

SECOND LEVEL UNIVERSITY MASTER

EWA

Exotic, Wildlife and zoo animals

Programme structure

The **Master in Exotic, Wild and Zoo Animals** is an advanced course, providing attendees with a thorough, up-to-date and multidisciplinary preparation on **zoological medicine** and **surgery**.

The course delves on clinical anatomy, physiology and pathology of the main taxonomic categories, providing solid fundamentals to take on the diagnostic and treatment challenges concerning these species.

Special attention is paid to clinical exam methods, diagnosis formulation and treatment planning, by integrating the latest technologies available. It explains and applies cutting-edge diagnostics, and covers also mini-invasive procedures, with a focus on specific anaesthesiologic protocols and on post-surgery pain management, according to the different physiology.

Learning content

The Master in Exotic, Wild and Zoo Animals is divided in 3 Learning blocks and six modules, each one dedicated to an animal group: **amphibian, reptiles, birds, exotic mammals and aquatic species**.

Every session is a combination of lectures, discussion of real clinical cases, and wet labs, to allow the attendees to apply the knowledge acquired directly, in simulated and realistic contexts.

The faculty comprises national and international experts in zoological medicine, and attendees will have the chance to confront themselves with the field's best practices and develop a clinical approach based on scientific evidence, professional ethics and animal welfare.

Learning Block 1 – PHYSICAL EXAMINATIONS, ETHICS AND COMMUNICATION

This Learning block provides an introduction on the anatomy of non-conventional animal species. Through lectures and hands-on workshops, attendees will learn the morphological and functional fundamentals of these species, with a particular focus on their anatomical peculiarities. In addition, this Learning Block covers the ethical and communication aspects with stakeholders.

Learning Block 2 – VETERINARY PATHOLOGY

The Learning block 2 delves into the main pathologies affecting non-conventional animals. Through a multidisciplinary approach, attendees will explore the causes, mechanisms and clinical onsets of the diseases, with particular focus on ecological, diagnostic and treatment aspects.

Learning Block 3 – MEDICINE AND SURGERY

This Learning Block focuses on the diagnostic, treatment and surgical aspects concerning non-conventional animals. Attendees will explore the most common pathologies, the clinical management techniques, and the specific surgery protocols for those species. Particular attention is paid to animal welfare, captivity management, and the challenges related to wild animal preservation. The Learning Block also covers specific clinical cases, by highlighting the critical diagnostic aspects and the treatment options available.

Recipients and career opportunities

The **Master in Exotic, Wild and Zoo Animals** is addressed to Veterinarians who wish to acquire specialized competences in the healthcare management of exotic and wild animals, and animals kept in controlled environments. It is intended for working professionals, and freelancers in particular, who wish to know more and upgrade their zoological knowledge.

The course's purpose is not opening new job opportunities, but rather perfecting existing ones, and strengthening the clinical and decision-making skills of attendees. At the end of the Master, professionals will become more proficient in diagnosing and managing the pathologies affecting different animal species, including non-conventional ones. The **multidisciplinary approach** and use of cutting-edge diagnostics and treatments will help them identify the pathological conditions more quickly, and select the best treatment, to improve the quality of the clinical intervention and the welfare of the animals cured.

Programme at a glance

Week	Dates	Mode / venue	Weekly title
Week 1	1-2-3-4 February 2027	In person Milan	Rabbit Medicine and Surgery
Week 2	8-9-10-11 March 2027	Online Virtual classroom	Rodent and Ferret
Week 3	12-13-14 April 2027	Online On Demand + In person Milan	Avian Medicine and Surgery
Week 4	17-18-19-20 May 2027	Online On Demand + Online Virtual classroom	Reptile Medicine and Surgery
Week 5	14-15-16-17 June 2027	Online Virtual classroom	Zoo and Wild animal Medicine and surgery
Week 6	13-14-15-16 September 2027	Online On Demand + In person Padua	Large marine vertebrates

Week 1

Rabbit Medicine and Surgery

Dates	1-2-3-4 February 2027
Delivery format and location	In person - Milan
Teaching modalities	Face-to-face lectures, practical sessions

Schedule day 1 (1 February 2027):

