



News Release

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UNDER STRICT EMBARGO UNTIL 0001 BST MONDAY 2 JULY 2018

Exotic bird nursed back to health after swallowing metal screw

An exotic bird whose life was threatened after swallowing a metal screw is back on her feet thanks to cutting-edge hospital equipment and quick-thinking vets.

Elvis – a red-legged seriema – was brought to a specialist facility after her keepers at Blair Drummond Safari Park noticed that she was quiet and struggling to eat.

Innovative equipment and expertise helped vets to spot and remove the screw quickly, allowing Elvis to get back to normal life almost immediately.

Red-legged seriemas are native to South America and stand around a metre tall, thanks to their distinctive spindly legs.

After noticing that Elvis was lethargic, her keepers swiftly called in expert help from the University of Edinburgh's Royal (Dick) School of Veterinary Studies.

On arrival at the Hospital for Small Animals at the University of Edinburgh, Elvis was seen by the exotics department who teamed up with experts in internal medicine to assess the bird.

Working together, they tested Elvis' blood and referred her to colleagues for a high-powered CT scan, which showed a picture of a metal screw in her stomach.

Elvis was quickly sent to a dedicated in-house unit where specialist vets used a miniaturised camera to spot the screw inside her stomach and remove it without the need for invasive surgery.

Elvis was back eating normally at home in Blair Drummond the next day.

Animal experts say that red-legged seriemas are inquisitive and often peck at foreign objects. Swallowing items such as screws can be very harmful to their health, causing poisoning or even tearing of the intestines.

Vet, Dr Bronwyn Koterwas of the Exotic Animal and Wildlife Medicine and Surgery service at the Hospital for Small Animals at the University of Edinburgh, said: "Elvis was very poorly when she came to us. Thanks to our advanced scanning equipment and dedicated team

of experts working across departments we were able to rapidly spot what was wrong. We are delighted that Elvis has left the building and has returned safely to Blair Drummond.”

Sheila Walker, Animal Collection Manager at Blair Drummond Safari Park, said: “It is imperative that when any of our animals are sick that they are seen by vets with expertise and the experience necessary to treat the species and we are very fortunate that the Royal (Dick) School of Veterinary Studies is only a short drive away.

“Elvis does a short walk from her aviary to the presentation ground and we think that is where she possibly picked up the screw. Our keepers now do a quick sweep of the track before bringing her out.”

For further information, please contact:

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