

To Whom It May Concern:

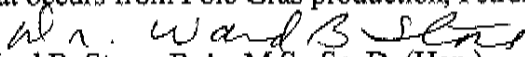
I was born and educated in New York State and hold undergraduate and graduate degrees in zoology with a graduate specialty in animal pathology and parasitology from Syracuse University. I also was awarded a Doctor of Science (Hon.) from the State University of New York in Animal Pathology and Toxicology. I am a U.S. Navy veteran and graduated from a 14 month course in Clinical Pathology from the National Naval Medical School at Bethesda Maryland.

For more than 36 years I have been the Wildlife Pathologist for the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation. This is a competitive civil service position and my entire career with the state has been as head of the Wildlife Pathology Unit in Delmar, New York. I have been an author on more than 200 scientific and popular papers.

In my position as state wildlife pathologist I have examined and carried out thousands of necropsies on waterfowl, and have published a number of papers related to duck pathology. I have on several occasions performed post-mortems on ducks that died while being grown for duck liver pate production. The ducks were mulards; a Muscovy duck and domestic duck cross. Some of the birds died from massive hemorrhage into the body cavity when the liver tissue was torn, resulting in heavy bleeding. With the forced overfeeding that such ducks receive the liver and its hepatocytes are overloaded with lipids, and the greatly enlarged liver places stress on the capsule on the livers surface. Even minor trauma can cause the capsule to tear with damage to the liver proper, resulting in fatal hemorrhage. The overloading of the liver with lipid (lipidosis) is a pathological process and I have never seen extensive lipidosis in waterfowl except for the cases involving overfeeding for liver pate.

In addition to the liver pathology I have seen cases where the esophagus was torn or lacerated. In waterfowl the esophagus is lined with a slippery mucosa that aids in the movement of food toward the thickly muscled cornified cellular lined ventriculus (gizzard). The esophagi of ducks are capable of considerable distention and they can be stretched in natural feeding until they are so thin that they appear to be almost transparent. In the insertion of heavy feeding tubes followed by the rapid release of a blast of food I have seen esophagi lacerated, resulting in death of the ducks.

I eat meat including ducks on occasion. However, the short tortured lives of ducks raised for Foie Gras is well outside the norm of farm practice. Having seen the pathology that occurs from Foie Gras production, I strongly recommend that this practice be outlawed.


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