



Casey's Bird Cage

CaseysBirdCage.com

## **Report on West Nile Virus & Exotic Birds**

At this time there is no test to differentiate between West Nile Virus and St. Louis encephalitis. In fact, West Nile is now referred to as West Nile Encephalitis.

Symptoms in birds include: seizures, ataxia, uncoordination, weight loss, diarrhea, tremors, general neurological problems, brain lesions and death.

The disease outbreak factor is thought not to be as bad in exotics, particularly parrots and the parrot family, as it has been to corvids (crows) and jays, which have been virtually wiped out in many of the outbreak areas. Avian Vets have not seen the numbers of possibly infected birds that we were afraid would be happening. They have stated they have treated less than a dozen birds believed to be infected, and many recovered with supportive care. They went on to state that in their opinion the disease has both a low morbidity and low mortality rates in parrots. There have been documented cases of bird-to-bird transmission, however, this has only been proved in corvids and jays – not exotic birds.

There is a vaccine that has been developed is currently being used in zoos, bio parks and at research facilities. So far, there have been no adverse reactions to the vaccine and it did produce measurable antibodies in all birds even in low dosages. In chickens, the vaccine has produced kidney damage and neurological lesions although there were no clinical signs in the chickens. Currently the vaccine costs \$12 per injection.

Avian Vets current recommendations for treatment is not vaccination but mosquito control with both foggers and electronic bug zappers. If outdoors, take extensive protection against interaction between your birds and mosquitoes. For more information go to:

<http://www.aphis.usda.gov/oa/wnv/wnvstats.html>



Casey's Bird Cage

CaseysBirdCage.com