

THE 13TH ANNUAL EXOTICS SYMPOSIUM

JANUARY 10-11, 2015



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Dennis Schmitt, D.V.M., Ph.D. Dipl. ACT

Ringling Bros. Chair of Veterinary Services and Director of Research

Dr. Dennis Schmitt is the Chair of Veterinary Services and Director of Research with the animal stewardship department at *Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey*. He leads the veterinary services for the three traveling *Ringling Bros.* circus units and oversees research at the *Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey Center for Elephant Conservation* in Florida. Considered the leading North American expert in elephant reproductive physiology and veterinary management, Dr. Schmitt is also Professor Emeritus in the School of Agriculture at Missouri State University.

Dr. Schmitt led the team which resulted in first elephant born from artificial insemination in 1999 and in his more than 30 years as an elephant veterinarian he has experienced over 50 elephant births some of which were born at the *Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey Center for Elephant Conservation*. Dr. Schmitt administered the first successful treatment for the endotheliotropic herpes virus in an elephant, the single greatest health threat to the Asian elephant and established the first bovine non-surgical embryo transfer business in the state of Missouri.

In working with other facilities in both North America and in Asia, Dr. Schmitt has taught and trained the basics of elephant ultrasonography expanding its use in evaluating elephant health and reproduction world-wide. Although much of his work has been in elephant medical management and breeding programs, his research also investigates reproductive physiology of several endangered species.

Dr. Schmitt received his D.V.M. and Ph.D. in reproductive physiology from the University of Missouri – Columbia. He is board certified in Theriogenology (veterinary reproduction) and serves as a reproductive advisor for the AZA elephant TAG/ SSP management group since 1987. He is a member of the Asian Elephant Specialist Group of the IUCN.

Michael P. Jones, DVM, Dipl. ABVP (Avian)

Dr. Michael P. Jones graduated from the University of Missouri-Columbia College of Veterinary Medicine in May of 1992. Following graduation he participated in a one-year Small Animal Medicine and Surgery Internship at the University of Tennessee Veterinary Medical Center. Upon completion of the internship he accepted a three-year residency position in Avian and Zoological Medicine also at the University of Tennessee from 1993-1996. Dr. Jones then joined the faculty at the University of Tennessee in July of 1996 as an Assistant Professor of Avian and Zoological Medicine. In 2004 he was awarded Tenure and the position of Associate Professor. In 1997 Dr. Jones became board certified and a Diplomate of the American Board of Veterinary Practitioners in Avian Medicine and Surgery.

Currently, Dr. Jones' primary responsibilities are:

1. Clinical instruction of senior veterinary students and Avian and Zoological Medicine residents, research and teaching. Dr. Jones is the primary veterinarian for the American Eagle Foundation and also periodically assists with the efforts of the Knoxville Zoological Gardens, Ripley's Aquarium of the Smokies, the US Fish and Wildlife Service, the Tennessee Wildlife Resources Agency, and the Great Smoky Mountain National Park Service. He has served as an Avian/Exotics consultant for Antech Diagnostics since 1998. His clinical interests include the medical and surgical management of birds of prey, avian infectious diseases and avian emergency and critical care.
2. Director of the Office of Diversity and Recruitment at the University of Tennessee College of Veterinary Medicine

Dr. Jones is married to Konda Jones and has three children, Michael, Deven, and Kristina. Dr. Jones is also a Master Falconer with over 25 years of experience

