

On the sensitive innervation of the ostrich's foot pads

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SUMMARY

The sensitive and autonomic innervation of foot pads in the ostrich was studied employing an usual histological technique as hematoxylin-eosin or different gold chloride impregnations.

The autonomic innervation is represented by isolated or grouped ganglion cells located along the course of nerve bundles.

The sensitive somatic innervation is composed by free and capsulated nerve endings usually distributed in the thickness of the connective arrangement of the foot pads, in the most superficial part the first one, while the latter was generally located close to the blood vessels.

The capsulated nerve endings, morphologically classified as Pacini, Pacini-like and Herbst corpuscles, show the typical structure. They are not uniformly distributed throughout the considered districts and their number are always higher in the plantar pad compared with digital pads. These corpuscles could be found isolated or assembled to organize simple flower-sprays and to constitute opposito-polar corpuscles.

The Authors have put forward a hypothesis on the possible functional role of the above-mentioned nerve components.