

# Determining the Species of *Leishmania* Associated with Cutaneous Leishmaniasis in Red Kangaroo (*Macropus Rufus*) in the Northern Territory

## 6WEDP03

An investigation was conducted to determine the species of a newly detected cutaneous parasite, found in red kangaroos in the Northern Territory.

Leishmaniasis is considered by the World Health Organisation to be a significant parasitic disease and is endemic in 88 countries. Until this discovery, Australia and the Antarctic were considered to be the only continents free of *Leishmania*. Although there have been sporadic cases of leishmaniasis being imported into Australia via immigrants, travellers or pets, this investigation is the first report of cutaneous leishmaniasis in kangaroos where infection was acquired within Australia. Investigations into determining the species of *Leishmania* provided data that suggests the organism is a new species.

The investigation was led by Dr Karrie Rose of the Australian Registry of Wildlife Health. Funding was provided by the Wildlife & Exotic Diseases Preparedness Program (DAFF).

### Associated Papers and Articles

1. Rose, K. *Leishmania* discovered in Australia. *The Veterinarian* June 2004
2. Rose K. Cutaneous leishmaniasis in red kangaroos *Aust Vet J* 2004; 82(7): 440 <http://www.ava.com.au/avj/private/0407/04070440.pdf>
3. Rose K., Curtis J., Bladwin T. et al. Cutaneous leishmaniasis in red kangaroos: isolation and characterisation of the causative organisms *Int J Parasitol* 2004; 34(6): 655-664  
<http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/15111087?dopt=Abstract>