

**IMPORTANT: Veterinary Workforce Grant Program at Risk**

Please read the following letter from Dr. Gregory Hammer, AVMA President and help preserve this important component of the federal Farm Bill.

Tuesday, April 1, 2008

Dear Colleagues,

A critical legislative provision in the Farm Bill is at risk of being rejected by a U.S. Congress conference committee, and we need your help.

The U.S. House and the Senate passed their own versions of the Farm Bill reauthorization. The Veterinary Workforce Grant Program, which is included in the Senate version, would establish a competitive grant program to increase the number of veterinarians trained in agricultural biosecurity. This essential funding would be used by our nation's veterinary schools to increase capacity by building more classrooms and labs. The Veterinary Workforce Grant Program is now in danger of being removed from the final House and Senate approved Farm Bill.

With your active support and advocacy, we can insure that this important provision will remain in the final version of the Farm Bill.

Please stop what you are doing and take a few minutes to join us in the fight for this program. We expect the Farm Bill to come up for vote within the next two to three weeks, and it is urgent that you act now.

Taking action is easy. Just take the following steps:

1. Call Congress at 1-800-828-0498.
2. Ask to speak to the office of the Representative from your home district or to a Senator from your home state. (If you do not know the names of your Members of Congress go to: [http://www.avma.org/advocacy/federal/legislative/contact\\_congress.asp](http://www.avma.org/advocacy/federal/legislative/contact_congress.asp).) It is essential that you call your Representative and your state's two Senators.
3. Once connected to your Member's office, ask to speak to the staff member who deals with agricultural issues.
4. Ask the staffer for their Member's support for the Veterinary Workforce Grant Program in the Farm Bill and ask them to contact the conference committee to insure that the Veterinary Workforce Grant Program remains in the final version of the bill.

Thank you for taking action with us.

If you would like more information on the Veterinary Workforce Expansion Program, you can find it by going to: [http://www.avma.org/press/releases/071219\\_vwgp.asp](http://www.avma.org/press/releases/071219_vwgp.asp). If you have specific questions or want to tell us that you called Congress, please contact Dr. Mark Lutschaunig, Director, AVMA Governmental Relations Division ([mlutschaunig@avma.org](mailto:mlutschaunig@avma.org); 1-800-321-1473).

Sincerely,

Gregory S. Hammer, DVM  
President

**Large Animal Survey**

Many veterinarians recently received a survey and letter from Jacob Pruemer, a 3rd Year student at the College of Veterinary Medicine at the University of Illinois. Jacob is trying to gather information on the veterinary profession as it relates to Ag Safety and Health.

If you have received a copy of the survey, your participation would be greatly appreciated. The results of the survey will be shared with ISVMA members.

### ISVMA Spring Seminar Series - Register Now!

You should have received (or will receive soon) a mailing from ISVMA with information and a registration form for the 2008 ISVMA Spring Seminar Series. Please give serious consideration to participating in this program. With support from IDEXX Laboratories, we have hired two outstanding speakers to provide updated and critical information on the following topics:

- Feline Heartworm Disease - New Advances You Have to Know.
- Challenges in the Diagnosis and Treatment of Canine Hyperadrenocorticism.
- Addison's Disease in Dogs - Update on hypoadrenocorticism including current issues regarding available diagnostic tests and their interpretation.
- Endocrinology Update for Practitioners

The 2008 ISVMA Spring Seminar Series will be offered in the following locations:

April 19 in [Springfield, IL](#)  
 April 20 in [Fairview Heights, IL](#)  
 April 26 in [Chicago, IL](#)  
 April 27 in [Lisle, IL](#)

Please visit the ISVMA website for program [information](#) and [registration](#).

\*The 2008 ISVMA Spring Seminar Series is generously sponsored by:



### Dr. Shelly Rubin on Today's Oprah Show

Dr. Shelly Rubin, ISVMA President-Elect, will be on the Oprah Show this afternoon. The show will report on puppy mills and Dr. Rubin's contribution to the show is the discussion of the benefits of spay/neutering. There will be a short segment in which Dr. Rubin follows his client through the procedure from beginning to end. Set your DVRs!

### About the Photo

Spring is coming!

The [Yellow-breasted Chat](#) (*Icteria virens*) is a local harbinger of spring. It is (as of now) considered a member of the wood warbler family. However, its species placement is not definitely resolved. It has for a long time been considered the largest of the wood-warblers; genetic data suggest that it is not a warbler at all. It is the only member of the genus *Icteria*.

Adult chats have a bright yellow throat and breast, olive-greenback, white eye rings and white whisker stripes. The bill is stout, large, curved and usually solid black. The lores (the area between the bill and the eye) are black in males and gray in females; otherwise, the sexes are similar in appearance.

The Yellow-breasted Chat ranges from southern Canada and British Columbia east to southern New Hampshire and south to northern Florida, the Gulf Coast and Baja, California. The species winters from southern Texas and central Mexico south through the Yucatan to western Panama. Yellow-breasted Chats are declining in eastern North America due to habitat loss, which is caused primarily from deforestation and urban development. This species is particularly vulnerable to brood parasitism from Brown-headed Cowbirds that have taken advantage of the fragmentation of Eastern forests to expand their range in the last century. It is a summer resident (breeder) in Southern Illinois and its status is decreasing northward in state.

The breeding habitats of this species are dense, brushy areas and hedgerows. The nests of Yellow-breasted Chats are cup-shaped, and are placed in thick shrubs. They eat insects and berries, and will forage in dense vegetation, occasionally gripping food with their feet.

The song of this bird is an odd, variable mixture of cackles, clucks, whistles and hoots. Their calls are harsh chack's.

Unlike most warblers, this species has been known to mimic the calls of other birds. This bird is somewhat secretive, but will usually sing from exposed locations.

Despite its bright yellow chest, loud song, and conspicuous display flights, the Yellow-breasted Chat is easily overlooked because of its skulking nature and the denseness of its brushy haunts.

I photographed this Yellow-breasted Chat in east-central Illinois in the summer of 2005.

### Contact Us

Please feel free to forward this issue of the E-SOURCE to veterinarians that are not receiving ISVMA's electronic newsletter. Any ISVMA member may subscribe to the E-SOURCE for free:

If you wish to add your name to the recipient list, send an e-mail to [info@isvma.org](mailto:info@isvma.org) and ask to receive the E-SOURCE newsletter.

ISVMA values your membership and does not want to send you any unwanted email. If you would like to be removed from this member service, please email [info@isvma.org](mailto:info@isvma.org).