



E-Zine

Summer 2016



In this Bulletin



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 **2016 CONFERENCE IN BERLIN**

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Want more? The editor recommends this great read! An open access paper on respiratory disease in stoats, weasels and polecats published in BMC Vet Res:
<http://www.biomedcentral.com/1746-6148/12/72/email?from=email>

Presidents corner



It has been another very busy and productive year in the EWDA. There have been a number of new developments in wildlife disease which serve to underscore the importance of regular, routine wildlife disease surveillance to facilitate early identification and understanding of, and response to, new and emerging pathogens.

In December 2015, the Council of Europe recommended trade restrictions on salamanders, to prevent the further spread of the chytrid fungus *Batrachochytrium salamandrivorans* (Bsal), which has decimated the wild European fire salamander populations in the Netherlands, and has spread to the UK and Germany via the pet trade. This has underscored how essential it is to be aware of risks to populations of wild species from trade in exotic species.

In April, Chronic Wasting Disease was detected in free ranging reindeer in South Norway; this is the first time CWD was identified in cervids in Europe. Given the tenacity of this pathogen and its proclivity for becoming endemic in wild cervid populations, it will be important to determine if this was a unique case, or if not, how widespread this pathogen may be in Europe.

In May, the new EU funded 'ASF-STOP' COST Action commenced; the aim of the COST Action is to bring together colleagues at meetings and workshops to understand and develop strategies to combat African Swine Fever in Europe, and there will be an opportunity for colleagues in the EWDA to hear more about this Action (and the opportunities for being involved in the work of the Action) at the upcoming EWDA conference in Berlin in August.

The EWDA has also continued to develop and evolve as a Section of the parent organisation, the Wildlife Disease Association. The EWDA Student Chapter was the first student chapter developed in the WDA, and it has continued to be a model for how the WDA student chapters can best work with and contribute to the goals of the parent organisation. Over the past two years, we have worked hard to clarify and strengthen our relationship with the EWDA Student Chapter; clearly this is vital because our student colleagues are the future of our organisation. I have no doubt that this relationship will continue to grow and flourish in the coming years.

I have continued to be impressed by the welcoming and supportive environment in the EWDA. I have greatly enjoyed my work with my colleagues in the EWDA as Chair over the past two years, and look forward to working with the new Chair in the coming year.

We have two upcoming conferences this summer: the WDA International Conference at Greek Peaks Resort in Cortland, NY, USA (31 July – 5 August 2016) and our EWDA Conference from 27 – 31 August in Berlin, hosted by our colleagues at the Leibniz Institute for Zoo and Wildlife Research



Lisa Yon

EWDA President
University of Nottingham



News from the EWDA board



Spring is a time of renewal in all things living ! The EWDA board follows a similar process. In the past few months the nomination committee (Dolores Gavier-Widen, Thijs Kuiken, Steven Van Beurden) has been busy selecting candidates for the positions which will be opening in the EWDA board. These are: the chair, co-chair, student activities representative, research advisor and Eastern countries communications officer.

The Chair, Co-Chair and Student activities representative shall serve a term of two years. The Research advisor and the Eastern countries communications Officer will each serve a term of four years.

Selected candidates which EWDA members will be asked to vote for as of beginning of June are : Marie- Pierre Ryser (chair), Erik Agren (co-chair), Lineke Begeman (student activities representative), Andrew Breed (Research advisor) and Gabor Czirjak (Eastern countries communications Officer). Voting ended on June 30th and the new board will be presented at the 2016 EWDA conference in Berlin.

With the spring, our website has shed it's old skin and thanks to our website coordinator, Rogier Bodewes, now displays its beautiful new colors. We recommend checking it out at

[https://sites.google.com/site/ewdawebsite/!](https://sites.google.com/site/ewdawebsite/)



Karin Lemberger

EWDA secretary

Vet Diagnostics and
Faunapath, Lyon, France

Amongst other subjects on which the board members worked over the past few months, contribution to the parent association bylaws updates, with a particular focus on the relationship of the student chapter with the EWDA were the subject of considerable brainstorming. After productive discussions amongst the EWDA Board and Student Chapter, new guidelines have been set and the relationship between the two entities has now been clarified (see details in the News from the Student Chapter).

