

# AAV NEWSLETTER

AN OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE ASSOCIATION OF AVIAN VETERINARIANS



FEBRUARY 2010

## ***First-Ever Diplomates In Exotic Companion Mammal Specialty Announced By ABVP***

The American Board of Veterinary Practitioners announced the first eight veterinarians to become diplomates in the new Exotic Companion Mammal practice specialty.

Exotic small mammals like this chinchilla are the focus of the Exotic Companion Mammal practice specialty available through the American Board of Veterinary Practitioners.

In December 2009, the first-ever diplomates to achieve certification for the new Exotic Companion Mammal specialty from the American Board of Veterinary Practitioners were announced.

Exotic companion mammals include ferrets, rabbits, guinea pigs, hamsters, mice, rats, chinchillas, gerbils, sugar gliders, hedgehogs and other small pet mammals.

The eight veterinarians who are now certified in the Exotic Companion Mammal specialty are: Dr. Jennifer Graham (Massachusetts), Dr. Cheryl Greenacre (Tennessee), Dr. Cathy Johnson-Delaney (Washington), Dr. Joerg Mayer (Massachusetts), Dr. Sandra Mitchell (Maine), Dr. Connie Orcutt (Massachusetts), Dr. David Vella (Australia) and Dr. Robert Wagner (Pennsylvania).

The quest to have an ECM specialty began in 2004. Michael Dutton, DVM, DABVP(C/F), DABVP(Av), co-founder of the Association of Exotic Mammal Veterinarians, became chair of the organizing committee for the Exotic Companion Mammal specialty. He and others petitioned for the specialty, and the American Veterinary Medical Association granted it provisional recognition in 2008.

Dutton is currently the ECM regent and he said that the first year for the ECM practice went fine, but noted some room for improvement. "The exam needs fine tuning," he said. "2009 was also the year the ABVP changed exam companies, and there were logistical issues across all the Practice Groups."

A total of 46 veterinarians became new diplomates in 2009, including the eight who received

certification in the ECM practice. According to its website, the ABVP differs from other specialty boards of the American Veterinary Medical Association because it offers species-specific certification. The ABVP currently awards certification in 10 categories: Avian; Beef Cattle; Canine and Feline; Dairy; Equine; Exotic Companion Mammal; Feline; Food Animal; Reptile and Amphibian; Swine Health Management.

Part of the process to become a diplomate involves the veterinarian submitting his or her credentials to the ABVP, being accepted and passing both specialty and practical exams for the chosen specialty. Exams usually occur in November.

The ABVP formed in 1978, and the first 41 diplomates were certified in 1981 in three possible categories: companion animal; equine and food animal. Currently, the ABVP has more than 850 diplomates. Recertification is required every 10 years.

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## ***AAV Clinical Forum Submissions***

The Clinical Forum invites submissions related to clinical practice, case reports, and items of interest to practitioners. Submissions should be in Word format. E-mail as an attachment to:

[AAVPublications@aav.org](mailto:AAVPublications@aav.org).

Association of  
Avian Veterinarians  
PO Box 811720  
Boca Raton, FL 33481  
Newsletter Editor:  
Kathy Lyon  
[aavpublications@aav.org](mailto:aavpublications@aav.org)  
(817) 599-7766

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AAV CENTRAL OFFICE - P.O. Box 811720 - Boca Raton, FL 33481.  
561-393-8901 - Fax 561-393-8902. [aavctrlfoc@aav.org](mailto:aavctrlfoc@aav.org)  
AAV Publications Office, PO Box 2584, Weatherford, TX 76086  
817-599-7766 - [aavpublications@aav.org](mailto:aavpublications@aav.org)- Website: [www.aav.org](http://www.aav.org)

## ECM Board Certification On The Horizon

A new specialty, Exotic Companion Mammal, will soon be available to veterinarians.

The American Veterinary Medical Association has granted provisional recognition to the first completely new veterinary specialty since 1993. The new specialty will focus on small mammals including rabbits, ferrets, guinea pigs and mice.

"The public and the profession will see these specialists as providing that next level of care of small exotic pets," said Dr. Beth Sabin, assistant director of the AVMA's Education and Research Division.

"This will be a great benefit to both veterinarians and pet owners," said Natalie Antinoff, DVM, Diplomate ABVP (Avian). "It challenges veterinarians to learn even more, and ensures that veterinarians are current on diseases and treatments."

