

Book Reviews

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BOOK REVIEW . . .

Parasites and Diseases of Wild Mammals in Florida. Donald J. Forrester. University Press of Florida, Gainesville, Florida. 1992. 459 pp., 90 figures, 216 tables. \$59.95 U.S.

A number of textbooks are available on wild mammal diseases and parasites. Most are either outdated or limited in the scope of various species discussed. This textbook includes information on 69 Florida mammalian species, 61 native and 8 non-native, ranging from the southeastern shrew to the right whale. It also places special emphasis on species and subspecies unique to Florida such as the manatee and the Key deer which are not covered by other currently available wildlife disease textbooks.

There is a wealth of knowledge on diseases and parasites of wild mammals packed into this textbook and the literature cited is impressive and complete (as far as concerns Florida). This text is not meant to be a diagnostic or therapeutic manual. Each chapter is devoted to one species or a group of related species and has an excellent introduction which includes review articles and bibliographies on diseases and parasites and citations for other pertinent subjects such as physiology, nutrition and clinicopathology.

The author usually remains true to the title and rarely discusses diseases and parasites not found in Florida. Exceptions for the most part

are a few species where little is known about their diseases and parasites in Florida or in general. This narrow view may be a disappointment to some readers but remember the title does state that this is a book on diseases and parasites of mammals in Florida.

The text is heavy on the larger parasites. This may not only reflect the area of the author's expertise but also the fact that helminths and arthropods of wildlife, in general, are better studied than other disease agents such as viruses, bacteria, and toxins. Each chapter ends with a summary and conclusions section which is redundant and unneeded but does not necessarily detract from the remainder of the chapter. The textbook ends with a Summary and Conclusions chapter which has a number of wonderful tables outlining diseases and parasites of Florida wild mammals that also infect humans.

Although this text is limited primarily to diseases and parasites of wild mammals in Florida, it is excellent and highly recommended for all wildlife veterinarians, veterinary pathologists, wildlife biologists and public health officials, for it is a veritable warehouse of information.

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BOOK REVIEW . . .

The African Elephant as a Game Ranch Animal, edited by the South African Veterinary Association Wildlife Group. Proceedings of a symposium on the African elephant as a game ranch animal. Kruger National Park, 29-30 April 1991. 146 pp. Bibliography with cross index. SAVA Wildlife Group, P.O. Box 12900, Ondestepoort 0110, Republic of South Africa. \$50.00 U.S. including postage and packaging.

This book, which is in a format that one would expect of an annual report, is about 208 × 300 mm and has a soft paper cover with a nice black and white drawing of an elephant on it. There are no photographs in the book. Except for the paper on hunting potential written in Afrikaans, the 17 papers are in English. There is no English abstract for the paper in Afrikaans; thus, it is unavailable to most readers outside of South Africa, including myself. The 21 authors of the 17 papers all seem to reside in South Africa, and many are not veterinarians. The extensive bibliography of about 739 entries (I found one number missing) will be one of the most useful features of the book. Two people, one of them not a contributor of a paper, are responsible for the bibliography. The "cross index" glued into the back of the book appears to have only one entry for each paper, so that a paper listed by number under "Veterinary Aspects" does not appear under any other heading such as "Reproduction" or "Immobilization." "Veterinary Aspects" has the most citations in the "cross index," 142, while "Translocation" and "Hunting" are tied for three each. Several of the citations at the ends of the papers are missing from the bibliography. Since 13 of the papers cite references, there is some repetition among those citations.

The first chapter covers past, present and future distribution of elephants in southern Africa, and how they are confined. "Elephants and Habitats" provides the ecological background for discussions of their establishment in certain areas. This is followed by legislation and management which leads to culling techniques, electric fences (within which elephants are successfully contained), bomas, and management of captive juveniles. Then, a discussion of the elephant as a game ranch animal is followed by the hunting potential, a discussion of economics with emphasis on domesticating them as are Asian elephants, diseases, disease diagnosis (which is mostly hematology), digestion, and lastly elephant autopsy. This is a very disparate group of papers.