Last but not least, board members are actively involved in current and future conferences. Several board members are part of the scientific and organizing committees of the Berlin conference. We are also in discussion with the ECZM for a joint conference and our Time and Place committee has been actively searching (and now hopefully located) an exciting destination for our 2018 conference.

All this and more is to be presented at the Berlin conference, where we look forward to seeing you all in an exciting and scientifically stimulating venue !



12th Conference of the European Wildlife Disease Association (EWDA)

August 27th – 31st, 2016

Berlin, Germany



Dear colleagues,

Only a short time is left until the [12th Conference of the European Wildlife Disease Association!](http://www.izw-berlin.de/EWDA-Conference-European-Wildlife-Disease-Association.html) This year it will be held from August 27th to 31st in Berlin, Germany, and is preceded by a satellite event - the EWDA Wildlife Health Surveillance Network Meeting - one day earlier on August 26th. Moreover, Saturday August 27th four different workshops are offered and a few places are still left – make sure to check the conference' website to join:

<http://www.izw-berlin.de/EWDA-Conference-European-Wildlife-Disease-Association.html>

Plenary speakers

Three distinguished international plenary speakers will introduce the respective session theme of the day:

Prof. Dr. Daniel Martineau from the Montreal University, Canada, will talk about **“Causes and consequences of anthropogenic changes”** exemplified at the situation of Beluga whales.



Prof. Dr. Daniel Martineau



Prof. Dr. Chris Walzer

“Wildlife conservation and management” including methods e.g. radio-tracking, data logger, non-invasive sampling will be addressed by **Prof. Dr. Chris Walzer** from the University of Veterinary Medicine and the Research Institute of Wildlife Ecology, Vienna, Austria.

And finally, **Dr. Woutrina Smith**, UC Davis School of Veterinary Medicine, California, USA, will discuss the One Health approaches to investigate the epidemiology and transmission dynamics of zoonotic pathogens as a lead into the **“Wildlife Health”** session. A session on “neglected species” also received considerable interest concluding from the number of abstracts submitted for this topic.



Dr. Woutrina Smith



12th Conference of the European Wildlife Disease Association (EWDA)

August 27th – 31st, 2016

Berlin, Germany

Scientific contributions

Over 180 abstracts were submitted for oral and poster presentations. They were kindly reviewed by the session chairs, who faced a challenging task to rank the overwhelming number of highly competitive papers.

Social events

One evening is dedicated to a “Poster&Pasta Party” to allow combining both an enjoyable social evening and discussing posters at the same time. So far participants from 39 different nations registered for the conference and we are certain that they will find a high quality program and time for networking to create new ideas concerning wildlife health and conservation challenges in a changing world.

Student support: As always, there will be the **EWDA AUCTION**

– PLEASE DO NOT FORGET TO BRING AN ITEM (or more) FOR THE AUCTION !!!

We are also very happy to be able announce that a small grant from the German Science Association (DFG) made it possible for the conference’ scientific committee to award a small number of travel grants to European wildlife scientists with significant financial need, with a dedicated career in wildlife (veterinary) science and/or conservation medicine.

Of course there are more reasons to come to the 12th EWDA conference beside a stimulating conference program: Berlin is one of the hotspot cities for touristic activities and sightseeing! The mid-conference excursion will introduce you to the UNESCO biosphere reserve “Spree Forest”, located one hour south-easterly from Berlin – be prepared to end it with a surprising evening event deep in the forest!

Post conference tour to the National Park of Saxon Switzerland

For those who would like to see more of Germany’s hidden landscape treasures there will be a post conference tour to the National Park of Saxon Switzerland located close to the city of Dresden with hundreds of sandstone formations and pillars rising between dark green pine forests and small ravines.



If you would like to attend this conference but haven’t registered yet please use this link for online registration: <http://www.bayceer.uni-bayreuth.de/ewda2016/>

For any enquiries please contact Anke Schumann or Gudrun Wibbelt at:

EWDA2016@izw-berlin.de

We are very much looking forward to meet you soon in Berlin!