The new provisional recognition granted the Exotic Companion Mammal specialty by the AVMA is temporary. The specialty has between four and 10 years to petition for full recognition from the AVMA. The first group of ECM diplomates is expected to receive certification in December of 2009.

"The ECM covers more species than ferrets — ferrets will be approximately one-third of the examination," said Michael Dutton, DVM, Diplomate ABVP (CF). "A client can expect that an ECM specialist has met high requirements that demonstrate his/her expertise in dealing with ferrets, rabbits, rats, mice and so forth."

Antinoff said the new specialty enables an even higher standard of treatment for pets. "It also gives ferret owners the ability to find a 'board certified' veterinarian," she added.

The ECM specialty is one more avenue veterinarians can pursue in ferret care. However, even some of the best care providers may choose not to become certified. "There will still be numerous great ferret vets who are not specialists," Dutton said.



## U.S. agency moves to ban importation of pythons

EIGHT OTHER TYPES OF LARGE SNAKES ALSO TARGETED

Hoping to halt a slithering invasion of giant exotic snakes, federal officials said Wednesday that they want to ban all imports of Burmese pythons, the adaptable constrictor that is threatening the Everglades' balance of species.

Eight other types of large snakes also would be banned from entering the country.

"The Burmese python and these other alien snakes are destroying some of our nation's most treasured — and most fragile — ecosystems," Interior Secretary Ken Salazar said in a statement telling of the proposed ban. "We must shut down the importation of the snakes and end the interstate commerce and transportation of them."

The proposal will be published in the *Federal Register* next month, and the public then will have 60 days to comment before a final decision is made.

Other snakes that would be banned are northern African pythons, southern African pythons, reticulated pythons, green anacondas, yellow anacondas, Beni or Bolivian anacondas,

## MEMORY GAME

Developed by the European AAV, this game not only enhances your memory but also hones your skills in identifying hematology and histology slides. There are 32 images (64 cards). The goal of the game is to win all of the cards. Turn over two cards on each turn. When a player can match two from memory the player takes those two. Complete descriptions of the slides are included along with species represented and instructions on how to play.

A great pastime at breaks, or for tests of identification skills.

Proceeds from sales of the game support the EAAV Helga Gerlach Fund. \$49 PLUS SHIPPING - MC/VISA accepted. Order from the AAV Publications Office: [aavpublications@aav.org](mailto:aavpublications@aav.org)

DeSchauensee's anacondas and boa constrictors.

The Pet Industry Joint Advisory Council has opposed such a ban, saying dealers and pet owners can regulate themselves.

Burmese pythons can grow as long as 20 feet. Officials say the snakes escaped from pet shops during hurricanes or were released into the Everglades by owners who had grown tired of them.

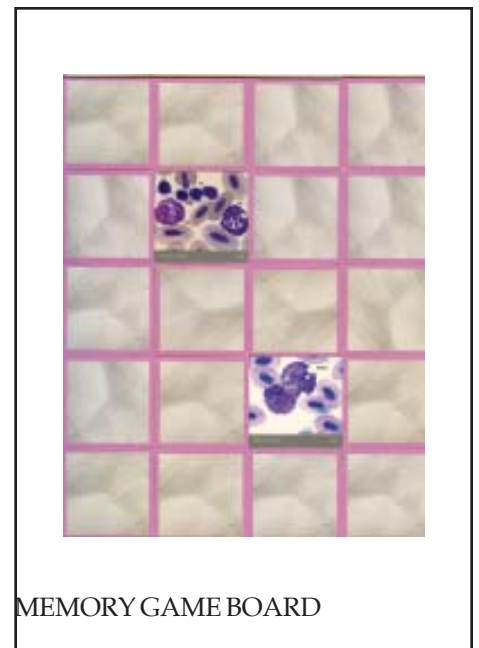
Florida wildlife officials have licensed trappers to kill pythons. Since 2000, more than 1,200 of the snakes have been removed from Everglades National Park alone. Just this month, 25 Burmese pythons were captured in South Florida by water management workers.

Over the past three decades, about 1 million constrictors such as the Burmese have been imported into the United States.

"We need to do better at preventing invasive species from being brought into the country," Sen. Bill Nelson, D-Fla., said in a statement lauding the wildlife agency's proposal.

Nelson and U.S. Rep. Kendrick Meek, D-Miami, had sponsored a bill calling for a similar ban.

