

The mite causes a disease known as Notoedric mange, usually seen in cats, but occasionally in pups. In Notoedric mange, thick crusts are seen on the edges of the ears, between the eyes, on the head, neck, paws and tail. There is little irritation, but the animal is very depressed and may even die.

The mites are usually plentiful and easily found when scrapings from affected areas are examined microscopically.

Weekly washing with Tetmosal (Tetra-ethylthorium monosulphide) 5 per cent. in soap or application of Gammexane (1 per cent.) in liquid paraffin every four days generally cures the condition.

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PEROSIS IN DUCKLINGS.

PEROSIS or slipped tendon is a condition in poultry due to a deficiency of manganese. This element is thought to be required in greater quantities when there is a high calcium and phosphorus intake. A deficiency of choline can also predispose to perosis.

It has been recorded previously in Papua in turkeys but does not appear to be common. There is usually an adequate amount of manganese present in the soil so that if birds are allowed free range they should not suffer from any manganese deficiency.

The outbreak under consideration occurred in a backyard flock of 30 ducklings at Boroko, Port Moresby. The birds were between six and eight weeks old and were locally bred. They were housed in a run with adequate shade and suitable watering facilities. Sawdust, changed once a fortnight, was used on the ground. Free range was not permitted. Diet consisted of green leaf scraps from one of the local freezing companies and imported poultry mash. Six birds had died over a period of four to five days when one was brought in for examination. Its gait showed the typical "spraddle legs" seen in perosis of the tibio-tarsal joint. The affected joint was enlarged and flattened and post-mortem examination revealed that the Achilles tendon had slipped from its groove behind the hock and taken up a position on the medial aspect of the joint, thus completely crippling the leg. The six deaths were probably due to inability to forage. The owner was, therefore, advised to add manganese sulphate to the ration. This, however, proved unobtainable locally so coconut meal, which is rich in manganese, was substituted at the rate of 1 lb. per 3.6 lb of ration.

As expected the affected birds showed an improvement and although further losses occurred in the following week resulting in a total mortality of nearly 50 per cent., no fresh cases developed.

This outbreak was thought to be worth recording because perosis is apparently not common in ducks. This is probably due to the fact that it is usual for ducks to have free range with access to soil.

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