
Taronga Pathology Registry

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The Taronga Pathology Registry consists of a collection of materials relating to disease conditions affecting our native fauna and includes some zoo animals. It is made up of:

Colour transparencies depicting clinical signs, post-mortem findings and changes seen in tissues examined by light and electron microscopy. We have approximately 3 000 on file.

Tissue Sections. These are prepared from animal tissues and mounted on glass slides. We have approximately 20 000 of these.

Paraffin Blocks. These are the materials from which tissue sections are processed.

To date we have filed in the registry materials from 3 060 cases of which approximately 80% are from native fauna. For example, we have 445 cases of kangaroos, 174 possums, 164 Koalas and wombats, 194 dasyurids and 851 birds.

Tissues from all these cases have been examined microscopically and the type of lesions seen and probable cause have been entered into a computer data base which allows rapid and comprehensive retrieval of information.

Why is a pathology registry needed? Many veterinary and other biological institutions throughout Australasia have varying amounts of native animal material on their files. Much of this material could be lost forever unless it is filed in some sort of central repository. So, we at Taronga are gradually acquiring this old material and current material, not only from institutions in Australia, but also from throughout the South West Pacific area.

Thus the registry is a sort of museum or library in which masses of information relating to diseases of our native fauna will be stored. It will be used not only for reference purposes

but also for under- and post-graduate instruction in comparative animal pathology and also for investigations and research projects. The registry will also run a consultant pathology service.

Materials will be added continually to the registry and hopefully it will be functioning for many years to come. It is the only comprehensive collection of its kind in Australasia.