



Cornell University

Cornell Wildlife Health Center



WILDLIFE PATHOLOGY

Photo by Kevin Hynes, NYSDEC wildlife biologist

EXPERT DIAGNOSTICS

Wildlife pathologists at Cornell University have extensive experience in diagnosing diseases of free-ranging and captive wildlife. Like all veterinary pathologists, we are trained in the diseases of domestic animals, but have sought out additional experience and training in wildlife disease. Thus, we can use a comparative approach in order to determine the cause of death in species for which there is little published information.

Moreover, the wildlife pathologists at Cornell collaborate with other specialists around the world, and we work hard to reach a diagnosis, whether for a hummingbird or a moose.

DISEASE MONITORING: FROM INDIVIDUAL ANIMALS TO POPULATIONS

We serve individual veterinarians and wildlife rehabilitators wanting to know the cause of death of a single patient, government agencies overseeing free-ranging wildlife populations, as well as managers of captive collections.

Our findings can be used to document the presence of disease in a population, detect the emergence of new diseases, or discern changes in disease trends. Moreover, we can provide information regarding diseases that may cross between domestic animals and wildlife, as well as those with potential public health significance.

TEACHING AND TRAINING

Each of our faculty has a passion for teaching and is committed to training the next generation of wildlife health experts. We provide instruction at the College of Veterinary Medicine, mentor students doing independent studies in wildlife pathology, and teach the students rotating through the Pathology Service during their fourth year of DVM training.

Graduate veterinarians pursuing board certification in Veterinary Anatomic Pathology are trained by all pathology faculty, each of whom has cultivated expertise in a particular diagnostic area and in comparative veterinary pathology. Trainees with a particular interest in wildlife disease are given increased opportunities to interact with our wildlife experts and wildlife cases. In addition, we have a long-standing dual training program with the Bronx Zoo in New York City, allowing qualified applicants to specialize

in zoo and wildlife pathology by receiving targeted training at both institutions.

ADVANCING WILDLIFE DIAGNOSTICS THROUGH RESEARCH

Some of our main goals as wildlife disease experts are to contribute to the advancement of knowledge in the field, and to develop better tools that can be used to monitor and improve wildlife health. Thus, in addition to our diagnostic work, we conduct a variety of research projects on wildlife disease and test development, as well as provide technical support for researchers working on specific health conditions.

Our pathologists are experts in study design, data analysis, and the application of specific diagnostic tools for basic and applied research. We take great pride in knowing that all of this work contributes to wildlife conservation in New York State and around the world.