The conference organisation team

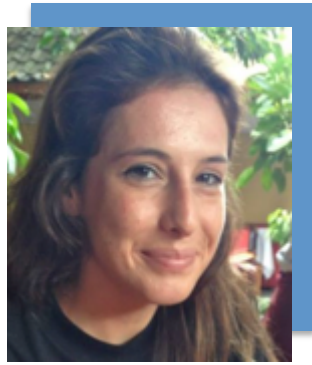


Interventions in Wild Animal Health



Neil Anderson

University of Edinburgh



Alexandra Thomas

Zoological Society of London



Barbara Vogler

University of Zurich

A short report on the first field course „Interventions in Wild Animal Health“, part of the on-line MVetSci in Conservation Medicine (University of Edinburgh), held from February 06 – 28, 2016 in Rajasthan, India.

This year the Zoological Society of London (ZSL), the Wildlife Institute of India (WII) and the University of Edinburgh (UoE) ran their first field course as a component of the on-line MVetSci in Conservation Medicine awarded by UoE. The course was predominantly based at Sariska Tiger Reserve, Rajasthan, India, and was supported by The Thriplow Trust. The aim of the course was to provide practical skills to complement the theoretical learning from the MVetSci Conservation Medicine and also to increase the capacity of wildlife health professionals in developing countries, particularly in South-East Asia.

The course was attended by 11 MVetSci students of different nationalities and veterinary backgrounds from North America, Africa, Europe and Asia and ten Indian veterinarians involved in national wildlife work. The curriculum was provided by 16 tutors from UoE, WII and ZSL and consisted of lectures and field training covering the three module topics: (i) population monitoring including practical use of transects and camera trapping, (ii) rehabilitation, field disease investigation and surveillance, including use of geographical information systems and field pathological investigation (iii) free-living wild animal restraint and anaesthesia, including planning, equipment and techniques. While the course was based at Sariska National Park, the students also visited Keoladeo National Park, Ranthambore National Park and the Wildlife SOS Bear and Elephant rescue facilities in Agra. Each site was used to discuss specific protected area management paradigms and the different scenarios of human-wildlife conflict encountered by wildlife health professionals in India.

Apart from learning new techniques and approaches for their veterinary work, most participants remarked that the main benefits resulting from the course were (i) their increased sensibility and skills gained in communication and negotiation when working professionally with different cultures and backgrounds and (ii) the opportunity to form lasting professional relationships with like-minded people.

From this year, the Interventions in Wild Animal Health Field Course will take place annually in February. Further details are available on <http://www.zsl.org/science/postgraduate-study/interventions-in-wild-animal-health>. In order to participate in the course prospective students should enroll on the MVetSci in Conservation Medicine (<http://www.ed.ac.uk/vet/conservation-medicine>).



Left: Students and tutors discuss the possible progression of events leading to the death of the sambar deer found on a roadside within Sariska National Park.



Above: Students observe a routine check up of a sloth bear at the bear rescue center in Agra.

Below: Discussion between Course participants and inhabitants of Haripura village, Sariska National Park, on their perception of human-wildlife-conflict and their feelings regarding the planned translocation of their village to outside of the park boundaries. Moderation by Dr. Ruchi Badola, WII.



Above: Teaching in the field with Dr. Sankar, WII.

Grey seals, a newly recognized cause of death for harbour porpoises



Examination of carcasses of protected free ranging species has many similarities with forensic examination. Little is known of the history of the specific animal and the aim is to know who or what to blame for its death. Harbour porpoise carcasses regularly wash up on shores of different European countries with deep, sharp-edged lacerations in their skin and organs. The extent of the damage is such that they can be called 'mutilated' carcasses. Because similar lesions previously had been associated to by-catch, fishery was suspected to be responsible for these deaths. Another suspected cause was ducted propeller injury, similar to what was seen in seals in Scotland (Thompson et al., October 2010, report on recent seal mortalities in UK waters caused by extensive lacerations). Large marine predators such as sharks or orcas could be ruled out as these do not occur in the region.