Dr. Megan Baebler

Dr. Baebler is a 2007 graduate of the University of Missouri College of Veterinary Medicine. During her veterinary training, Dr. Baebler worked with the veterinary staff at the Tennessee Aquarium in Chattanooga, the National Aquarium in Baltimore and Sea World Florida, as well as volunteering her time with the Raptor Rehabilitation Project associated with the University. She has a longstanding love of exotic animals, and after graduation completed a year-long specialized internship in exotic pet medicine at Gulf Coast Veterinary Specialists in Houston, Texas. Following the completion of her internship, she spent 2 years in Chicago as an associate veterinarian at Midwest Bird and Exotic Animal Hospital, the first and oldest exotic pet-exclusive animal hospital in the United States. In 2010, she moved back to her hometown of St. Louis and began working for Bird Medicine and Surgery in early 2011. Dr. Baebler has a special interest in avian and reptilian medicine and surgery, exotic pet emergency and critical care, aquatic pet medicine, and rabbit and small herbivore dentistry. She has also trained as an emergency veterinarian for all species, including dogs and cats. Dr. Baebler has worked as an emergency veterinarian part-time for the last 4 years and has spent time working for animal shelters performing low-cost spays and neuters for the community.

Dr. Kelly Straka

Dr. Kelly Straka is a graduate of the University of Minnesota's College of Veterinary Medicine with a doctorate in Interdisciplinary Medicine, and is currently a candidate for a Master's in Epidemiology through the School of Public Health. She has always had a passion for wildlife, and enjoys hunting, fishing and camping. Kelly has worked as a wildlife biologist for Ducks Unlimited, the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources, the US Fish and Wildlife Service, and a private biological laboratory. She also completed a three-year veterinary student trainee program with the US Department of Agriculture, and was a volunteer veterinarian at an equine hospital in Morocco.

Dr. Cathleen Kovarik

Dr. Kovarik is an associate teaching professor in the Department of Biomedical Sciences at the University of Missouri. She teaches anatomy, including reptile anatomy, to first year veterinary students. She also has developed a Neuroscience course for the first year veterinary students, and is interested in how hormones and aging interact to influence the central nervous system.

Dr. Jacqueline Pearce

Dr. Jacqueline Pearce received her DVM in 2003 from the Western College of Veterinary Medicine at the University of Saskatchewan, Canada. She did a 1 year rotating internship in small animal medicine and surgery at Purdue University from 2003-2004. She completed a residency in comparative ophthalmology and a Master of Science degree in Biomedical Sciences at the University of Missouri from 2004-2007. Dr. Pearce became a Diplomate of the American College of Veterinary Ophthalmologists in 2007. Currently she is an Assistant Teaching Professor at the University of Missouri. Dr. Pearce enjoys all aspects of veterinary ophthalmic surgery and medicine. She has a specific interest in comparative ophthalmology of exotic animal species, and has worked on patients from the Raptor Rehabilitation Project at MU, Omaha's Henry Doorly Zoo, Kansas City Zoo and the St. Louis Zoo. Her research focus at the University of Missouri is inherited retinal diseases in dogs and cats.

Dr. Dusty Nagy

Dusty Nagy is a 1995 graduate of Cornell University College of Veterinary Medicine. After which she completed an internship and residency program in food animal medicine, surgery, and production medicine at the University of Missouri. She is a boarded Diplomate in the American College of Veterinary Internal Medicine. In addition she has a MS in veterinary medicine and surgery with a focus on neonatal immunology. and a PhD in veterinary pathobiology with a focus on the epidemiology of retroviral disease in cattle both from the University of Missouri. Dr. Nagy has spent 5 years on the faculty at the University of Illinois College of Veterinary Medicine. She is currently an Associate Teaching professor at the University of Missouri College of Veterinary Medicine.

Dr. James Bailey, DVM, MS, Dipl. ACVAA

James Bailey has been a board certified veterinary anesthesiologist for 18 years. After graduating from Colorado State University, College of Veterinary Medicine in 1989, Dr. Bailey completed a Master's degree in veterinary physiology and pharmacology at The Ohio State University followed by a residency in veterinary anesthesiology at the University of Florida colleges of veterinary medicine. Dr. Bailey has taught and researched veterinary anesthesiology at the veterinary colleges of Colorado State University, The Ohio State University, Louisiana State University and Ross University, and joined the National Marine Mammal Foundation team in 2011. His passion is the improvement of marine mammal anesthesia and pain management, as well as the study of oxygen supply-demand balance and critical oxygen delivery in health, disease and pharmacologically altered states. Dr. Bailey also serves as independent contractor providing marine mammal anesthesia support globally.