The lessons will be held at Unisvet Venue - Milan

08:30 – 09:00	Registration procedures & Welcome coffee	
09:00 – 09:15	Introduction	D. d'Ovidio
09:15 – 10:00	The pet rabbit: basic anatomy, physiology and behavior	J. Mayer
10:00 – 10:45	Husbandry of rabbits	J. Mayer
10:45 – 11:00	Coffee break	
11:00 – 13:00	- The importance of proper rabbit nutrition for the clinician - Basic clinical techniques in rabbits - Clinical pathology	J. Mayer
13:00 – 14:00	Lunch	
14:00 – 15:30	- Gastrointestinal disorders - Respiratory and cardiovascular diseases - Neurologic and Musculoskeletal diseases	J. Mayer
15:30 – 16:00	Coffee break	
16:00 – 17:30	- Main infectious diseases - Ophthalmologic diseases	J. Mayer

Schedule day 2 (2 February 2027):

08:30 – 09:00	Registration procedures & Welcome coffee	
09:00 – 09:30	Introduction	D. d'Ovidio
09:30 – 10:30	Uro-genital disorders	D. d'Ovidio
10:30 – 11:00	<i>Coffee break</i>	
11:00 – 12:00	Dermatologic diseases	D. d'Ovidio
12:00 – 13:00	Anesthesia: equipment and preanesthetic examination	
13:00 – 14:30	<i>Lunch</i>	
14:30 – 15:30	Preanesthetics, induction, intubation maintenance and monitoring of anesthesia	D. d'Ovidio
15:30 – 16:30	Loco-regional anesthesia and analgesic treatment	D. d'Ovidio
16:30 – 17:30	Practical session: Examination and clinical procedures	

Schedule day 3 (3 February 2027):

08:30 – 09:00	Welcome coffee	
09:00 - 10:00	Basics of radiology, radiology of the head and miscellaneous	P. Raymond
10:00 - 11:00	Advanced diagnostic imaging with special focus on the head	P. Raymond
11:00 – 11:30	<i>Coffee break</i>	
11:30 - 12:30	Basic principles of surgery	P. Raymond
12:30 - 13:30	Surgery of the male reproductive tract	P. Raymond
13:30 - 14:30	<i>Lunch</i>	
14.30 – 17:30	Practical session: Anesthesia, Radiology and Dentistry Lab	P. Raymond

Schedule day 4 (4 February 2027):

08:30 – 09:00	Welcome coffee	
09:00 – 10:00	Surgery of the female reproductive tract	P. Raymond
10:00 – 11:00	Surgery of the urinary tract	P. Raymond
11:00 – 11:30	<i>Coffee Break</i>	
11:30 – 12:30	Miscellaneous surgical techniques	P. Raymond
12:30 - 13:30	Surgical treatment of odontogenic abscesses	P. Raymond
13:30 – 14:30	<i>Lunch</i>	
14.30 – 17:30	Practical session: Surgery Lab	P. Raymond

Week 2

Rodent and Ferret

Dates	8-9-10-11 March 2027
Delivery format and location	Online - Virtual classroom
Teaching modalities	Live online lectures

Schedule day 1 (8 March 2027):

The lessons will be held on Zoom

08.30 - 09.00	Zoom in time	
09:00 – 10:00	The pet rodents: taxonomy, basic anatomy, physiology and behaviour	D. d'Ovidio
10:00 – 11:00	Housing and nutrition	D. d'Ovidio
11:00 – 11:30	<i>Break</i>	
11:30 – 12:30	Physical examination and clinical procedures	D. d'Ovidio
12:30 – 13:30	Uro-genital disorders	D. d'Ovidio
13:30 – 14:30	<i>Break</i>	
14:30 – 15:30	Dermatologic diseases	D. d'Ovidio
15:30 – 16:30	Clinical pathology	D. d'Ovidio
16:30 – 17:30	Ophthalmologic diseases	D. d'Ovidio

Schedule day 2 (9 March 2027):

The lessons will be held on Zoom

08.30 - 09.00	Zoom in time	
09:00 – 10:00	Gastrointestinal disorders	D. d'Ovidio
10:00 – 11:00	Respiratory and cardiovascular diseases	D. d'Ovidio
11:00 – 11:30	Break	
11:30 – 12:30	Neurologic and Musculoskeletal diseases	V. Jekl
12:30 – 13:30	Rodent anesthesia	V. Jekl
13:30 – 14:30	Break	
14:30 – 15:30	Rodent dentistry I	V. Jekl
15:30 – 16:30	Rodent dentistry II	V. Jekl
16:30 – 17:30	Rodent surgery	V. Jekl

