

Sandhill Veterinary Services

Veterinary Care for Game Birds, Commercial Poultry and Pigeons



JULY 2015

SUBMISSION REVIEW

A 'submission' is a single bird or distinct batch of birds of the same age or type. These figures do not include faeces samples submitted for coccidial oocysts counts and worm egg counts.

Total Game Birds Examined	737	Total Number of Submissions	226 Incl 1 x duck
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PHEASANTS

PARTRIDGES

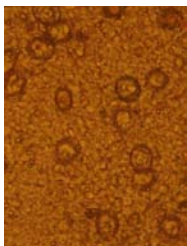
Age	Number of submissions	Age	Number of submissions
1 – 7do	7	1 – 7do	1
8 – 14do	10	8 – 14do	3
2 – 4wo	43	2 – 5wo	10
4 – 7wo	98	5 – 7wo	2
7wo +	32	7wo +	18
Adults	1	Adults	0
TOTAL:	191	Total:	34

PHEASANTS:

0-7 day old Pheasant Chicks: The majority of chicks seen up to five days old had yolk sac infections which had resulted in the birds failing to eat. E.coli was the primary bacterium isolated from the infected yolk sacs. Yolk sac infection is regarded as being a problem that originates at the hatchery. If birds have Yolk Sac Infection then most of those that are going to die will do so by the time they are five days old – after that age we commonly saw enteritis in six and seven day old chicks and although this may be related to the stress of variable weather conditions or be related to chick quality it can also be due to failure to provide the chicks with a suitable environment.

8-14 day old Pheasant Chicks: Enteritis was the most common finding in birds seen in this age group. We saw one case of Typhlitis in ten day old chicks which we suspected was due to salmonella infection however cultures failed to isolate Salmonella and a mixture of coliform and E.coli bacteria were isolated from these birds. We had no positive tests for Rotavirus infection in July.

2-4 week old Pheasant Chicks: A case of clinical coccidiosis was seen in birds as young as 16do. Just under 50% of the birds in this age group seen in July had clinical coccidiosis and some level of coccidial oocysts were detected in 65% of the birds in this age group. Bacterial enteritis was identified in 65% of submissions with about 40% of submissions having intestinal Spironucleosis. (Hexamita) The severity of disease could not be correlated with the numbers of Intestinal Spironucleosis parasites present. Cases of generalized bacterial infections accounted for over 10% of submissions with E.coli being the main bacterium isolated and one case of Mycoplasmosis was seen in a batch of 21do birds.



Coccidial oocysts seen under the microscope

4-7 week old Pheasants: By far the greatest number of pheasant submissions was in this age group and cases of enteritis and coccidiosis either separately or together formed the majority of the submissions. The stress of unseasonably cold nights, variable daytime temperatures and some heavy outbreaks of rain made treating depressed birds difficult. Many birds had to be kept on heat for longer than would be expected in an average summer. Significant levels of Spironucleosis were seen in about 77% of those birds diagnosed with bacterial enteritis.



Lesions suggestive of Mycoplasmosis were seen in two batches of birds in this age group at 31do and 35do.

Young pheasant poult showing signs of respiratory disease.

7+ week old Pheasants: Birds in this age group were primarily birds that had been released. Enteritis with Intestinal Spironucleosis (Hexamita) present was the most common finding.

A significant number of birds that had been out of the release pens for several weeks were seen in poor bodily condition. It is likely that the low night time temperatures were responsible for many of these cases. At this age birds are still growing and building up reserves of fat and energy in addition to growing their full set of feathers. Many birds will have had to use up a large amount of energy to keep warm and survive the chill, wet weather and whilst still growing they had not been able to build up the necessary reserves. These thin birds were stressed by further poor weather and this resulted in cases of enteritis or Dysbacteriosis (an overgrowth of gut bacteria) which presented in some cases to the keepers as a yellow scour.



Birds showing poor body condition

There were nearly five times as many pheasant submissions in July 2015 as in July 2014.

PARTRIDGES:

Whereas pheasant submissions were much higher in July 2015 compared with July 2014, submission of partridges were much lower in the same period with only 34 partridge submissions in 2015 compared with 162 in 2014.

0-2 week old Partridge Chicks: The few problems seen in very young chicks related to poor chick quality with Yolk Sac Infections, generalized bacterial infections and enteritis being the primary findings.

2-7 week old Partridges: Coccidiosis was seen in birds as young as 3wo. In 50% of the birds with caecal coccidiosis severe lesions causing massive damage to the caecal linings were observed. Generalized bacterial infections caused by E.coli bacteria were seen in two batches of birds at 24do and 28do.

7+ week old Partridges: Cases of clinical coccidiosis accounted for 55% of the submissions of partridges in this age group.



Three cases of Necrotic or Ulcerative Enteritis were diagnosed in birds ranging from 70do to 89do.

A single case of Mycoplasmosis was seen in a batch of 10wo birds which has swollen sinuses filled with purulent material.