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AnNex
Animal Research Nexus

Welcome to Issue 5 of the AnNex Newsletter

As we face the realities of life in another period of lockdown in the UK, the AnNex team has managed to settle into a 'new normal' pattern of online meeting and collaborations. We are delighted to bring you news of some of the work that's been going on over the last few months. We hope this newsletter finds you all safe and well as we all face the all-too-familiar restrictions on everyday life.



Health, Homes and Hobbies

2020 has been such a significant year for all of us. It's forced us, for better or worse, to become more introverted and think about life closer to home, and the things that are important to us. Much of our recent work in AnNex has dealt with how animal research affects us personally. For example, Renelle McGlacken gives a very personal account of why the lines between medical and cosmetic surgery are blurry.

Work by the AnNex Exeter team similarly looks at new directions in how direct beneficiaries of animal research, the patients, are involved in shaping animal research. Rich Gorman's recent work on the use of horseshoe crab blood in pharmaceutical testing reinforces how each of us has personally benefited from the use of animals in research. And recent work by the Oxford team explores what happens when our pets and hobbies (e.g. birding and other wildlife catching and tagging) become part of animal research.

Research News in this Issue

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[The Medical and the Cosmetic](#)

Renelle McClacken explores the blurred boundaries between 'cosmetic' and 'medical' surgery.

[Read the Blog](#)



[Animal Borderlands](#)

The AnNex Oxford team hosted the most recent British Animal Studies Network conference, which demonstrated the value of interdisciplinary for thinking about human-animal relationships.

[Read the Blog](#)



Wildlife Research by Citizen Scientists

In their paper published in *People and Nature*, Ally Palmer and colleagues consider how wildlife research by citizen scientists should be regulated, given its clear benefits but risks to animal welfare.

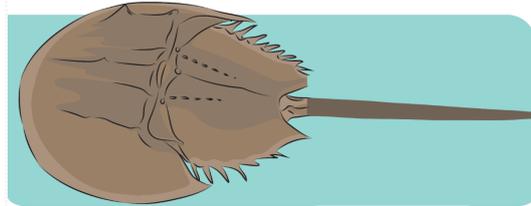
Read the Paper



POLEs

Research conducted outside the laboratory often receives less attention than lab work. The AnNex team held a workshop to consider issues in non-lab research last year, and have now published the workshop findings in *Animals*.

Read the Paper



Horseshoe Crabs and the Pharmaceutical Industry – Challenges and Alternatives

Based on his recent work with the RSPCA, Rich Gorman shows how all of us are consumers of horseshoe crab blood, given their widespread use in pharmaceutical testing.

ATLANTIC HORSESHOE CRAB
Limulus polyphemus

Conservation status: **"VULNERABLE"**

Use in biomedical research: Substance taken from crab blood is used to detect bacterial endotoxins in vaccines, injectable medicines and medical devices.*

Use is not covered by most lab animal laws.

+500K CAPTURED EVERY YEAR **25-40% OF BLOOD IS REMOVED** **8-30% ARE ESTIMATED TO DIE**

Concerns:

- ANIMAL WELFARE:** captured, transported, handled, cleaned, restrained, kept out of water, blood taken, released
- ENVIRONMENTAL:** wild population decreasing; effects on foodchain
- GROWING GLOBAL DEMAND FOR MEDICINES:** including vaccines for COVID-19; raises serious questions around animal welfare and sustainability

The future:

- REPLACING CRAB BLOOD:** Synthetic alternative (ST) available since 1993 but delicate; some have well it detects endotoxins. Accepted by regulators in Europe. Not accepted in USA. Other alternatives are being developed.
- REDUCING CRABS USED:** New technology can reduce the amount of crab blood product needed - down 95%
- REDUCING SUFFERING:** Better handling, less time out of the water and removing less blood could reduce mortality by 50%

*Horseshoe crab cause various side effects including blood poisoning. If you, or your pet, have ever had an injection, you are a consumer of horseshoe crab blood.

RSPCA: We believe horseshoe crabs can suffer and want to see genuine commitment to replacing their use in endotoxin tests and to conserving them in the wild.
AnNex: Find out more at: tinyurl.com/HorseshoeCrabReport

Read More



Cultures of Care

In their recent paper in *Social & Cultural Geography*, Rich Gorman and Gail Davies dig deep into the meeting of animal research and patient engagement in the UK.

Read the Paper

Would you like to collaborate?

We are currently reviewing our collaborations with a view to formalising and publicising some of our relationships. If you currently work with the AnNex team, or would like to be included on our website, please contact animalresearchnexus@exeter.ac.uk or [Gail Davies](#) for further information.



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