Schedule day 3 (10 March 2027):

The lessons will be held on Zoom

08.30 - 09.00	Zoom in time	
09:00 – 10:00	The pet ferret: Basic anatomy, physiology and behavior	N. J Schoemaker, Y. Van Zeeland
10:00 – 11:00	Housing and nutrition	N. J Schoemaker, Y. Van Zeeland
11:00 – 11:30	Break	
11:30 – 12:30	Physical examination and clinical procedures	N. J Schoemaker, Y. Van Zeeland
12:30 – 13:30	Clinical Pathology	N. J Schoemaker, Y. Van Zeeland
13:30 – 14:30	Break	
14:30 – 15:30	Gastrointestinal disorders	N. J Schoemaker, Y. Van Zeeland
15:30 – 16:30	Neoplastic diseases	N. J Schoemaker, Y. Van Zeeland
16:30 – 17:30	Cardiovascular diseases	N. J Schoemaker, Y. Van Zeeland

Schedule day 4 (11 March 2027):

The lessons will be held on Zoom

08.30 - 09.00	Zoom in time	
09:00 – 10:00	Respiratory diseases	N. J Schoemaker, Y. Van Zeeland
10:00 – 11:00	Endocrine diseases	N. J Schoemaker, Y. Van Zeeland
11:00 – 11:30	Break	
11:30 – 12:30	Dermatologic diseases	N. J Schoemaker, Y. Van Zeeland
12:30 – 13:30	Uro-genital disorders	N. J Schoemaker, Y. Van Zeeland
13:30 – 14:30	Break	
14:30 – 15:30	Neurologic and Musculoskeletal diseases	N. J Schoemaker, Y. Van Zeeland
15:30 – 16:30	Clinical cases	N. J Schoemaker, Y. Van Zeeland

Week 3

Avian Medicine and Surgery

Dates	12-15 April 2027
Delivery format and location	Online On Demand + In person Milan
Teaching modalities	Pre-recorded lectures available h24 and Face-to-face lectures + practical sessions

On-demand lectures:

Lessons are available on [unisvet.it](https://www.unisvet.it)

In order to access the module, it is mandatory to watch all the on demand lectures in advance

Avian anatomy, physiology and behaviour	M. Huynh
Housing and nutrition	M. Huynh
The avian consultation	M. Graf-Wernick
Avian respiratory diseases, pathology and update	M. Huynh
Avian neurologic diseases, pathology and update	M. Graf-Wernick
Avian reproductive diseases, pathology and update	M. Huynh
Avian digestive diseases, pathology and update	M. Graf-Wernick
Clinical techniques	M. Graf-Wernick
Hematology and biochemistry	M. Graf-Wernick
Avian Ophthalmology	M. Graf-Wernick
Cytology in avian medicine	M. Huynh

In person lectures:

The lessons will be held at Unisvet Venue – Milan

Schedule day 1 (12 April 2027):

08:30 – 09:00	Registration procedures & Welcome coffee	
09.00 - 10.00	Equipment and principles of avian surgery	M. Graf-Wernick
10.00 - 11.00	Surgery of gastro-intestinal tract	M. Graf-Wernick
11.00 – 11.30	Break	
11.30 - 12.30	Surgery of respiratory and reproductive system	M. Huynh
12.30 - 13.30	Orthopedic surgery	M. Graf-Wernick
13.30 – 14.30	Break	
14.30 – 17:30	Surgery workshop	

Schedule day 2 (13 April 2027):

08:30 – 09:00	Welcome coffee	
09.00 - 10.00	Avian diagnostic imaging, equipment and positioning techniques	M. Graf-Wernick
10.00 - 11.00	Avian cardiology	M. Graf-Wernick
11.00 – 11.30	Break	
11.30 - 12.30	Diagnostic imaging of the coelom, vertebral column and limbs	M. Huynh
12.30 - 13.30	Interactive clinical cases in radiology	M. Huynh
13.30 - 14.30	Break	
14:30 – 17:30	Clinical pathology workshop	

Schedule day 3 (14 April 2027):