Lineke Begeman
EWDA Student Activities Representative
Erasmus Medical Centre, Rotterdam



In Belgium there had been a sighting of a grey seal with a mutilated harbour porpoise carcass and puncture wounds on this carcass had distances comparable to that of grey seal canines (Haelters et al., 2012, Aquatic Mammals). The question arose if grey seals could have caused these mutilations. This initiated a deeper investigation of the wounds by collaboration of Dutch veterinary pathologists of the department of pathobiology, faculty of Veterinary Medicine, and biologists of IMARES and Royal Netherlands Institute of Sea Research, Texel. Swabs were taken from puncture wounds and the laceration wounds of three very freshly dead carcasses. These were examined with forensic methods in an attempt to detect DNA of suspected inflictors of the wounds (van Bleijswijk et al, 2014, MEPS). Both the puncture and laceration wounds on the same animals showed acute haemorrhages and no inflammation, showing that the wounds were inflicted just prior to death and at almost the same time. In some puncture wounds (one on each of these animals) DNA was detected that was specific for grey seals. Thus, it was concluded that the grey seals were the cause of the wounds on these harbour porpoises, and the wounds were so severe that they were the most likely cause of death.

To differentiate lesions inflicted by grey seals from lesions not inflicted by grey seals (e.g. bird scavenging marks), the lesions of the three carcasses that had grey seal DNA in the wounds were studied in more detail. This resulted in five types of lesions of which was suspected they were inflicted by grey seals: ‘mutilation’, ‘head marks’, ‘tailstock marks’, ‘flipper marks’, and ‘scratches’.

A retrospective study of pictures taken from 1081 harbour porpoise autopsies in the Netherlands from 2003-2013 was performed. Because of the autolysis many carcasses could not be assessed for these lesions. Eventually in 120 of 202 (59%) harbour porpoises with mutilations grey seal associated lesions could be pinpointed, while this was only in 38 of 306 (12%) non-mutilated harbour porpoise carcasses. First this shows these (suspect) grey seal inflicted lesions were significantly more often present on mutilated harbour porpoise carcasses than on non-mutilated harbour porpoise carcasses ($p < 0.001$). Second this gives us an indication of the proportion of harbour porpoises which was most likely mutilated by grey seals of all harbour porpoises examined (approximately 18%). Third, some porpoises had non-lethal grey seal wounds, in other words: they had escaped an attack.



(Photo credits previous page: Cees van Hoven and this page: Johan Krol)

This study allows us to differentiate harbour porpoise deaths caused by grey seals, from other causes of mutilations like fishery bycatch and ship propellers on the basis of morphology of external lesions. This is important as many stranded carcasses will not be fresh enough to allow for predator DNA samples to be obtained. Questions remaining are what incites this behaviour in grey seals, and if the behaviour occurs ‘just’ in the North Sea or also beyond.



Dave Jessup

WDA Executive Manager

The membership of Wildlife Disease Association spans the globe. About 18% of members reside in Europe and the Nordic countries, 14% in Australasia, 4% in Africa and the Mideast, 4% in Latin America, 8% in Canada, and 50% in the USA. Every year there are at least 3 WDA meetings or conferences. In 2016 they will be in Courtland, New York, USA in July-August; Berlin Germany in September; and New Zealand in October. In 2017 the Annual International will be at San Cristobal de las Casas, Chiapas State, Mexico (a joint meeting of WDA, WDA Latin American Section and other colleagues), and there will be geographic section meeting in Africa and one in the Nordic countries. Attendance numbers vary from year to year, but approximately 800 WDA members and colleagues will attend conferences in 2016.

In 2006, with the support of Wildlife Conservation Society, WDA began providing free access to Journal of Wildlife Diseases (JWD) in nations with lower per capita GDP. In 2010 WDA Council set the endowment of publishing JWD and providing the online version worldwide at no cost to the 124 nations, as our highest priority. The thinking being that everyone needs the latest and highest quality wildlife health information, and that the ability to pay for that is often least in countries where the emerging wildlife disease and conservation challenges are greatest. The JWD Endowment was established in 2012 with the goal to raise \$2.5 million by 2020 and use the interest and increase to cover publication of JWD and worldwide distribution. Endowment funds are in invested accounts separate from other WDA funds. In December 2015 WDA reached the halfway point. The JWD Endowment Committee, chaired by Joe Gaydos, expects to work with WDA Council, Officers and Executive Manager over the next 4 years to reach our goal, and at that time, WDA will have a third major source of income (the increase and interest on the invested endowment), to add to membership fees and author page charges (the basic sources of WDA operating expenses for the last 50 years).



