A Carolina Anole owned by Phoenix member, Linda Gleis-
Welcome from the President

My name is Jeanne Hall. I am the President of Phoenix Exotic. Our monthly newsletters are provided essentially for our members who may not have access to our website in an effort to keep our membership well-informed regarding organizational business and abreast of current legislation regarding private ownership.

The stated purpose of Phoenix per the articles of incorporation:
“…for charitable educational and scientific purposes; to educate the public in the necessary safety precautions and procedures for dealing with exotic wildlife; and to provide emergency assistance to exotic wildlife in need of care or relocation.”

In our monthly newsletters, you will also find information regarding husbandry, upcoming meetings, rescue, cage design, safety and much more.

If you wish to see any of our past copies of the newsletters, you may go to website, http://www.PhoenixExotics.org/. You can join the e-list at http://phoenixexotics.org/ and then click on the link for E-groups email list. ENJOY!

-Jeanne Hall

Letter From Editor

Our monthly newsletter is a compilation of articles and posts from the Phoenix Exotic Wildlife Association, Inc. E-List. We are limited in the print medium to select only a few items.

Any published submissions have been granted prior permission for publication.

Our thanks goes to the Associated Press for granting a non-exclusive license to reprint materials online for the purpose of this newsletter.

We encourage member participation by submitting stories and photos of your animals to us with your expressed written permission to use the material for the newsletters and website. If you wish to remain anonymous, just express it with your consent. Thank you!

-Rhonda Kiker

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Rhonda Kiker
Could The Ground Under Your Property Be Banned?
Submitted by (lionguy) Mon July 13, 2009

What would happen to your animals and your rights if an earthworm was declared an Endangered Species?

"Searchers shovel Northwest dirt seeking giant worm" - By Nicholas K. Geranios

Moscow, Idaho (AP) - The giant Palouse earthworm has taken on mythic qualities in this vast agricultural region that stretches from eastern Washington into the Idaho panhandle - its very name evoking the fictional sandworms from "Dune" or those vicious creatures from the movie "Tremors."

The worm is said to secrete a lily-like smell when handled, spit at predators, and live in burrows 15 feet deep. There have been only a handful of sightings.

But scientists hope to change that this summer with researchers scouring the Palouse region in hopes of finding more of the giant earthworms. Conservationists also want the Obama administration to protect the worm as an endangered species, even though little research has been done on it.

The worm may be elusive, but there's no doubt it exists, said Jodi Johnson-Maynard, a University of Idaho professor who is leading the search for the worm. To prove it, she pulled out a glass tube containing the preserved remains of a fat, milky-white worm. One of Johnson-Maynard's graduate students found this specimen in 2005, and it is the only confirmed example of the species.

The worm in the tube is about 6 inches long, well short of the 3 feet that early observers of the worms in the late 1890s described. Documented collections of the species, known locally as GPE, have occurred only in 1978, 1988, 1990 and 2005.

The farmers who work the rich soil of the Palouse - 2 million acres of rolling wheat fields near the Idaho-Washington border south of Spokane - also have had little experience with the worm.

Gary Budd, who manages a grain elevator in Uniontown, said no farmer he knows has talked about seeing the worm. He compared the creature to Elvis.

"He gets spotted once in awhile too," Budd joked. Johnson-Maynard and her team of worm hunters are working this summer at a university research farm and using three different methods to try and find a living worm.

One involves just digging a hole and sifting the soil through a strainer, looking for any worms that can be studied.

The second involves old-fashioned chemical warfare, pouring a liquid solution of vinegar and mustard onto the ground, irritating worms until they come to the surface.

The third method is new to this search, using electricity to shock worms to the surface.

"The electro shocker is pretty cool," said Joanna Blaszczak, a student at Cornell who is spending her summer working to find the worm alongside Shan Xu, a graduate student from Chengdu, China, and support scientist Karl Umiker.

The shocker can deliver up to 480 volts. That makes it dangerous to touch, and it could potentially fry a specimen.

On a recent day, Umiker drove eight 3-foot-long metal rods into the ground in a small circle and connected them to batteries. Then he flipped the switches. The only sound for several minutes was the hum of a cooling fan.

"I'm kind of bummed we haven't seen anything yet," Umiker said.