08:30 – 09:00	Welcome coffee	
09.00 - 10.00	Current therapy in avian medicine	M. Huynh
10.00 - 11.00	Preanesthetic medication, induction, intubation, maintenance and monitoring	M. Graf-Wernick
11.00 - 11.30	Break	
11.30 - 12.30	Locoregional anesthesia and analgesia	M. Huynh
12.30 - 13.30	Endoscopy in avian medicine	M. Graf-Wernick
13.30 - 14.30	Lunch	
14.30 – 17:30	Endoscopy workshop	

Week 4

Reptile Medicine and Surgery (pt. 1)

Dates	17-18-19-20 May 2027
Delivery format and location	Online - Virtual classroom
Teaching modalities	Online On Demand + Live online lectures

On-demand lectures:

Lessons are available on unisvet.it

In order to access the module, it is mandatory to watch all the on demand lectures in advance

Taxonomy and anatomy	Z. Knotek
Physiology	Z. Knotek
Housing management	Z. Knotek
Nutrition	Z. Knotek
Hematology	Z. Knotek
Radiology and CT	Z. Knotek
Ultrasonography	Z. Knotek

Schedule day 1 (17 May 2027):

The lessons will be held on Zoom

08:30 – 09:00	Zoom in Time	
09.00 - 10.00	Physical exam	Z. Knotek
10.00 - 11.00	Clinical pathology	Z. Knotek
11.00 - 11.30	Break	Z. Knotek
11.30 – 12.30	Interactive cases: Hematology and biochemistry	Z. Knotek
12.30 – 13:30	Interactive cases: Diagnostic imaging	Z. Knotek
13:30 – 14:30	Break	
14:30 – 16:00	Video Session: Anatomy	Z. Knotek
16:00 – 17:30	Video Session: Handling and physical examination	Z. Knotek

Schedule day 2 (18 May 2027):

The lessons will be held on Zoom

08:30 – 09:00	Zoom in Time	
09.00 - 09.30	Infectious diseases: bacterial, viral and fungal	Z. Knotek
09.30 - 10.30	Parasitic diseases	Z. Knotek
10:30 – 11:00	Break	
11.00 - 12.00	Shell diseases and repair	Z. Knotek
12.00 - 12.45	Analgesia and Anaesthesia I	Z. Knotek
12.45 - 13.30	Analgesia and Anaesthesia II	Z. Knotek
13.30 - 14.30	Break	
14.30 - 17.30	Video Session: Anesthesia	

Schedule day 3 (19 May 2027):

The lessons will be held on Zoom

08:30 – 09:00	Zoom in Time	
09.00 - 10.00	Clinical procedures	Z. Knotek
10.00 - 11.00	Metabolic and non infectious diseases	Z. Knotek
11.00 - 11.30	Break	
11.30 - 12.30	Rigid endoscopy	Z. Knotek
12.30 - 13.30	Flexible endoscopy	Z. Knotek
13.30 - 14.30	Break	
14.30 – 17:30	Video Session: Endoscopy (Practical session in UniPD on 6 th module)	

Schedule day 4 (20 May 2027):

The lessons will be held on Zoom

08:30 – 09:00	Zoom in Time	
09.00 - 10.00	Introduction to reptile surgery	Z. Knotek
10.00 - 11.00	Non reproductive surgery	Z. Knotek
11.00 - 11.30	Break	
11.30 - 13.30	Reproductive surgery	Z. Knotek
13.30 - 14.30	Break	
14.30 – 17:30	Video Session: Surgery and Shell repair (Practical session in UniPD on 6 th module)	

Week 5

Zoo and Wild Medicine and Surgery

Dates	14-15-16-17 June 2027
Delivery format and location	Online - Virtual classroom
Teaching modalities	Live online lectures

Schedule day 1 (14 June 2027):

The lessons will be held on Zoom

08:30 – 09:00	Zoom in time	
09.00 - 10.00	Principles of zoo health management	N. Chai, E. Sos
10.00 - 11.00	Zoo mammal and bird management	E. Sos
11.00 - 11.30	<i>Break</i>	
11.30 – 12.30	Zoo reptile and amphibians management	N. Chai
12.30 – 13:30	Capture and anesthesia of wildlife	N. Chai
13:30 – 14:30	<i>Break</i>	
14:30 – 15:30	Capture and anesthesia of zoo mammals and birds	E. Sos
15:30 – 16:30	Capture and anesthesia of reptiles and amphibians	N. Chai

