

PAULIINA RAUTIO
Editor-in-Chief
 pauliina.rautio@oulu.fi

Greetings from a café at the Central Railway Station at Helsinki on a very early April morning. I arrived on a night train from the North of Finland to attend a two-day grant-writing spree with colleagues from around Finland, focusing on multispecies concerns in urban settings. I have just dropped a few crumbs from my breakfast sandwich to the ground for the nearby sparrows to find them, mindful that I was not seen by the café personnel.

This is the ninth volume of *Trace*, and it brings you a record amount of peer-reviewed original articles, now in all the three accepted languages of the journal: English, Finnish and Swedish. A feature that has been strengthening over the years in articles and other texts published in *Trace* is a move from descriptive human-animal engagements towards more critical approaches, conscious and mindful of the perspectives and well-being of other animals in our societies. This is also aligned with the spirit of the Finnish Society for Human-Animal Studies publishing *Trace* – and the current issue further establishes this path of compassion.

This issue of *Trace* is mindful of the perspectives of the small (wasps and ticks), the swimming (trout), the land-walking (rats, dogs, cats), and the air-borne (seagulls), as well as addressing current discussions in the field of animal studies and in societies at large. What connects most of the texts in this issue is rooting for the underdog, the neglected, the shunned, disliked, or even actively vilified.

Small perspectives include an original article by Minna Santaoja, Jyrki Tornainen and Atte Komonen outlining response-ability in human-wasp encounters. They highlight that the crucial question amidst current environmental crises is how to live with unloved others, borrowing the term from Deborah Rose and Thom van Dooren. Analysing human-wasp conflicts through biological and media analyses, the authors end up proposing creative methods that allow the developing of “intimacy without proximity”. Another small animal with a conflicted reputation is featured in the original article by Sanna Lillbroända-

Annala and Oscar Winberg. It is sometimes called Finland's most dangerous animal: the tick. Dynamic media analyses of risk discourses related to ticks show the development of two grand narratives over time: ticks as dangerous or ticks as everyday companions, and the authors discuss the respective implications.

Swimming perspectives include the perspective of trouts in Timo Haapasalo's original article is taken at the level of species: considering the impacts of fishing to the endangered species and their stock sizes. The ethical issues related to harm done to individual trouts is also brought up, especially when connected to human enjoyment and the so called catch and release fishing. Haapasalo concludes that the evident appreciation that fishers have towards natural stock of trout works in favour of the conservation of endangered species.

Land-walking perspectives are offered by Venla Österdahl, Nina Nygren and Virpi Valtonen in their original article about human cohabitation with rats. Through collected stories about encounters with rats, the authors trace affects as powerful and sticky – clinging not only to rats but to places of rat-encounters and to culturally circulating preconceptions about rats. The authors conclude that the analysis of rat stories reveals a variety of feelings and locates the source of those feelings not only to the rat but in part to cultural imagery. Tiamat Warda, in their

original article, writes about emotional labour in interspecies relationships by addressing the Covid-era restrictions to the guide-dogs for the blind in Ireland. Social distancing and forms of lockdown meant adjustments to the work-life of dogs, trainers, and clients, all of them, however, not negative from the perspective of the dogs. Finally, land-walking perspectives of cats, along with other species, are featured in the *Lectio praecursoria* of Virpi Valtonen's PhD defense at the University of Helsinki. The lecture is a summary of Valtonen's thesis, handling the premises and timeliness of multispecies concerns in education. A posthumanist trilogy of the animal turn, the rug-weaving-inspired methodology, and the conceptual landscape of the proposed multispecies educational move is offered while discussing cats as focus animals.

Airborne-perspectives are offered poignantly via a long train journey to attend a conference with seagulls as a core theme in Croatia by Salla Tuomivaara. In her report Salla covers the history and particular features of the conference in Split, highlights interesting talks and the solid collaboration and aspirations of academics in a region of countries in conflict. Seagulls are present in the conference theme, in talks, and all around the city of Split.

Current discussions are the explicit focus of two original articles. First Silviya Serafimova compares intra- and inter-

generational justice for animals within the frameworks of environmental and ecological justice and proceeds to argue that a capabilities-based multispecies justice shows promise in building affective care on a multispecies level. Second, Tom Rice, Adam Reed, Alexander Badman-King, Sam Hurn and Paul Rose offer an original article on silence as a mode for zoo visits, based on a wider study of auditory culture in zoos. The silent visits described in the article show promise for experientially challenging the prevailing zoo-visiting culture, as the participants produced thoughtful and also critical perspectives in their observed discussions. The importance, and neglect, of sound in the formation of human-animal relations is brought forward as a relevant topic for further research also beyond a zoo setting. Finally, a highly useful double book review is offered by David Herman, who

considers the accessibility and usefulness of two books as instructional material for undergraduate students. Matthew Carlarco's *Animal Studies: The Key Concepts*, and Lori Gruen's edited book *Critical Terms for Animal Studies* are each evaluated with regard to target audience and suggested to work for different levels of studies.

Approaching our 10th anniversary, we are constantly growing our editorial team to accommodate the increasing number of submissions each year. I want to congratulate the current editors of *Trace* – Helinä, Jenna, Tuure and Samu – and my right hand, Editorial secretary Jouni, for yet another issue and thank you for your committed work. We wish to extend heartfelt thanks to all the reviewers of *Trace*, and to the authors who trusted their manuscripts with us. *Trace* is growing with us and because of us all.