Eventually, a small rust-colored worm dug its way to the surface. It was not a GPE, but it was collected for study anyway.
The search for the giant worm is reminiscent of efforts in Louisiana, Florida and the swamps of eastern Arkansas to find the elusive ivory-billed woodpecker. The large, black-and-white bird was believed to be extinct until a reported sighting five years ago stirred national experts and federal funding to launch a full-blown campaign to verify its existence. Search efforts later dwindled after biologists and volunteers were unable to find the evidence they were looking for.

The GPE was described as common in the Palouse in the 1890s, according to an 1897 article in *The American Naturalist* by Frank Smith. Smith's work was based on four samples sent to him by R.W. Doane of Washington State University in nearby Pullman.

Massive agricultural development soon consumed nearly all of the unique Palouse Prairie - a seemingly endless ocean of steep, silty dunes - and appeared to deal a fatal blow to the worm.

They were considered extinct when Idaho graduate student Yaniria Sanchez-de Leon in 2005 stuck a shovel into the ground to collect a soil sample and found the worm that now is in the tube in Johnson-Maynard's office.

Conservation groups quickly petitioned the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to protect the worm as an endangered species, citing as proof the lack of sightings. But the agency said there simply was not enough scientific information to merit a listing.

Conservationists recently filed a second request, saying they had more information. They are also hoping the Obama administration will be more friendly than the Bush administration. The GPE would be the only worm protected as an endangered species.

Doug Zimmer of the Fish and Wildlife Service in Seattle said the agency isn't ready to comment on the petition. "It's always good to see new information and good science on any species," Zimmer said.

Farmers are keeping a wary eye on the process. "The concern is whether a listing is going to end up curtailing farming activities," said Dan Wood of the Washington State Farm Bureau. "I don't know if people plan to stop all farming for the possibility of a worm being somewhere."

Most earthworms found in the Northwest originated in Europe, arriving on plants or in soil shipped to the New World. The giant Palouse earthworm is one of the few native species, and has become quite popular with the public.

While it's tough to come by a live GPE, visitors seem happy to take a picture with a dead one. Johnson-Maynard said she has received calls from tourists who want to come to her office and be photographed with the specimen.

"A lot of people are curious about it," she said.

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**Orangutan escapes enclosure at Australian zoo**

Submitted by (southzoo) Mon July 13, 2009

Sydney, Australia (AP) – Officials at an Australian zoo say a clever orangutan used a rope to swing out of its enclosure and enjoy a brief taste of freedom.

Pulang the orangutan’s daring escape happened Saturday at the Perth Zoo in Western Australia state. Orangutan keeper Kylie Bullo told Australia's Fairfax news that Pulang freed a rope from a bolt and swung herself into the visitor area.

Zoo officials coaxed the creature back into its enclosure a few minutes later.

Zoo CEO Susan Hunt says officials are reviewing security at the facility. She says Pulang is a gentle creature who never posed a threat to visitors. Officials at a zoo in Adelaide evacuated visitors in May after an orangutan escaped by climbing the fence surrounding its enclosure.
All-Pet Airline Takes Off
Submitted by (lionguy) Tue July 14, 2009

By Samantha Bomkamp - AP Transportation Writer

New York, New York (AP) - One trip for their Jack Russell terrier in a plane's cargo hold was enough to convince Alysa Binder and Dan Wiesel that owners needed a better option to get their pets from one city to another.

On Tuesday, the first flight for the husband-and-wife team's Pet Airways, the first-ever all-pet airline, took off from Republic Airport in Farmingdale, N.Y.

All commercial airlines allow a limited number of small pets to fly in the cabin. Others must travel as checked bags or in the cargo hold-a dark and sometimes dangerous place where temperatures can vary wildly.

Binder and Wiesel used their consulting backgrounds and business savvy to start Pet Airways in 2005. The last four years have been spent designing their fleet of five planes according to new four-legged requirements, dealing with FAA regulations and setting up airport schedules.

The two say they're overwhelmed with the response. Flights on Pet Airways are already booked up for the next two months.

Pet Airways will fly a pet between five major cities-New York, Washington, Chicago, Denver, and Los Angeles. The $250 one-way fare is comparable to pet fees at the largest U.S. airlines.