About 30 years ago I gave a talk to a gathering of veterinarians in Zimbabwe and tried to en-

courage veterinarian assistance in game ranching at that time. I suggested that such work would open up a whole new and challenging field for them. They were far from enthusiastic. One of the more open people said, "We see as our job the protection of the cattle industry." The clear implication was that game ranching threatened the cattle industry. The veterinarians present saw wildlife only as reservoirs of disease and competitors for forage. They recognized no value for wildlife itself. I certainly am pleased that this book shows none of that, although I would be extremely surprised to learn that such attitudes no longer exist among veterinarians of southern Africa.

The most appropriate users of this book are South Africans who will be reintroducing elephants to game areas or have already done so as a result of the recent changes in the laws permitting this with animals culled from such populations as occur in Kruger National Park. The book will find its primary use outside of Africa among those who care for elephants in zoos and game parks. For them, the large bibliography may be especially useful because of the many references to literature uncommonly seen outside of Africa. For those concerned with elephant conservation, the tables of numbers and distribution of elephants in Africa will be useful. I was especially interested in the conservation and management implications of heart failure and stroke, even in young animals, resulting from medial sclerosis and atheromas brought on by the effects of inadequate habitat, and to learn that these syndromes are absent from nearby herds found in moderate numbers in optimal habitats with adequate trees (see pp. 112 and 119 of the book).

Some of the wording is very unfamiliar to people outside of South Africa. An example is the suggested use of Tannalized gum poles to construct a boma. A boma usually refers to a small, safely enclosed area, and a gum pole is a eucalyptus tree trunk used as a pole like our telephone poles. I suspect that "Tannalized" is a trade name for a chemical treatment to prevent termite damage, but I don't know. Unfortunately these problems point toward some of the other problems I found with the book. Many seem to have resulted from the decision to "make do" without an editor.

There is no index, no general introduction, and no summary drawing the disparate papers together as a meaningful entity. Two different styles for citing literature were used, even in the same paper. There is at least one untitled table, and one paper has tables numbered 1 and

4 but lacks tables numbered 2 and 3. There is no uniformity in format among the papers. Geographic areas are given for the same parks or other wildlife areas in two or more papers and in several cases the areas do not agree; for example, the largest and best known park in South Africa is Kruger National Park which is given an area of 1,865,000 ha by one author and 1,948,528 ha by another. This is no rounding error. Some dates are left off of citations, and several papers cited did not appear among the references for that paper. There was one case in which the references were not alphabetized properly. I found numerous misspellings. Words were left out of sentences, and in at least one

case, a phrase was missing and perhaps much more. The kinds of papers and quality of the papers vary greatly.

This book seems over-priced. For those working directly with African elephants it surely will be useful because it draws together information not readily available elsewhere. They should definitely get it. Those with only a casual interest may wish to wait for a more carefully crafted effort.

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BOOK REVIEW . . .

Animals, Pathogens and the Environment, Office International des Epizooties Scientific and Technical Review 12, Rue de Prony, 75017, Paris, France. Volume 10, Number 3. 884 pp. 175 French francs (approximately \$32.50).

This volume is divided into two main subjects: I. Impact of animals on the environment and II. Pathogens in the environment. The volume has articles both in English and in French. While not fluent in the latter, I was able to obtain a great deal of information from the tabular material, figures and pictures.

The seven contributors to the first part of this volume centered their remarks on variations in management necessary in various climatic conditions (i.e., temperate and tropical) to accomplish an equilibrium among human influence, environmental change and the numbers of both wild and domestic animals which affect life in various described situations.

The second part of the volume which deals with the various pathogenic agents and their particular niche in the environment is very enlightening. The discussions primarily focus upon what "upsets" natural relationships and results in conditions which create problems. Of interest, were comments regarding pathogen development, survival and spread in the environ-

ment. One article dealing with parasitic problems was very graphic and informative.

There are several contributors who write to their particular specialty within the microbiologic focus and include discussions related to environmental persistence of viruses, salmonellae, listeriae, yersiniae, and anaerobic bacteria.

These specific areas are followed by three contributions, of which two deal with pathogen persistence in sewage, excreta and sludge as well as practical approaches in the use of pathogen contaminated materials in stabilizing and enhancing the environmental equilibrium. The third covers the topic of providing environmental protection during large scale animal disease eradication work.

In summary: The majority of the contributions offer new and informative insight into dealing with pathogens in the environment. These situations are problem areas of increasing concern and it is my opinion that this volume provides significant information which would enhance the ability to handle these problems.

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