



The World Around Us



"Foreign Correspondent"
Michael Ludwig reports on some strange goings on in the natural world.

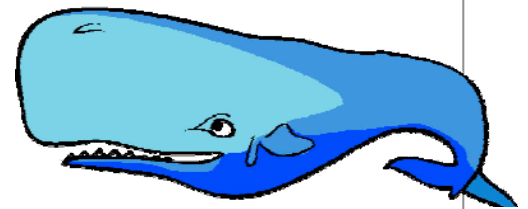
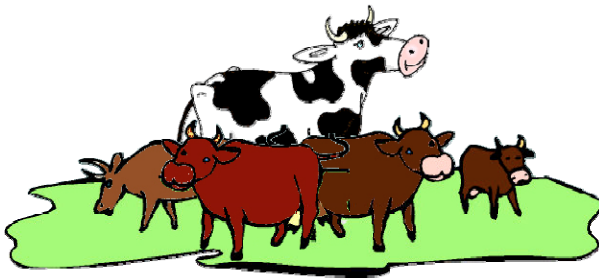


An Addition to the Herd

On 23rd October this year, a male European Bison was born at Fota Wildlife Park, in Cobh, Co Cork. Fota Wildlife Park has a herd of 15 Bison, including this new calf. Its father, Hyssop, joined the herd four years ago as part of a European breeding program. With European Bison having been hunted to extinction in the wild, zoos and wildlife parks (including Fota) have a cooperative captive breeding program and because of this, European Bison have been reintroduced back into the wild in Poland, Romania and other European countries.

A 'Giant' of a Steer!

On a farm in Western Australia, there's one steer that stands out from the herd and his name is 'Knickers'. A steer is a male cow that has been neutered. 'Knickers', a 7 year old Holstein Friesian, stands 1.94 metres high and weighs 1,400 kg. He was so big that he was saved from the slaughterhouse as the equipment could not handle his great size. He will now spend the rest of his days on the ranch. It is not known why 'Knickers' is so big but some scientists have suggested that he may have produced excessive growth hormone in his body when he was about 2 or 3 years old.



A Stark Reminder About Plastic in the Oceans

When researchers examined a dead sperm whale, recently found in an Indonesian national park, they discovered 5.9 kg of plastic waste in its stomach. Amongst the waste were 115 plastic cups, four plastic bottles, 25 plastic bags, two flip-flops and a nylon sack. In total, 1,000 pieces of plastic were found.

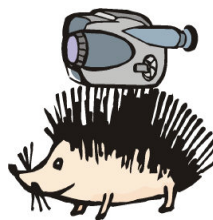
It is not known if the plastic killed the 9.5 metre long whale as it was too badly decomposed to tell, but it certainly highlights one of the consequences of allowing plastic to enter our waterways, our seas and our oceans.

Wildlife Comedy Photography Awards 2018

Check out the winners of the 2018 Comedy Photography Awards at:

www.comedywildlifephotography.com

There are some hilarious photographs this year. From a startled squirrel to a grinning shark to a peeking owl, they will definitely bring a smile to your face.



X-ray Vision at Oregon Zoo

Oregon Zoo, in Portland, Oregon, USA, gives a fascinating look at some wildlife, from a totally different view. When animals at the zoo get their health check up, they often have x-rays taken as it is a useful tool for the zoo's animal experts. These x-rays are taken using state-of-the-art equipment that uses digital radiation, which is slightly different to traditional x-rays. They use far less radiation and are also easier to use on the animals and produce results much faster. The digital images are full of detail and can even be fine-tuned after they have been taken.

