BOOK REVIEWS


This book is an impressive compilation of disease agents reported in wild Florida birds during the last 50 yr, with an emphasis on parasites. This book is exceptional in its detailed and complete database on several agents.

The book is organized by bird species rather than by disease agents and is divided into 24 chapters, such as those on loons and grebes, ducks, eagles, cranes, pigeons and doves, wild turkeys, and owls. Each chapter begins with an introduction that discusses the species of birds seen in Florida, their distribution, and their historic and present status.

In each chapter, the diseases are divided under categories such as trauma, predation, human disturbance, inclement weather, organochlorines, organophosphates, carba- mates, metals, radionuclides, oiling, biotoxins, neoplasia and anomalies, viruses, bacteria, fungi, protozoans, helminths, arthropods, emaciation, and unresolved die-offs. The distribution in different counties, prevalence, and intensity of each disease agent are presented for each bird species. Public health concerns are also discussed, especially those relating to gulls, pigeons, and doves. A small table of contents is provided at the start of each chapter, which is very helpful for visualizing the organization of the chapter and permitting the reader quick access to a particular section of interest.

Numerous tables are dispersed throughout the chapters, covering such topics as causes of mortality, organochlorine residues in tissues, heavy metal (lead, mercury) levels in tissues, bacteria identified from postmortem examinations, protozoans, helminths, and ectoparasites. Data are well referenced. High-quality photographs and photomicrographs are used in this book to represent the clinical presentation and histologic appearance of specific disease agents. Tables, photographs, and drawings are well distributed throughout the text.

Each chapter concludes with the most important mortality factors for a particular bird species (or group) and a summary of the disease agents reported for the group. All chapters have been written by Drs. Forrester and Spalding and are all very detailed and homogenous throughout the book.

Parasites and Diseases of Wild Birds in Florida is not meant to be a clinical reference. The book does not describe clinical signs, pathogenicity, diagnoses, or treatment modalities of the different disease agents discussed. However, the reader is provided with references to papers covering these topics. From a clinical standpoint, every disease agent is described in such extensive detail that it can be difficult to differentiate which disease agents are significant health concerns and which are just subclinical conditions. Unfortunately, disease agents are often synergistic, and the relative importance of each factor is often unknown.

In conclusion, Parasites and Diseases of Wild Birds in Florida is an excellent database of disease agents reported in wild birds in Florida. The book is host oriented, being divided by different bird species rather than by disease etiology. The book is well structured and visually pleasing, and information is easy to access. Numerous tables and photographs are dispersed throughout the text. The strength of this book is the impressive database on parasites for each bird species, making the book surely one of the most complete references available for wild birds. This book is not meant to be a clinical reference but remains an excellent resource for wildlife biologists, ecologists, animal health researchers, public health officials, and veterinary practitioners who deal with wild birds.—Maud Lafortune, D.M.V., M.Sc., Zoological Medicine Resident, University of Florida, White Oak Conservation Center, 581705 White Oak Road, Yulee, Florida 32097, USA.


Veterinary Nursing of Exotic Pets is, to my knowledge, the first book written about exotic animals that is specifically designed for veterinary nurses and technicians. The author states that he hopes the book will also serve as a reference tool for students and private practitioners. The book is divided into three sections: Avian Species, Reptiles and Amphibians, and Small Mammals. Each section contains six chapters, which cover basic anatomy and physiology, housing and husbandry, handling and restraint, nutrition, common diseases, and therapeutics specific to each taxa. There are scattered black and white drawings and photographs to help illustrate anatomy and medical conditions as well as six pages with color photographs in the center of the book.

The first six chapters make up the avian section. Chapter 1, “Basic Avian Anatomy and Physiology,” introduces the reader to several different types of birds including psitacines, passerines, anseriformes, strigiformes, and falconiformes. Normal and unique anatomic characteristics of birds are discussed in sufficient detail to serve as a technician and student’s reference. Good descriptions of the skeletal structures in birds are included, but the reader would need to refer to other texts for any specific information regarding muscular anatomy because this level of detail is not included in the book. There are useful reviews of the avian respiratory, digestive, renal, reproductive, and cardiac anatomy. Avian hematology is introduced but not in sufficient detail for a technician to learn how to perform avian hematologic evaluations. Chapter 2, “Avian Housing and Husbandry,” covers caging and husbandry requirements for parrots, songbirds, raptors, columbiformes, and waterfowl. Chapter 3, “Avian Handling and Chemical Restraint,” discusses whether or