Prolapse of the Phallus and Cloaca in Emu (*Dromaius novaehollandiae*)

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Cloacal prolapse is a rare condition in emu birds (Minnaar and Minnaar, 1992). The present report describes the prolapse of the phallus and cloaca in an emu male bird.

**Case History and Observations**

The incidence of phallus and cloaca prolapse in a male emu breeder bird maintained at TANUVAS, Regional Research Centre, Pudukkottai was observed during the year 2010. Emu birds were reared under standard managerial practices. They were fed with emu breeder ration containing 17.7 per cent crude protein and 2640 k cal ME/kg. Feed and water were offered ad lib. The breeder emu aged 6 years 11 months developed prolapse of phallus and cloaca in November month during the peak period of breeding season. The prolapsed mass consisted of cloaca, phallus and covered with uric acid deposits. The affected emu was dull, anorectic, declined to mate and unable to walk. The bird showed excessive straining as a result of irritation in the prolapsed mass.

**Treatment and Discussion**

Cloacal prolapse is associated with severe diarrhea, impaction of the intestine, nutritional deficiencies (Bezuidenhout *et al*., 1993) and tenesmus (Ioranidis *et al*., 2003). Although the pathologies and etiology of the condition was unknown in this case, the bird was affected with impaction for 5 days before developing prolapse. Stress induced immunosuppression and poor husbandry practices related to feed, water or hygiene were some predisposing factors involved in cloacal prolapse in ratites (Santos *et al*., 2005). The clinical signs observed in this case were similar to those previously described in emu by Minnar and Minnar (*loc. cit*).

The affected emu bird was restrained and anaesthetized with Xylazine hydrochloride (5 mg/kg bw) and Ketamine hydrochloride (10 mg/kg bw). The prolapsed mass was reduced as described by Minnar and Minnar (*loc. cit*). The feathers around the cloacal region were properly trimmed. The prolapsed mass was flushed thoroughly with normal saline to remove the uric acid deposit and dirt and cleaned with povidone iodine solution. Then the prolapsed mass was gently pushed back and retained by putting purse string suture. The bird was treated with antibiotic ampicillin (10/ mg kg bw) and meloxicam (NSAID) for 5 days. Suture was removed after 7 days. The bird recovered uneventfully.

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The flaccid phallus of ostrich is about 20 cm long, bright red in color and lies in a phallic pocket in the ventral wall of the proctodeum. When it erects, the phallus is about 40 cm long and projects from the cloaca in a ventrocranial curve and slightly to the left, with the phallic sulcus on the dorsal aspect (Fowler, 1991). Paraphimosis or prolapse of penis in ostriches is not uncommon among the young ostrich breeders. It is normally observed in young breeding males, about 3 to 4 years old. It is seldom observed in older birds.

Case History and Observations

An ostrich male of aged 3 years was observed for paraphimosis. The male bird had not shown any breeding activity earlier. The actual phallus along with the uro – proctodeal, proctodeum and urodeum protruded out. Initially, it was mistaken for penis alone as similar sightings would result in involution of penis after a few seconds. But, this was hanging for longer time and the ostrich was moving unmindful of the condition. The male bird failed to retract the organ. The whole organ looked engorged with blood vessels. The bird was restrained physically for close observation and it was observed that the phallus along with the surrounding tissues was totally everted.

Treatment and Discussion

The everted area was first washed with potassium permanganate solution (2%) and liquid paraffin was applied. With little difficulty, the phallus along with the surrounding musculatures was pushed inside. After few minutes, the phallus again protruded and similar situation was observed three times.

References