Dr. Kirk Suedmeyer

Dr. Kirk Suedmeyer graduated from the University of Missouri- College of Veterinary Medicine in 1987. Dr. Suedmeyer is a Diplomate for the ACZM (American College of Zoological Medicine). He took on the role of Director of Animal Health for the Kansas City Zoo beginning in 1992, and still holds the position today. He is an Adjunct Assistant Professor of Zoological Medicine at the University of Missouri- College of Veterinary Medicine, in Columbia, Missouri from 1994-present. In addition, Dr. Suedmeyer is an Associate editor for the Journal of Zoo and Wildlife Medicine. He is also a past President of AAZV (American Association of Zoo Veterinarians and a past President of ARAV (Association of Reptile and Amphibian Veterinarians). He has over 150 journal articles/proceedings/book chapters, etc. in his career and is a Master falconer and wildlife artist.

Dr. Brendan Tindall

After qualifying in 1999, I immediately started work in a mixed animal practice specializing in exotics in the south of England. After 6 months of working there I was fortunate to be offered the post of veterinarian and head of the game capture unit for the Ministry of Wildlife and Tourism in Namibia, and was soon transferred to Etosha National Park. The majority of my work in Namibia focused on the conservation, management and relocation of black rhino.

After nearly 4 years in the state service in Namibia, I returned to South Africa and continued practicing as a private wildlife

veterinarian for 4 years travelling around South Africa and parts of west africa. After meeting my wife a new chapter in my life began and with the advent of a family looming, we decided that the nomadic lifestyle was not conducive to raising kids and decided to buy a small practice in Plettenberg Bay. Although the domestic side of my veterinary career has flourished, my love of wildlife has never been tamed and I continue to travel extensively, especially in the winter months, to continue my career in wildlife veterinary medicine. Although I have had the opportunity to work extensively with a wide range of wildlife species, my passion remains with rhino conservation and their wellbeing.

Dr. Copper Aitken-Palmer

Dr. Copper Aitken-Palmer, is originally from Kansas City, Missouri. She went to vet school at Kansas State University as the first student to complete a dual degree program (MS/DVM) working with both Kansas State and the Smithsonian Conservation Biology Institute. After completion of veterinary school and her Master's degree studying reproduction in cats, she began her PhD at the University of Maryland. During this time she studied giant panda reproduction in China as a part of a multi-institutional collaboration with the Smithsonian, University of Maryland, and the Chengdu Research Center for Giant Panda Breeding. After working in China, she transitioned into the University of Florida's Zoological Medicine Residency program where she worked at the Lubeck Bat Conservancy, St. Augustine Alligator Farm, White Oak Conservation Center, and Disney's Animal Kingdom. She is now the chief veterinarian at the Smithsonian's Conservation Biology Institute as the head of the Department of Conservation Medicine. Current projects and interests include the study of giant panda and red panda health and disease susceptibility.

Dr. Peter Caldwell

Dr. Peter Caldwell currently practices in Pretoria, South Africa as a Small Animal and Wildlife Veterinarian. Education: BSc agric (animal science), Univ. Of Pretoria and BVSc, Onderstepoort, Univ. Of Pretoria. Current research includes, but not limited to: Cheetah gastritis, Nutrition, Medicine and Surgery, Cryptococcus meningitis in cheetahs, Vitamin A deficiency in wild felines (Research in association with the National Zoological Gardens Pretoria) and Macrocytic lactone toxicity in lions. Dr. Caldwell's current work interests include practice with rare and endangered wildlife species through De Wildt Cheetah centre and various other facilities. Special interest in carnivores. In addition, Dr. Caldwell has accomplished abundant work with rhino, buffalo, sable antelope, roan antelope and most other wildlife species.

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