resources Defense Council (NRDC)* sent this email on 14. 7. 08. It states: '...our courtroom campaign to protect whales from the Navy's deadly sonar systems is headed to the U.S. Supreme Court.' At the request of the Bush Administration, the Court has agreed to consider whether the Navy can sidestep key environmental laws during its sonar exercises off the Southern California coast. The NRDC continues, 'As you know, a federal district judge and a federal appeals court have both sided with NRDC, ruling unanimously that the Navy must put environmental safeguards in place. They also affirmed that no government agency is above the law.' Tens of thousands of dolphins and whales, including endangered blue whales, could be harmed by Navy sonar off this coast if the Bush Administration gets its way. The case is to be heard this Autumn.

+ Animal Concern has slammed the RSPCA and Sainsbury's for endorsing Scottish salmon despite the company which farms the fish, Marine Harvest, admitting to shooting seals. Marine Harvest is a Norwegian-owned company which runs a fish farm in Wester Ross. Animal Concern has written to the RSPCA urging them to pull out of the deal between Sainsbury and Marine Harvest. The contract between the two companies has been launched with a massive advertising campaign fronted by Jamie Oliver. Source: *Sunday Post*, 15. 6. 08

+Centuries of tradition look set to be overturned after the European Commission moved a step closer to a complete import ban on seal products. At present 90% of sporrans, worn with the kilt, are fashioned from the mammal's hide. Source: *Ind.* 25. 7. 08

+A sick northern bottlenose whale repeatedly beached itself on sandbanks in Langstone Harbour near Portsmouth. Blood tests taken

from the mammal were sent for testing and showed that it was suffering from irreversible renal failure. Eventually the poor creature had to be put down as it could not be returned to the sea. Source: *Ind.* 2. 8. 08



+Despite being one of the partners in the Year of the Dolphin initiative (which highlights the threats to dolphins in the wild), holiday company Thomson (and their parent company TUI) promotes captive dolphin facilities to its holidaymakers. In June, the Captive Animal Protection Society (CAPS), working with the Daily Mirror, exposed how British tourists were paying to swim with scarred and stressed dolphins caged in small 10m x 20m pools near the Turkish resort of Bodrum, having bought tickets from Thomson and other tour operators in their hotels. For more info. contact CAPS, PO Box 4186, Manchester M60 3ZA www.captiveanimals.org Sent 5. 9. 08

I have sadly to announce the death of our wonderful 'in house' poet, John Amsden. Here, printed below, is the last poem he sent me. I still have a number of his books of sea poems so contact me if you would like one. Julie.

Entangled.

Much the hidden malaise
To the roaring seas
Much danger in the tearing winds
Bringing pollution our life to tease.

In the green wavering
The plastic remains plastered
In fragment or refuse
For the shores beyond wasted

Destroying the fleet waves
For centuries cleansed
Rolling in an harmony
Where the story ends.

John Amsden

Many thanks to all of you who send me articles. All contributions are gratefully accepted so do keep them coming in. They might not appear in a newsletter, but they are all used. Julie.