



## PARASITES

This is just a very short list of a few of the more common parasites emus can pick up. Deworming with Ivermectin twice a year is the smart thing to do. Since this dewormer comes in a pour on as well as injectable, it is easier on the bird.

**NOTE - if you worm the birds they must not be processed for 90 days.** For this reason, many farms are turning to a food grade Diatomaceous Earth.

**Avian Roundworms:** These long, yellowish white worms are found in the intestine and stomach of the birds. They cause slow growth, weakness and death. These are first hosted by the lesser meal worm - the darkling beetle in both the larva and adult stages.

**Avian Tapeworms:** These long, white, flat, segmented worms are found in the intestine and stomach of the birds. They cause slow growth and weakness. These are first hosted by the lesser meal worm - the darkling beetle in both the larva and adult stages.

**Baylisascaris (raccoon worm).** This is a round worm carried by raccoons and opossums in some areas of the country. Improper personal hygiene after cleaning infected pens is the most common way for you to pick it up. The worm migrates from the intestinal tract to the liver, brain or eyes. Birds with obvious neurological problems (unable to walk properly, staggering) could be infected. If you live in an area with a high raccoon or opossum population, ask your vet if Baylisascaris is a problem in your area. Worming the birds and using proper hygiene is the preventative.

**Cerebral Nematodiasis (brain worm disease):** Signs of nematode infection include crooked necks, staggering, apparent disorientation and/or sudden death. Deworm with Ivermectin and you may save the chick if the worms have not already invaded the brain. Physical evidence to the damage done to the spinal cord will remain (crooked neck) and the chick may not flourish. If you are in areas with high populations of raccoons, grackles or skunks, deworm chicks once a month with Ivermectin for their first year. Dosage is by weight.

**Cyathostoma Variegatum (bronchial worms)** Signs of this nematode infestation are respiratory distress and head shaking, with blood tinged sputum or a frothy phlegm. The worms attach to the walls of the bronchi. Left untreated the bird with smother. Deworm with Ivermectin twice a year.

**Syngamus Trachea (Tracheal worms or gape worms):** Like *Cyathostoma variegatum*, these red colored nematodes are transmitted via earthworms, slugs, snails, beetles and cockroaches. The worm attaches itself to the trachea and if the infestation is severe enough you can even see it through the open mouth of the emu. Signs of this nematode infestation are respiratory distress and head shaking, with blood tinged sputum or a frothy phlegm. Left untreated the bird with smother. Deworm with Ivermectin twice a year.