Robert Nolin can be reached at [rnolin@SunSentinel.com](mailto:rnolin@SunSentinel.com) or 954-356-4525. Copyright © 2010, South Florida Sun-Sentinel



## ***Avian and Exotics Medicine Club at UC Davis 25th Annual Symposium***

Dates: April 24 - 25, 2010

Location: School of Veterinary Medicine, University of California, Davis

The 25th Annual Avian and Exotics Symposium will present a wide variety of topics concerning exotic species medicine and surgery, including oncology, pathology, and radiology in avian species. 11 CE units are available. For more information please visit our website at <http://www.vetmed.ucdavis.edu/Clubs/AEMC/symposium.html>

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### ***Annual Dates to Remember***

- 2010 ANNUAL CONFERENCE & EXPO, August 1-5, 2010
- Annual Business Meeting. First Monday of the Annual Conference at 12:30 p.m.

PROCEEDINGS-If you do not plan to attend the annual Conference and Expo, and you paid extra to receive a hard copy and do not received one by the end of October of the same year, please notify the Central Office by fax or email.

### ***2009 Proceedings, Milwaukee, WI***

The digital copy of the 2009 proceedings is up on the AAV website. ([www.aav.org](http://www.aav.org)). Sign in the Members Area, Select the link to *Publications* and then to *Proceedings*. The access codes can be found behind the member's only wall.

Access is case-sensitive. Non-members will be denied access.

Hard copies may be ordered from the publications office. (\$55+ \$5 shipping).

There are also a small number of the proceedings from the combined Sunday program; AAV- Pre Surgical Patient; AEMV- Small Mammals (\$25)

Fax order to: 817-599-0088

## ***Alabama legislators vote to punish cockfighting***

MONTGOMERY, Ala. (AP) - Feathers could fly again at the Alabama Legislature over a bill to increase the penalties for cockfighting.

The Senate Judiciary Committee voted unanimously Wednesday for a bill that would provide up to a year in jail for organizing, attending or betting on cockfights. A second offense would carry a sentence of 1 to 10 years in prison.

The current penalty is a fine of \$20 to \$50. The Humane Society of the United States rates Alabama's law as the nation's weakest.

The bill's sponsor, Judiciary Committee Chairman Myron Penn of Union Springs, said it will be difficult pass. A similar bill died in the Legislature last year after drawing opposition from people who raise the birds.

**Time to renew your membership. Renew online at [www.aav.org](http://www.aav.org) and follow the link to "REGISTER"**

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### ***Your 2010 membership renewal***

Your renewal is due January 1, 2010. Your timely renewal will ensure uninterrupted access to the Member's Only area of the AAV website. Late renewals may be purged from the Member's Only list and forfeit their discounted renewal rate. Late renewals will need to re-apply for login codes after 2/26/10.

You do not need login codes to renew. Just go to the website and follow the REGISTER link to the renewal form.

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## ***IN-MEMORIAM CARDS SHOW YOUR CLIENTS YOU CARE WHILE YOU DONATE TO RESEARCH***

The AAV offers beautiful cards to send to your clients after the loss of a beloved pet. The cards are heavy weight, are on off-white card stock, and each has its own gold foil-lined envelopes.

You may purchase a set of six cards for \$30. Clients appreciate that you care and that you are contributing to the research that can save other pets.

At the same time, you are supporting the AAV research fund that was started in 1980. A list of studies receiving AAV grants is published on the AAV Web site.

You may contact the publications office directly to order these cards, or print out the publications order form from the AAV site ([www.aav.org](http://www.aav.org)).

*Photo by Megan Parks*





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**FEBRUARY 2010**



**Conference Corner**  
**31st Annual Association of**  
**Avian Veterinarians Conference & Expo**  
with the Association of  
Exotic Mammal Veterinarians  
**San Diego, California**  
**San Diego Marriott Hotel & Marina**  
August 1-5, 2010  
[www.ConferenceOffice.com/aav](http://www.ConferenceOffice.com/aav)

*Make Plans Now to Attend the 31st Annual AAV Conference & Expo with the Association of Exotic Mammal Veterinarians*

- AAV Practical labs
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- Round Table Discussions: all species
- Great events planned: Kick-Off at Sea World, Tour to San Diego Zoo, Conservation Tour, Guest Program
- Poster Abstracts: Submit and you could be chosen to receive \$110 toward registration fees.

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