

EDITORIAL

A case report describes an 8-year-old female cockatiel (*Nymphicus hollandicus*) that was presented with coelomic distension.⁷ An irregular intracoelomic mass was found by palpation and an exploratory coeliotomy identified an intraabdominal irregular mass. Histological examination showed features consistent with a respiratory hamartoma.

The bird recovered uneventfully, with no recurrence, and the authors suggest that this should be one of the differential diagnoses for coelomic masses in avian patients.

Wildlife & zoos

Immunosuppression following stress has been implicated as a contributing factor in infectious diseases of koalas⁸ and it has been suggested that faecal cortisol measurement may be a suitable non-invasive methodology for quantifying stress. This study used an adrenocorticotrophic stimulation test to induce secretion of cortisol. Measurement in serum samples showed an elevation of serum cortisol for at least 4 h post injection, but there was no corresponding peak in corticosterone or cortisol concentrations in extracts from the faeces. There was a sudden rise in cortisol levels that was probably related to contamination with urine. The authors conclude that rigorous validation is needed for each species when attempting to use faecal cortisol as an index of stress.

Equine

This issue is the first for a long time that does not include an equine paper. We are at the mercy of when papers are submitted, and

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Re: Book review *Fish vetting essentials*

It was with much interest that I read the book review on *Fish vetting essentials*.¹ I wish to comment on some of the factual errors in the reviewer's assessment of the content of the book.

On the subject of temperature ranges, it was the reviewer's assessment that 'the information provided on farmed fish and other aquatic species is limited and at times, potentially detrimental'. In making these comments the reviewer has assumed the temperatures quoted in the text are optimal for commercial production. However, *Fish vetting essentials* and in other reviewed texts make a distinction between 'optimal' and 'tolerance' ranges.

The authors state that the optimal temperature range for rainbow trout is 14–18°C and their tolerance range is from –1 to 25°C. This is in alignment with various government literature that quotes optimal temperature ranges of 9–22°C and a tolerance range of 0–30°C. In some trout growing areas in Australia, farmers are selecting fish with an increase in the upper range of tolerance.

Temperature requirements for barramundi also differ. *Fish vetting essentials* notes that the published lower tolerance range is 15°C and the optimal at 25°C. The reviewer considers that the optimal range is 27–30°C. The authors quote other government publications that state that barramundi inhabit areas where the water temperature range is 16–35°C, and that the optimum temperature for growth of Northern Territory barramundi is 28–32°C.

although we have several being reviewed at the moment, none are at the stage of being suitable to publish. I would like to call for submissions, particularly for large animal studies, but new papers are always welcome. We are now able to use our Manuscript Central site for the other AVA journals of Australian Veterinary Practitioner, and the Australian Equine Veterinarian, and I know that their editors are also very keen for more quality submissions.

References

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8. Johnston SD, Booth RA, Pyne M et al. Preliminary study of faecal cortisol and corticosterone as an index of acute cortisol secretion in the koala (*Phascolarctos cinereus*). *Aust Vet J* 2013;91:534–537.

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The authors wish to note that although the reviewer was concerned that the recommended use of malachite green was not always accompanied by a warning about its use being banned in food fish, 4 of their 8 references to malachite green state that the dye is carcinogenic and prohibited from use in food fish. Most medicines worldwide used for the treatment of aquatic animals must be used under a veterinarian's care and will be used off-label.

Finally, the first edition is in a practical format and the authors have received many positive reviews contrary to that published in the AVJ.

I have not gained personally by authoring this submission and seek only to put some of the record straight.

Reference

1. Hardy-Smith P. *Fish vetting essentials*. Loh R, Landos M, editors [Book review]. *Aust Vet J* 2013;91:159.

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