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Introduction to the Special Issue ‘Canine and Feline Reproduction: Reproductive Biology and Medicine of Domestic and Exotic Carnivores’

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1. Background

Every 4 years, the International Symposium on Canine and Feline Reproduction (ISCFR) brings together scientists representing major laboratories worldwide investigating canine, feline and endangered carnivore reproduction, as well as fertility and contraception. It allows them to share recent research and consider new avenues of collaboration. The 9th Quadrennial ISCFR follows upon past meetings in Dublin, Ireland (1988); Liege, Belgium (1992); Veldhoven, Holland (1996); Oslo, Norway (2000); Embu das Artes, SP, Brazil (2004); Vienna, Austria (2008); Whistler, Canada (2012); and Paris, France (2016). These have included three previous joint meetings with the European Veterinary Society for Small Animal Reproduction (EVSSAR) in 2000, 2008 and 2016.

This Special Issue gathers a selection of peer-review papers that were presented at the 9th Quadrennial ISCFR. The symposium was held jointly with EVSSAR as a satellite event to the International Congress on Animal Reproduction (ICAR) in Bologna, Italy. The symposium ISCFR-EVSSAR 2020+2 was held from June 30 to July 2, 2022 at the Università degli Studi di Milano in Italy. The symposium program included a Thursday evening welcome reception and opening ceremony, a Friday evening poster review reception, a Saturday closing, and an 'Awards Ceremony' followed by a gala dinner.

Preparation and organization of the ISCFR-EVSSAR 2020+2 was affected by the SARS-CoV2 pandemic, which resulted in a two-year delay. Despite the challenges, >200 delegates from 34 countries plus their guests attended. The largest numbers of delegates were from Italy (n = 46), Germany (n = 24), France (n = 20), and USA (n = 18). A total of 175 research reports and reviews was presented during 14 plenary lectures, 2 keynote addresses, 49 oral research reports,

and 110 posters and other communications. All the abstracts of ISCFR-EVSSAR 2020+2 are available at <https://www.ivis.org/library/iscfr/iscfr-evssar-symposium-italy-2022>.

The longevity of the ISCFR remains indebted to the 2020+2 Local Organizing Committee headed by Gaia Cecilia Luvoni (chair), Martina Colombo, and Isa Mohammed Alkali. We are also grateful to the 2021-2022 EVSSAR Board for their invaluable cooperation in the organization of the joint meeting, providing featured speakers and assisting with the related administrative and logistical work.

The next ICAR is scheduled to be held during the summer of 2026 in Obihiro, Japan and an ISCFR 2026 venue in Eastern Asia is therefore contemplated.

2. Content of the Special Issue

Each ISCFR results in a post-conference Special Issue composed of peer-reviewed papers representing the reviews and research papers selected as representing the Symposium highlights, the major invited reviews, and the most seminal contributions to our science. Past Special Issues have become the definitive resource on the history, state of the art, and direction of canine and feline research in reproduction. The present issue consists of peer-reviewed papers representing 9 invited reviews and 11 research reports presented at the meeting considered to best represent the highlights of the meeting. Papers cover different subject matters including basic biological issues and clinical methods to molecular and cellular aspects of reproduction and reproductive disease in domestic as well as wild carnivores.

3. ISCFR Delegate Recognition Awards

The following awards were announced and presented at the closing ceremony of the Symposium:

New investigator: Robby van Leeuwenberg (Belgium)

Clinical research: Sylvie Chastant-Maillard (France)

Basic research: Wojciech Nizanski (Poland)

Senior investigator research award: Mariusz Kowalewski (Switzerland)

Lifetime: Carlos Ambrosio (Brazil)

Best presentation: Ragnvi Hagman (Sweden)

Best student/resident presentation: Miguel Tavares Pereira (Switzerland)

Best student/resident poster: Pakpoon Navanukraw (Thailand)

Best poster: Luisa Mateus (Portugal)

Special attendee: Tanya Holumbiyovska (Ukraine)

4. ISCFR-EVSSAR 2020+2 Committees

We wish to thank all who participated and we look forward to seeing them at another successful symposium in 2026.

ISCFR International Organizing Committee:

Michelle Kutzler, Oregon State University (USA)

Pierre Comizzoli, Smithsonian Institution (USA)

Gary England, University of Nottingham (UK)

EVSSAR Executive Board 2021–2022:

Georgios Mantziaras, President (Greece)

Sebastian Arlt, Vice-President (Germany)

Paulo Borges (Portugal)

Andrea Del Carro (Italy)

Cindy Maenhoudt (France)

Chiara Milani (Italy)

Helen Øvregaard (Norway)

Tuire Tamminen (Finland)

ISCFR-EVSSAR 2020+2 Abstract Review Committee:

Sebastian Arlt (Germany)

Paulo Borges (Portugal)

Pierre Comizzoli (USA)

Andrea Del Carro (Italy)

Michelle Kutzler (USA)

Gaia Cecilia Luvoni (Italy)

Cindy Maenhoudt (France)

Georgios Mantziaras (Greece)

Chiara Milani (Italy)

Helen Øvregaard (Norway)

Sabine Schäfer-Somi (Austria)

Hasan Sontas (Austria)

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