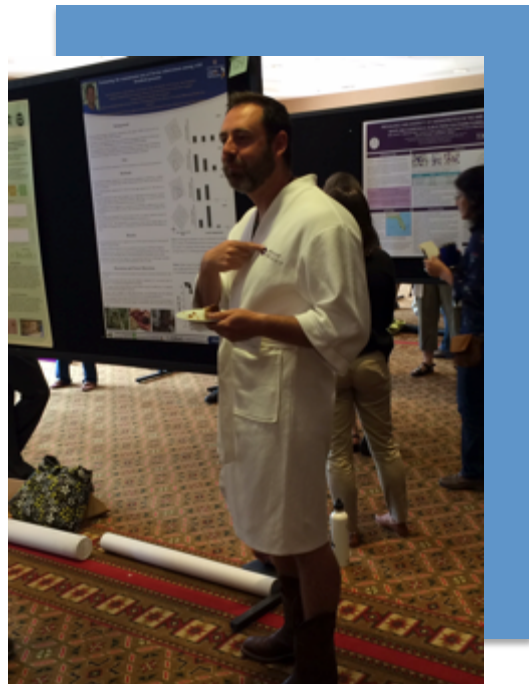
Sea otter
(Photo credit Bryant Austin)

Journal of Wildlife Diseases has a new Editor, Daniel Mulcahy. Dan obtained a BS in Zoology in 1970, and then a PhD in Microbiology in 1977 from Oregon State University. He worked for as a microbiologist for the USFWS on diseases of salmonid fishes. He later acquired his DVM from the University of Wisconsin in 1992 and became a Diplomate of the ACZM in 1998. Since 1995 he has been a wildlife veterinarian for the USGS Alaska Science Center providing medical and surgical services to wildlife biologists doing research on Pacific walruses, polar bears, sea otters, waterfowl and seabirds; providing advice and assistance with wildlife disease concerns; and mentoring numerous graduate students. He is currently working with Jim Mills our retiring Editor on the transition. Jim, much of whose career was with Centers for Disease Control (CDC) was editor from 2009 – 2016. He was greatly aided by with wife Barbara Ellis who still works at CDC. WDA has been extremely fortunate to have had a series of excellent editors (see pictures at:

<http://www.wildlifedisease.org/wda/ABOUTWDA/AboutUs/WDAEditors.aspx>

WDA members will receive 5 issues of JWD this year instead of the usual 4. The special wildlife welfare issue (JWD 52(2)s) was made possible by sponsorships from San Diego Zoo Global, American Association of Wildlife Veterinarians, U.C. Davis, Karen C. Drayer - Wildlife Health Center, and WDA's Wildlife Veterinary Section and Small Grants program. Kevin Castle served as guest Editor but was greatly assisted by Dan Mulcahy and many others members.

Right: A man in need of a duck (Present your poster in a bathrobe and you may get the duck award!)



Student Chapter Update



2016 has been an exciting year for the EWDA Student Chapter so far:

7th EWDA Student Workshop

First of all, the organization of the 7th EWDA Student Workshop is well on its way and it's going One Health this time. It will take place from April 6th to 9th, 2017, and held at the much-valued conference centre of the Fondation Mérieux, in Veyrier-du-Lac, France (dates and location preliminary). Titled "One Health: living and surviving the interface" the workshop is supposed to convey the idea of the 'broader picture' to our student participants. As in previous years, we aim to welcome a number of cutting-edge researchers of leading institutions and policy-makers of agencies and organizations such as FAO and WHO. In order to strengthen the interdisciplinary dialogue and in addition to vet science we aim to attract speakers and participants from a range of One Health related fields such as human medicine and environmental science. A crowd-funding project and a professionally produced promotional video will support us on the challenging path of gaining sponsors.

Student country representatives

Our second priority is to engage local student communities in EWDA related fields: For this purpose our network of country representatives is continuously growing. Currently we have 16 student reps in 15 countries in Europe and beyond. Apart from organising local lecture events, our country reps have started setting up networks with already existing wildlife groups and academic mentors in their countries. Some examples of their national initiatives included a lecture in Lisbon about captive breeding and reintroducing Persian leopards into the wild. The Portuguese student rep and his team also organized a workshop about emergency care in exotics and wildlife photography. Furthermore, the Austrian country rep set up an excursion to a wolf science centre that conducts first-class research on the behaviour and cognition of wolves and dogs. In 2014, a country representative award (free EWDA workshop admittance) was provided for the organization of the best lecture event and won by Portugal. We aim to realise this award for the 7th edition of the workshop as well.

