

Australian Registry of Wildlife Health

The following are some interesting cases that have passed through the Registry recently. These reports originate from free-ranging animals, and native fauna held in a variety of zoos, fauna parks and private collections.

September

- Koala – captive, NSW - the adult, female was euthanased due to the presence of a large facial mass involving the maxillary bones, palate and gingiva. The animal had a markedly elevated LCAT (latex agglutination test for *Cryptococcus* sp. antigen). The koala was found to have osteomyelitis associated with *Cryptococcus* sp. infection. Small numbers of organisms, within small foci of granulomatous inflammation were evident within the lungs and lymph nodes - disseminated cryptococcosis (5941.1).
- Grey-headed flying fox – captive, NSW - adult, male - one of several zoo and wild flying foxes to be found suddenly dead over the last 2 - 3 months. This animal was found soaking wet in the pond, but it did not appear to have drowned. The only lesions evident were acute haemorrhage around the kidneys and trachea, and acute degeneration in the kidneys (5946.1). Tissues have been submitted for viral culture.
- Chestnut breasted mannikin – captive, NSW - adult, male, has inclusion bodies in the kidneys suggestive of polyomavirus infection (5934.1). This virus has the potential to cause mortality in naïve adult birds, but most often is associated with high rates of neonatal mortality.
- Budgies – captive, NSW - was found dead with a very large abdominal mass (3.5 cm diameter) that seemed to replace the spleen - haemangiosarcoma (5953.1).
- Superb parrot and figbird – captive, NSW - both euthanased after suffering from chronic arthritis and osteomyelitis. The cases were unrelated, but both animals had bacterial infection around the joint and causing severe damage to the bones, tendons, and adjacent connective tissue. *Pseudomonas putida* was isolated within the periarticular tissues of the fig parrot. Acid fast bacteria (mycobacteria) were also present within foci of granulomatous inflammation surrounding the joints and eroded long bones (5729.2, 5945.1).

August 2007

- Ringtail possum – captive, NSW - one of a couple of captive and wild possums to die over a several week period with haemorrhagic enteritis and miliary hepatitis, suggestive of an acute viral infection (5901.1).
- Agile Wallaby – captive, NSW - died with a severe bacterial infection in the chest cavity, surrounding the heart, and in the lungs (*Streptococcus intermedius*, *Fusobacterium necrophorum*, *Bacteroides fragilis* group, and *Paecilomyces variotii* were isolated). The animal also had kidney stones (predominantly calcium carbonate with a trace of calcium oxalate) (5902.1).
- Centralian carpet python – captive, NSW - sudden paralysis and death. Inclusion body disease (suspected viral infection) in the brain and kidney. There was severe degeneration of nervous tissue in the brain (Wallerian degeneration). Also had a round cell tumour in the small

intestine, which was localised and likely to be an incidental finding at the time of death (5918.1).

- NZ Fur Seal - Port Hacking, NSW - the animal died shortly after being brought into veterinary care after being found stranded with a prolapsed rectum and prepuce. On post mortem examination the animal was found to have a severe bacterial infection in the urethra, which most likely resulted in severe straining and thus, the prolapses (5899.1).
- Australian Fur Seal – Watson’s Bay, NSW - an adult male fur seal was shot near Watson’s Bay by NSW DECC, in the presence of an RSPCA inspector, due to severe, chronic wounds caused by fishing line (long line) entanglement around the neck. Members of DECC and RSPCA attended the necropsy. Photos were taken for educational and community awareness programs (5906.1).
- Sub-Antarctic fur seal – Bateman’s Bay, NSW - a juvenile male animal was found very weak and emaciated in Bateman’s Bay. The animal died within 48 hours of admission to care. The fur seal was emaciated and had a moderate burden of lung worms (5914.1).
- Common Wombat - private clinic, Sydney west, NSW - mineralisation in the skin and several tissues, associated with chronic kidney disease (which results in retention of calcium and excretion of phosphorus). The wombat also had non-suppurative inflammation in the brain and heart, suggestive of a previous viral infection (5910.1).
- Grey headed flying fox - wild, Naremburn, NSW - euthanased due to severe elevation of liver enzymes suggestive of liver damage, but no liver lesions were evident. There were mild lesions suggestive of trauma (5919.1).
- Koala – wild, NSW - hermaphrodite animal submitted to a wildlife hospital and then released to back to the wild. Samples were collected for possible future genetic analysis, as requested by NSW Dept. of Conservation and Climate Change (5922.1).
- Southern Brown Bandicoot - WA - examples of viral induced papillomatosis were submitted to the Registry (5925.1).
- White-capped albatross – wild, NSW - submitted by Southern Oceans Seabird Study Association (SOSSA) - long-line fishing line related amputation of the lower jaw.