Case 15-763

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SIGNALMENT AND CLINICAL HISTORY

• 37 year old female African penguin

• Chronic history of degenerative joint disease, nonspecific wounds, and respiratory issues

• Advanced age (avg lifespan = 30yrs)
SIGNALMENT AND CLINICAL HISTORY

- Recent abrasions from exhibit-mate trauma on beak and forehead
- No other obvious problems
- Separated and treated twice with meloxicam
- Found dead next day 😞
AFRICAN PENGUINS

- *Spheniscus demersus* (demersus = Latin word for "plunging")
- Coast of South Africa
- Charismatic species popular with tourists
- Originally described by Linnaeus in his *Systema Naturae*
AFRICAN PENGUINS

• Also known as Jackass penguins...
GROSS FINDINGS
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FINAL DIAGNOSIS

• Disseminated malignant malignant melanoma
MALIGNANT MELANOMAS IN BIRDS

• Common disease of penguins compared to other avians
• Aggressive neoplasms
• Usually originate from skin of foot/hock or from around beak/oral cavity
MALIGNANT MELANOMAS IN BIRDS

• In chickens, malignant melanomas can originate from viscera
• In this bird, ovaries are a potential site of origin
• UV exposure NOT a risk factor in penguins
• Advanced age is most likely risk factor
QUESTIONS?

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