Student events at EWDA conference in Berlin

The EWDA conference is coming up in Berlin in August this year. The organization of another edition of the popular student-mentor mixer is on the way. We will also give a presentation on our most recent activities recruiting new country reps and mentors. You don't have to wait for the conference though: Our website, facebook group and twitter account (details see below) not only keep members updated on our most recent activities but also on news, job openings and educational opportunities in the area of wildlife diseases and conservation.

Elections of WDA Student Representative

Last but not least, one of our board members (Catharina Vendl, Advisor and previous Workshop Organizer) has run for the position of the Student Representative on WDA Council. We are proud to announce she has been elected and is now the first ever European student holding this position! The email with the election link was sent out by the WDA on April 30th. Elections closed on July 1st. Check out the other candidates here:

<http://www.wildlifedisease.org/wda/ABOUTWDA/WDAElections.aspx>



We are looking forward to any feedback you would like to give us. Please also don't hesitate to share your ideas and suggestions how to spread the word about the importance of wildlife diseases and One Health among students even more!



Yours sincerely,

The EWDA Student Chapter Board 2015-2017:

Anne-Fleur Brand (Chair)

Sofia Mlala (7th Workshop Coordinator)

Andreia Correira da Costa (Communication Officer)

Catharina Vendl (Advisor and Previous Workshop Coordinator)

Contact us via:

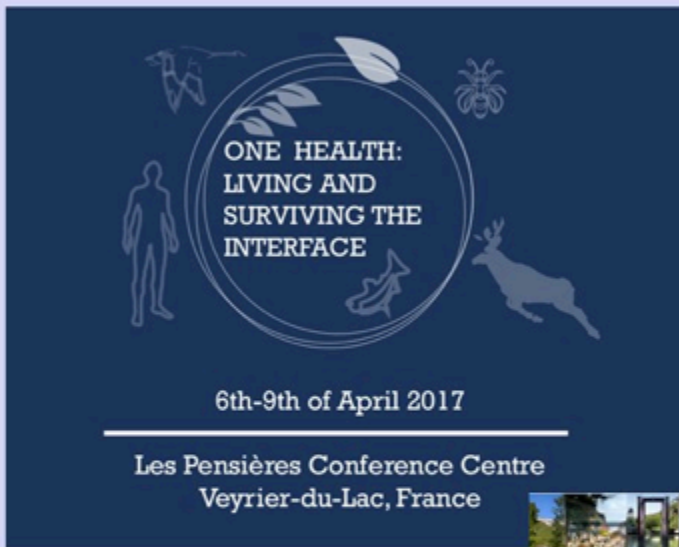
<https://ewdastudent.wordpress.com>

<https://facebook.com/groups/10403297125/>

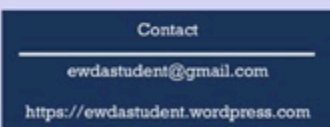
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EWDA STUDENT CHAPTER

Latest events and what's coming up soon:



Our country reps and a selection of their seminar announcements



Participants of the 6th EWDA Student Workshop in 2015

Don't forget to renew you EWDA/WDA membership for 2017 at

<http://www.wildlivedisease.org/wda/MEMBERAREA/JoinRenew.aspx>

There is an option to donate to support the EWDA Student Chapter Workshop, all donations (no matter how small) are hugely appreciated!!



Acknowledgements

We would like to thank all the contributors for their articles and their enthusiasm.! This Bulletin was thrown together driven by circumstances beyond control. The editors pray for everyone's forgiveness! APOLOGIES for omissions.

Disclaimer

The editors have tried to put this non-citable bulletin together as carefully as possible, we apologise for any errors or omissions that we may have committed.

As this is his last newsletter, the EWDA would like to express their gratitude to Paul Duff for his many years of excellent work as EWDA Bulletin Editor.

THANK YOU PAUL!!!



Bulletin Editors

Paul Duff

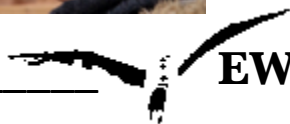
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