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Contents

EDITORIAL

Waner, T. 2

REVIEW ARTICLE

Emerging Zoonoses in Israel: Avian Influenza viruses.
The Threat is Around the Corner
Rudoler, N. 3

RESEARCH ARTICLES

In-Clinic Canine IgG Antibody Titer Test Comparative Study:
Results from Five Clinics
Salomon, K., de Lange, T., Calis, A., Radier, O. and Krosse, J. 7

Investigation of Antimicrobial Resistance, Biofilm Production,
Biofilm Associated Virulence Genes and Integron Genes of
Pseudomonas aeruginosa Isolates Obtained from Animal Clinical Samples
Ocak, F. and Turkyilmaz, S. 15

Investigation of Faecal Carriage of High-Level Gentamicin
Resistant Enterococci in Dogs and Cats
Aslantaş, Ö. 27

Normal Values of the Kidney in Persian Cats by MRI
Dabanoglu, I. and Pekoguz, N.C. 38

CASE REPORT

Takotsubo-like Cardiomyopathy Associated with Capture Myopathy
in a Zoo-Kept, Red-Necked Wallaby (*Macropus Rufogriseus*)
Tanner M. C., Thomason J. D., Rooney T., Schneider, S. M.,
Lynn, C. R. and Eshar, D. 44

Abstracts from the 43rd Symposium of Veterinary Medicine:
Koret School of Veterinary Medicine.
The Hebrew University of Jerusalem, Israel. 49

Front Cover: **THE EURASIAN OTTER** (*Lutra lutra*)

The Eurasian otter (*Lutra lutra*), also known as the **European otter**, **Eurasian river otter**, **common otter**, and **Old World otter**, is a semiaquatic mammal native to Eurasia. The Eurasian otter has a diet mainly of fish. Eurasian otters are strongly territorial, living alone for the most part. Though long thought to hunt using sight and touch only, evidence is emerging that they may also be able to smell underwater. The Eurasian otter uses its feces, called spraints, to mark its territory. Mating takes place in water. Eurasian otters are non-seasonal breeders, breeding at any time of the year. Gestation for the Eurasian otter is 60–64 days, the litter weighing about 10% of the female body mass. After the gestation period, one to four pups are born, which remain dependent on the mother for about 13 months. The male plays no direct role in parental care. The Eurasian otter population has declined in the second half of the 20th century primarily due to pollution from pesticides and polychlorinated biphenyls. It is a protected species under Wild Animals Protection Ordinance Cap 170. It is listed as Near Threatened.