Schedule day 2 (15 June 2027):

The lessons will be held on Zoom

08:30 – 09:00	Zoom in time	
09.00 - 10.00	Bird medicine 1	E. Sos
10.00 - 11.00	Bird medicine 2	E. Sos
11.00 - 11.30	<i>Break</i>	
11.30 – 12.30	Reptile Medicine 1	N. Chai
12.30 – 13:30	Reptile Medicine 2	E. Sos
13:30 – 14:30	<i>Break</i>	
14:30 – 15:30	Amphibian Medicine 1	N. Chai
15:30 – 16:30	Amphibian Medicine 2	N. Chai

Schedule day 3 (16 June 2027):

The lessons will be held on Zoom

08:30 – 09:00	Zoom in time	
09.00 - 10.00	Marsupial Medicine	N. Chai
10.00 - 11.00	Primate Medicine 1	N. Chai
11.00 - 11.30	<i>Break</i>	
11.30 – 12.30	Primate Medicine 2	N. Chai
12.30 – 13:30	Carnivore Medicine 1	E. Sos
13:30 – 14:30	<i>Break</i>	
14:30 – 15:30	Carnivore Medicine 2	N. Chai
15:30 – 16:30	Hedhehogs and gliders	D. d’Ovidio
16:30 – 17:30	Elephant Medicine	E. Sos

Schedule day 4 (17 June 2027):

The lessons will be held on Zoom

08:30 – 09:00	Zoom in time	
09.00 – 10:00	Rhino Medicine	E. Sos
10:00 – 11:00	Giraffes Medicine	E. Sos
11.00 – 11:30	<i>Break</i>	
11.30 - 12.30	Wild bovids Medicine 1	N. Chai
12.30 – 13.30	Wild bovids Medicine 2	N. Chai
13:30 - 14.30	<i>Break</i>	
14:30- 15.30	Wild equids Medicine	E. Sos
15.30 - 16.30	Endoscopy in Zoo and Wild Animals	N. Chai
16:30 – 17:00	Imaging in Zoo and Wild Animals	N. Chai, E. Sos

Week 6

Reptile Medicine and Surgery (pt. 2)

Large Marine Vertebrates

Dates	13-14-15-16 September 2027
Delivery format and location	Online On Demand + In person UniPD - Padua
Teaching modalities	Pre-recorded lectures available h24 and Face-to-face lectures + practical sessions

On-demand lectures:

Lessons are available on unisvet.it

In order to access the module, it is mandatory to watch all the on demand lectures in advance

The role of pathology in marine mammals and sea turtles' conservation (4h)	C. Centelleghé
Marine mammals stranding response (4 h)	S. Mazzariol

In person lectures:

Schedule day 1 (13 September 2027):

The lessons will be held at the Chioggia beach, located approximately 40 minutes from Padua.

09:00 – 09:30	Meeting point at the beach
09:30 – 10:00	Introduction to Group Activities
10:00 – 12:00	<i>Dolphin rescue and Turtle rescue</i>
12:00 – 13:00	Lunch
13:00 – 15:00	<i>Dolphin rescue and Turtle rescue</i>
15:00 – 15:30	Debriefing
15:30	Individual travel to Agripolis (Legnaro, PD)

Schedule day 2 (14 September 2027):

The lessons will be held at the University of Padua - Agripolis Campus

09.00 – 09.30	Registration procedures	
09.30 – 12.30	Practical session: Reptiles anatomy review	
12.30 - 13.30	<i>Lunch</i>	
13.30 – 17:30	Practical session: Reptile Endoscopy	

Schedule day 3 (15 September 2027):

The lessons will be held at the University of Padua - Agripolis Campus

08:30 – 09:00	Registration procedures	
09.00 – 12:30	Practical session: Reptile Surgery	
12.30 - 13.30	<i>Lunch</i>	
13.30 – 17:30	Practical session: Shell repair	

Schedule day 4 (16 September 2027):

The lessons will be held at the University of Padua - Agripolis Campus

08:30 – 09:00	Registration procedures	
09:00 – 11:00	Presentation of participants' clinical cases	
11:00 – 12:00	Diploma award ceremony	

Assessment and Final Evaluation

Weekly/module assessment

At the end of each teaching week, participants will complete a structured assessment. This will apply to both online and in-person weeks and will confirm that students have understood the core concepts of the week.

