

EXOTIC ANIMAL ABUSE AND NEGLECT

Animal Welfare in Practice Symposium

Dr. Lara Cusack

Assistant Professor, Zoo, Exotics and Wildlife Medicine

Atlantic Veterinary College

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EXOTIC ANIMALS

- How do we assess neglect and abuse?



EXOTIC ANIMAL EVALUATION

- Must know normal to recognize abnormal



EXOTIC ANIMAL EVALUATION

- Must know normal to recognize abnormal
- Recognize what you don't know



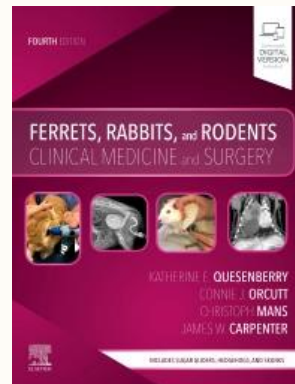
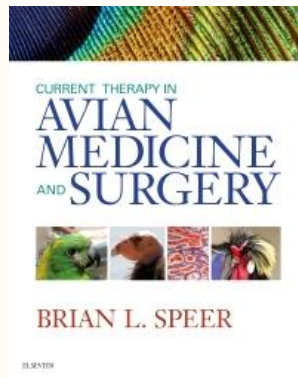
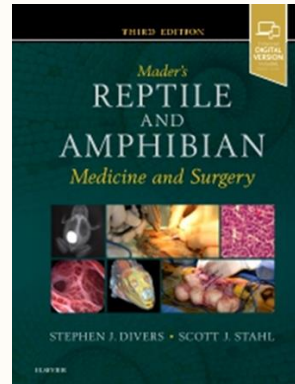
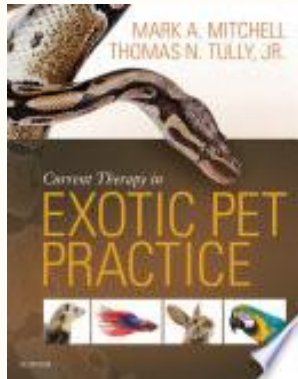
EXOTIC ANIMAL EVALUATION

- Must know normal to recognize abnormal
- Recognize what you don't know
 - What do you need to know?



EXOTIC ANIMAL EVALUATION

- Must know normal to recognize abnormal
- Recognize what you don't know
 - What do you need to know?
 - Where are you going to get it?

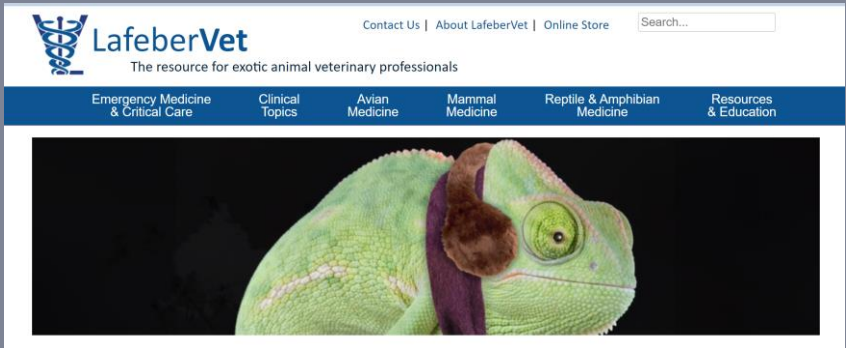


[Google Scholar](#)

EXOTIC ANIMAL RESOURCES

- **Journal Articles**
 - **Research CONSTANTLY updating**
- **Books**
 - Current Therapy in Avian Medicine and Surgery
 - Ferrets, Rabbits, and Rodents
 - Current Therapy in Exotic Pet Practice
 - Reptile and Amphibian Medicine and Surgery
 - Fish disease- Diagnosis and Treatment
 - Clinical Vet Advisor Exotics
 - Exotic Animal Formulary

EXOTIC ANIMAL RESOURCES



- Reputable Websites
 - LafeberVet
 - House Rabbit Society
 - Melissa Kaplan's Herp Care Collection



EXOTIC ANIMAL EVALUATION

~Species Specific Normals~

1. Anatomy & Physiology

- Examples of species differences
 - *Urine and Feces*
 - *Reptiles, amphibians*





EXOTIC ANIMAL EVALUATION

~Species Specific Normals~

1. Anatomy & Physiology

- Examples of species differences
 - *Urine and Feces*
 - *Reptiles, amphibians*
 - *Beak conformation*



EXOTIC ANIMAL EVALUATION

~Species Specific Normals~



Photo credit: Joey Buzzell

2. Husbandry

- Nutritional requirements
- Temperature
- Humidity
- Lighting requirements
- Housing
- Social structure

EXOTIC ANIMAL EVALUATION

1. History
 - *Species specific*
 - *VERY detailed*
 2. Distant examination
 - *BEFORE you touch the animal*
 3. Hands on physical examination
 4. Diagnostics
- Photos



EXOTIC ANIMAL EVALUATION

~Species Specific Normals~



- Complete Patient Picture
- Look for underlying issues consistent with neglect
 - a. Husbandry deficits
 - *Recurrent?*
 - b. Physical examination findings
 - *Correlate with husbandry?*
 - c. Diagnostics
 - *Supportive of neglect?*



NEGLECT?



NEGLECT?





NEGLECT?





NEGLECT?





NEGLECT?





HedgehogNation -

Top 5 Hedgehog Exercise Wheels - HedgehogNation

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ABUSE?



ABUSE?



ABUSE?



ABUSE?



- Physical implications?
- Distress?
- What other information would be helpful in assessing this animal?

ABUSE?



- Normal bearded dragon
 - Anatomy and Physiology
 - Husbandry
- Workup
 - History
 - Distant examination
 - Physical examination
 - Diagnostics



EXOTIC ANIMAL *ABUSE* *EVALUATION*

- Based on normal anatomy
 - Evidence or risk of injury?
 - Evidence of distress/stress?
- Based on husbandry requirements
 - Evidence of deficits?
 - *Physical exam findings*



EXOTIC ANIMAL *ABUSE* *EVALUATION*

- Based on normal anatomy
 - Evidence (or risk) of injury?
 - Evidence of distress?
- Based on husbandry requirements
 - Evidence of deficits?
 - *Physical exam findings*
- Look for evidence of common diseases caused by poor husbandry
- Bearded dragons > metabolic bone disease



EXOTIC ANIMAL *ABUSE* *EVALUATION*

- Based on normal anatomy
 - Evidence (or risk) of injury?
 - Evidence of distress?
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 - Evidence of deficits?
 - *Physical exam findings*
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EXOTIC ANIMAL *ABUSE EVALUATION*

- Diagnostics
 - Radiographs- 2 view
 - *Evaluate bone density*
 - *Previous or acute fractures*
 - Bloodwork
 - *CBC, Ca:P, iCa*



EXOTIC ANIMAL *ABUSE EVALUATION*

- Monitoring- provides additional information
 - *Decompensation- prey species*
 - *Clinical improvement with improved husbandry*
 - Can be acute and significant
 - May be supportive of previous husbandry deficits
 - *Hydration*
 - *Defecation*
 - *Body temperature*



EXOTIC ANIMAL ABUSE & NEGLECT ~Take Homes~

- Recognize degree of species differences
- Utilize resources for proper assessment
- Detailed history, distant exam, physical exam
 - Document everything (incl. photos)
- Continue to monitor
 - Daily care and response to treatment/improved husbandry