

VETERINARY HEALTH REPORT

For SPCA Inspection Purposes

Patient Name: Reuben

Species: Umbrella Cockatoo (*Cacatua alba*)

Sex: Male

Body Weight: 500 g

Microchip: Not provided

Date of Examination: 19 January 2026

Examining Veterinarian: Dr JLC De Beer, BVSc (Hons) MANZCVS (Avian Health)

Practice: Centre for Avian, Reptiles and Exotics, Pellmeadow Estate, Protea Road, R44 Klapmuts

1. HISTORY

Reuben is a male umbrella cockatoo that has not been presented to this practice since 2014. The patient was booked for grooming; however, an SPCA complaint was lodged by the owner's ex-wife alleging feather destructive behaviour (FDB) secondary to neglect.

According to the owner, the current diet consists of sorghum porridge and a form of baby food. This diet is **not considered nutritionally complete** for psittacine species and may predispose to nutritional deficiencies.

2. PHYSICAL EXAMINATION

- **General demeanour:** Bright, alert, calm. No signs of anxiety or distress noted during consultation.
 - **Body condition:** Acceptable.
 - **Feathering:**
 - Poor feather quality noted.
 - Feather destructive behaviour present, predominantly over the ventrum and around joints.
 - **Skin:** No evidence of open wounds, infection, or active self-mutilation.
 - **Musculoskeletal:** No acute lameness detected on physical exam.
 - **Cardiopulmonary:** Within normal limits on auscultation.
 - **Coelomic palpation:** Unremarkable.
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3. DIAGNOSTIC TESTING

3.1 Blood Biochemistry

Parameter	Result	Reference Range
AST	198	117–314
Bile Acids	<35	30–110
CK	550	106–305
Uric Acid	255	225–655
Glucose	14.1	WNL
Calcium	2.43	WNL
Phosphorus	0.9	WNL
Total Protein	44	WNL
Albumin	26	WNL
Globulin	18	WNL
Sodium	149	WNL
Potassium	4.7	WNL
Haemolysis	2+	—
Lipemia	0	—
Icterus	0	—

Interpretation:

Mild CK elevation likely reflects musculoskeletal change or handling. Mild haemolysis present, which may affect some values. No biochemical evidence of hepatic, renal, or systemic disease.

3.2 Radiographic Findings (Shown in Attachment A)

- Osteoarthritic (OA) changes present in **both stifles**
- Cardiac silhouette: normal
- Hepatic silhouette: normal
- Air sacs: clear
- Testes: prominent (consistent with intact adult male)
- Air present in cloaca

Interpretation:

The osteoarthritic changes identified are **common in this species and age group** and are **not indicative of trauma or neglect**.

4. ASSESSMENT

1. Feather destructive behaviour (multifactorial; species-predisposed)

2. Poor feather quality
3. Bilateral stifle osteoarthritis
4. Nutritionally inadequate diet

Important note:

Umbrella cockatoos are **well recognised as being highly predisposed to feather destructive behaviour**, even in appropriate captive environments.