For owners the big difference is service. Dogs and cats will fly in the main cabin of a Suburban Air Freight plane, retooled and lined with carriers in place of seats. Pets (about 50 on each flight) will be escorted to the plane by attendants that will check on the animals every 15 minutes during flight. The pets are also given pre-boarding walks and bathroom breaks. And at each of the five airports it serves, the company has created a "Pet Lounge" for future fliers to wait and sniff before flights.

The company will operate out of smaller, regional airports in the five launch cities, which will mean an extra trip for most owners dropping off their pets if they are flying too. Stops in cities along the way mean the pets will take longer to reach a destination than their owners.

A trip from New York to Los Angeles, for example, will take about 24 hours. On that route, pets will stop in Chicago, have a bathroom break, play time, dinner, and bunk for the night before finishing the trip the next day.

Amanda Hickey of Portland, Ore. is one of the new airline's first customers. Her seven-year-old terrier-pinscher mix Mardi and 2-year-old puggle Penny are taking their first flight soon.

Hickey said the service was a welcome alternative to flying her dogs in cargo when she transplants them from her soon-to-be Denver home to Chicago to stay while she and her fiance travel to Aruba to get married.

"For a little bit more money, I have peace of mind," she said.

It was a stressful experience in a cargo hold that spurred Binder and Wiesel to start their airline. Their Jack Russell terrier, Zoe, flew once in cargo and Binder said they worried about how the dog was doing, but were unable to check on her or get information. The couple soon started looking for a better solution.

"One time in cargo was enough for us," Binder said, walking through an airplane hangar as Zoe trotted in front of her. "We wanted to do something better."

The company, which will begin with one flight in each of its five cities, is looking to add more flights and cities soon. In the next three years, Binder hopes to fly to 25 locations.
Among the big U.S. carriers that offer pet services, AirTran, Spirit, Southwest and JetBlue only allow pets to fly in the cabin. Most U.S. airlines charge between $100 and $125, but Delta and Northwest charge $150 for cabin trips. AirTran is the cheapest among big carriers at $69.

The charge is more to fly in the cargo or check-baggage holds. Delta and Northwest are the most expensive at $275. Alaska Airlines and Midwest charge the least, at $100. Frontier prices its checked pets fees between $100 and $200 and only takes pets as checked baggage.

Anne Banas, executive editor of SmartTravel.com, questions the viability of an airline with such a specific niche.

"I'm not sure how sustainable it is," she said. "But if people are trying to go for a first-class service, it could make sense."

She said the service's popularity could spike in peak summer or winter months when airlines in some areas don't allow pets to travel.

Betsy Saul, co-founder of Petfinder.com, which has ranked the pet-friendliness of airlines for three years, said she’s excited about the expected impact Pet Airways will have on pet travel across major airlines.

"The entire industry will stretch because of Pet Airways," she said. "It's a challenge that says 'let's make this (experience) better for pets.'"

Training what comes naturally in a pet
Submitted by (southzoo) Mon July 13, 2009

(AP) - A wild animal can't be physically manipulated like a pet can. If a lion won't sit, it's a bad idea to try to push its back legs underneath it to give it the idea. These limitations force trainers to use their imagination, and the resulting methods can be useful to pet trainers as well.

One useful technique is to take a natural action and put a command to it. Laurie Thompson, biologist of primates and pandas at the National Zoo, says that this method is used to train the pandas in many behaviors, such as opening their mouths so that their teeth can be examined and extending their front legs for blood draws.

Rather than trying to force or elicit any of these movements, keepers simply “capture” the natural behavior by rewarding the panda when it opens its mouth on its own, and associate a word to the action.

If you’re a dog owner, try this method to train your pup to eliminate on command — a useful skill when you’re late for work or it’s pouring rain. Simply choose a command, preferably a phrase you won’t accidentally use in the living room, and repeat it every time the dog goes.

A food treat isn't necessary — it may distract, and the comfort of an empty bladder is its own reward. It may take a couple of weeks of repetition but eventually when you say your command, the dog will start looking for a place to go.
Highlighted In This Issue:

- Could The Ground Under Your Property Be Banned?
- All-Pet Airline Takes Off
- Training what comes naturally in a pet

DONATIONS NEEDED!
Due to economic hardship, Phoenix Exotics is asking its members for an additional donation for 2009. In the past, Phoenix has offered its services for low membership fees. Donations are now needed in order to cover postage, printing and general operation costs. Any donated amount will be greatly appreciated and will enable us to continue our services. Thank you!