

# Preface

Over the last 20 years there has been a dramatic increase in interest in the conservation and welfare of Australian native wildlife. Veterinarians are now frequently asked to treat these animals and there is increasing veterinary involvement in conservation programs for threatened and endangered species. Free-ranging and captive Australian mammals are now commonly used in research. Native mammals can be kept as pets in some Australian states and territories and some native Australian mammals are commonly kept as pets in other countries. Australian mammals are also popular display and educational animals in many zoos and fauna parks around the world.

Captive and free-ranging wildlife are frequently affected by both natural and anthropogenic events, with many cases requiring veterinary investigation or intervention. Australia and the rest of the world also face a number of challenges associated with emerging diseases, climate change and human population expansion, the impacts of which are often seen in wildlife.

Although the medicine of Australian mammals is covered in some textbooks, this is the first comprehensive text devoted to this subject. It is hoped that this text will be of value to veterinarians (private practitioners, zoo and wildlife veterinarians), biologists, zoologists and wildlife workers around the world. It presents the current state of knowledge on the medical management of all taxa of Australian native mammals. It is intended to be the single most important and useful, stand-alone text on the medical management of Australian native mammals. It presents the most up-to-date information available. It is specific and detailed enough to be of use to experienced zoo and wildlife veterinarians (with information on aetiology, epidemiology, pathology, clinical signs and treatment of specific diseases), but is also set out in such a way that it can be of use as a quick reference guide for veterinary practitioners that may not have much experience with Australian native mammals. The book is clinically oriented with the emphasis on providing a practical, usable, one-source reference and problem solving guide. It will assist veterinarians

in making sound decisions on diagnosis, prognosis and treatment.

We have brought together Australia's leading wildlife veterinarians, who have exhaustively reviewed the literature and contributed their own knowledge in the writing of their chapters. Although there have been many peer reviewed publications and scientific studies on the diseases and medicine of Australian native mammals much of the information cited in this text is based on the author's own experiences and anecdotal reports from other people. Much of what is cited has been empirically extrapolated from the medicine of domestic animals. It is essential that clinicians and other wildlife professionals using the information from this text keep this in mind. Assessment of patients and decisions on prognosis and treatment must be made on sound clinical judgement. Recommendations from the text, particularly with respect to therapeutics must be used with caution. In most cases this will be off-label use and without specific pharmacokinetic studies carried out for the drug in the particular species being treated.

Unless stated otherwise, the values for haematology and biochemistry presented in this volume are not reference ranges. Reference ranges are not available for the majority of Australian native mammals. Where proprietary product names are used, the manufacturer or supplier's name is cited in parentheses after the first time the product is mentioned in a chapter. The full details of the manufacturer or supplier are provided in Appendix 3. The scientific name for species listed in the text is included in parentheses after the common name when first mentioned in the text for each chapter. The common names (and their construction) and scientific names for mammals used in this volume have been standardised throughout. A complete checklist of the mammals of Australia and its territories is provided in Appendix 1. Wherever possible we have used terminology that is in common usage. In some instances these terms may not be acceptable to all or scientifically