Each weekly assessment will include multiple-choice questions (MCQs) and may also include short case-based questions. MCQs will generally include four possible answers, with one correct answer.

Final evaluation

The final assessment for the Master's program consists of the presentation and discussion of a clinical case study, developed by the candidate under faculty supervision. This evaluation is designed to assess the candidate's ability to integrate theoretical knowledge, practical skills, and clinical reasoning in the analysis and management of real-world scenarios. The project may be carried out either individually or as part of a group.

Proposed speakers

Cinzia Centelleghé (Master Program Director)	Prof. DVM, PhD, UniPd
Dario d'Ovidio (Associate Director of the Master's Program)	DVM, MSc, Spec. PACS, Dott. Ric., Dipl. ECZM (Small Mammal)
Joerg Mayer	DMV, MS, Dipl. ECZM, Dipl. ABVP, Dipl. ACZM
Paul Raymond	DVM, Dipl. ECZM (Small Mammal)
Vladimir Jekl	DVM, PhD, Dipl. ECZM (Small Mammal Medicine and Surgery)
Nico J. Schoemaker	DVM, PhD, Dip. ECZM-Small mammal, Avian, Dipl. ABVP-avian
Yvonne Van Zeeland	DVM, MVR, PhD, Dip. ECZM Avian, Small mammal
Morena Graf-Wenick	DVM, Dipl. ECZM (Avian)
Minh Huynh	DVM, MRCVS, Dipl. ECZM (Avian), Dipl. ACZM
Zdeněk Knotek	DVM, PhD, Dipl. ECZM (Herpetological Medicine and Surgery)
Norin Chai	DMV, MSc, PhD, Dipl. ECZM (Zoo Health Management)
Endre Sós	DVM, PhD, Dipl. ECZM (Zoo Health Management)
Sandro Mazzariol	Prof. DVM, PhD, UniPd



Prof. Cinzia Centelleghé

Master Program Director

Prof. Cinzia Centelleghé is an Associate Professor of General Pathology and Veterinary Pathological Anatomy at the Department of Comparative Biomedicine and Food Science of the University of Padua. A veterinary surgeon with a PhD in Veterinary Sciences, she is actively involved in research, teaching, and diagnostic activities in the field of veterinary pathology, with particular expertise in marine mammal pathology, conservation medicine, and veterinary forensic diagnostics.

Throughout her career, she has developed extensive experience in the study of cetaceans and sea turtles, focusing on necropsy investigations, infectious diseases, ecotoxicology, and the monitoring of environmental contaminants and their impact on marine ecosystem health. She is actively involved in coordinating the activities of the Cetacean Strandings Emergency Response Team (CERT) and participates in numerous national and international research projects, including those funded by Horizon Europe, PRIN, and Interreg.

Alongside her scientific work, she is deeply engaged in teaching across undergraduate and postgraduate programs at the University of Padua, contributing to the training of students and professionals in post-mortem techniques, veterinary pathology, and wildlife conservation. She is the author of numerous scientific publications in peer-reviewed international journals and collaborates with interdisciplinary research networks dedicated to the protection of marine biodiversity.



Dr. Dario d'Ovidio

Associate Director of the Master's Program

Dr. Dario d'Ovidio graduated with Honors from the University of Naples in 2003. He subsequently obtained a University Master's Degree in Wildlife Conservation, a Specialization Diploma in Avian, Rabbit and Game Animal Pathology, and a PhD in Biology, Pathology and Environmental Hygiene in Veterinary Medicine.

In 2014, Dr. d'Ovidio became a Diplomate of the European College of Zoological Medicine (ECZM), earning the title of European Specialist in Companion Small Mammal Medicine.

He has undertaken clinical training and professional appointments at veterinary clinics and universities in Kuwait, the United Kingdom, and the United States.

He is a frequent speaker at national and international courses and scientific conferences and is the author of more than 50 scientific publications.

He has served as an Adjunct Professor at the Faculties of Veterinary Medicine of the Universities of Naples, Parma, and Bologna.

He currently works exclusively as a consultant in Exotic Animal Medicine and Surgery, providing referral services to several private veterinary hospitals and clinics in the Campania region of Italy.