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All Wildlife Diseases, All Conservation, All One Health, All the Time!

NEWS RELEASE ON ARTICLES FROM JOURNAL OF WILDLIFE DISEASES 54(2)

Health of wildlife, domestic species and human beings, and the environments that support them (One Health), has been a focus of the Wildlife Disease Association for more than 55 years. The Journal of Wildlife Diseases (JWD) issue 54(2) has several articles with particular conservation and wildlife management significance that we would like to make you aware of.

Rabies and canine distemper virus infections in wildlife share similar presenting signs. **Claire Jardine** led a team of **Canadian** scientists investigating the **Frequency of Virus Coinfection in Raccoons (*Procyon lotor*) and Striped Skunks (*Mephitis mephitis*) During a Concurrent Rabies and Canine Distemper Outbreak**. Canine distemper virus was detected in (22/32) rabies positive raccoons and (7/34) skunks in Ontario, Canada in 2015–2016. Distemper tends to mask rabies and cases may be missed, with serious human and animal health consequences, if coinfections with both viruses are not investigated.

A research group from **Charles Sturt University, Australia** led by **Chloe Steventon** investigated a kangaroo die off where animals exhibited photophobic behavior, blindness, ataxia, lethargy, ear shaking, and behavior consistent with distress or depression. The livers of affected animals had lesions typical of steroidal saponin exposure. Other findings are described in **Steroidal Saponin Toxicity in Eastern Grey Kangaroos (*Macropus giganteus*): A Novel Clinicopathologic Presentation of Hepatogenous Photosensitization**. The outbreak occurred on pastures dominated by the invasive grass, *Panicum gilvum*, a recognized source of saponin-induced photosensitization in livestock.

Alissa C. Deming and co-authors report that the **Prevalence of Urogenital Carcinoma in Stranded California Sea Lions (*Zalophus Californianus*) from 2005–2015** was 14%, very similar to the 18% found in a previous 1979-1994 survey. This urogenital cancer was more common in adults compared to juveniles and subadults. Advanced-stage disease with metastases was identified in 78% (182/232) and was the cause of death in 95% (172/182) of these cases. This highly aggressive, fatal cancer remains common in stranded California sea lions.

Barbara Lulini and 19 co-authors from 10 **Italian** institutions summarized **Neuropathologic Findings in Cetaceans Stranded in Italy (2002-2014)**. Various brain lesions were identified in 45% of animals and evidence of a number of viral, bacterial and parasitic diseases was found

C. LeAnn White from **USGS-NWHC** and co-authors reported on **Mortality Trends in Northern Sea Otters (*Enhydra lutris kenyoni*) Collected from the Coasts of Washington and Oregon (2002-2015)**. Infectious diseases were the primary cause of death (56%) for otters examined, with *Sarcocystosis* most prominent (54% of those). It was seen throughout the study period while other infectious diseases, like morbilliviral encephalitis and leptospirosis, were

episodic. Trauma was the second most common cause of death (14%). Although a few carcasses were collected from the Oregon coast, sea otters are not resident there. Continued growth of the Washington sea otter population suggests they are able to tolerate current mortality rates.

Corinne Gible and 8 co-authors from 7 institutions report on an **Investigation of a Largescale Common Murre (*Uria aalge*) Mortality Event in California in 2015**. Coastal wildlife rehabilitation centers received more than 1,000 live, stranded, and debilitated murrelets from Sonoma County to San Luis Obispo County during August–October. Twenty-four out of 29 tested birds had detectable levels of domoic acid, and no indication of infectious disease was found. Emaciation is thought to be the cause of death for most birds, with a large warm water anomaly and harmful algal bloom playing a secondary detrimental role.

Abstracts of these and other articles in JWD 54(2) are available at:

<http://www.wildlifedisease.org/wda/PUBLICATIONS/JournalofWildlifeDiseases/OnlineJournal.aspx>

If you are interested in getting access to the full article, contact wda.manager@gmail.com