5. TREATMENT & RECOMMENDATIONS

- **Gabapentin:** 30 mg/kg PO BID (for chronic pain management)
 - **Nutritional support:**
 - Multivitamin/mineral paste (MT paste)
 - Calcibird supplementation
 - **Dietary correction strongly recommended**, including transition to a balanced commercial psittacine diet with appropriate fresh food supplementation.
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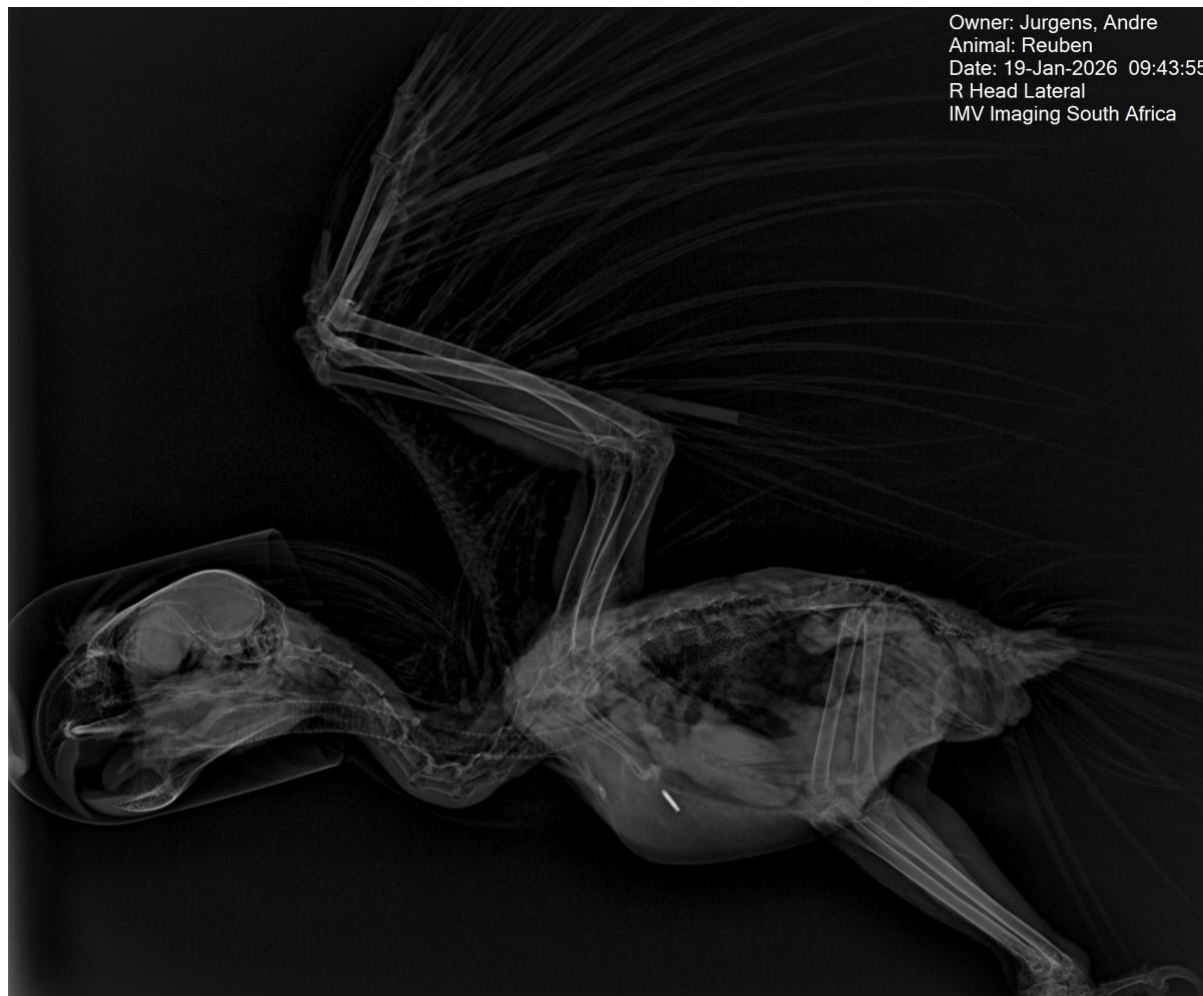
6. PROFESSIONAL OPINION (SPCA-RELEVANT)

- The feather destructive behaviour and osteoarthritic changes identified **are not, in my professional opinion, evidence of neglect**.
 - The radiographic lesions are **common and expected** in this species and **do not suggest abuse or chronic deprivation**.
 - The current diet is **nutritionally inadequate** and requires correction; however, dietary mismanagement alone does **not constitute neglect** under the Animal Protection Act.
 - **I do not consider this bird to be neglected** based on clinical findings.
 - **A home inspection by the SPCA is reasonable** to ensure there are no environmental or husbandry contraventions of the Animal Protection Act.
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7. CONCLUSION

Reuben presents with medical and behavioural conditions commonly encountered in umbrella cockatoos. While management changes—particularly dietary correction—are required, there is **no clinical evidence of neglect** at this time.

Attachment A



Owner: Jurgens, Andre
Animal: Reuben
Date: 19-Jan-2026 09:44:15
R Head Lateral
IMV Imaging South Africa



Owner: Jurgens, Andre
Animal: Reuben
Date: 19-Jan-2026 09:44:15
R Head Lateral
IMV Imaging South Africa



Owner: Jurgens, Andre
Animal: Reuben
Date: 19-Jan-2026 09:43:18
R Head VD
IMV Imaging South Africa



Attachment B- Physical Appearance







