BOOK REVIEW


This fully illustrated text discusses dentistry in a specific group of animals, namely, rabbits and rodents. There are 13 chapters and a list of 32 references at the end of the text; references are also listed at the end of each chapter.

Chapter 1 is an introduction to dentistry in exotics and exotic mammals. The two-page chapter discusses, in limited terms, the basis of dental problems associated with continually growing teeth and depicts malocclusions in a rabbit, ferret, iguana, tortoise, turtle, and parrot.

Chapter 2 is entitled “Anatomy of the Skull and Teeth.” This is appropriately placed at the beginning of the book and is exquisitely illustrated with full-color photographs and schematics. Tables are included that include a dental and periodontal anatomic glossary, dental directional glossary, general glossary, classification of teeth and dentitions, and a table of dental formulas. The chapter then discusses dental anatomical detail in each species (rabbit, guinea pig, chinchilla, golden hamster, Russian hamster, rat, and prairie dogs). This chapter relies on detailed photographs and schematics with captions rather than formatted text. The chapter ends with a pictorial comparison of skull sizes and a list of references.

In Chapter 3, the oral physiology of lagomorphs and rodents is discussed and depicted in six pages of text, photographs, and captions. Another list of references is provided at the end of the chapter.

Chapter 4 discusses the clinical exam, and, as in preceding chapters, is heavily illustrated and relies mostly on photo captions to discuss the exam in each species. A dental record form is provided at the end of the chapter to document the dental exam in each species. This is a nice addition to the text and will allow practitioners to detail specific dental problems for the animal presented. Some of the line drawings in these forms are slightly blurred or pixilated, but this does not detract from the intent.

Chapter 5 discusses radiology of the skull and teeth. The authors depict the proper positioning, equipment utilized, and radiographic anatomy of each species. In this chapter, the radiographic anatomy of the Degu (Octodon degus) is presented, but this animal is not discussed in Chapter 2. All of the pictures presented are of high quality and labeling is appropriate. References are supplied at the end of the chapter.

Chapters 6 and 7 discuss endoscopy and other diagnostics. A depiction of microbial culture and sensitivity plates, while a colorful addition to Chapter 7, is not necessary. Endoscopic pictures of the oral cavity are provided for a select number of species, but exclude animals described in other chapters. As with the other chapters, references are provided at the end of the text. In Chapter 7 brief discussions on hematology, biochemistry, bacterial culture and sensitivity, histopathology, and computed tomographic (CT) scanning are presented, and two CT plates of a chinchilla skull are included.

A thorough discussion of dental diseases is included in Chapter 8. The authors again take the approach of a pictorial essay to present the most common dental diseases and include a list of the most common causes of dental disease. A more detailed and accurate discussion of the pathophysiology of dental disease is presented, including schematics, radiographic images, osteologic specimens, endoscopic appearance of select problems, and illustrations of abnormal presentations. This chapter is the most extensive, covering nearly 50 pages. As with a few other chapters, some animals are added, whereas others are not included. In this particular chapter, the chipmunk is included, but the degu is not.

Chapter 9, “Secondary Diseases,” portrays sequellae that commonly occur with dental problems in lagomorphs and rodents. A photoessay depicts lesions and presentations of specific abnormalities.

In Chapter 10, a brief discussion of medical treatment is presented, with the suggestion that medical therapy alone seldom resolves dental disease, but should be combined with surgical intervention. A discussion of antibiotic therapy, use of antibiotic-impregnated polymethacrylate (AIPMMA) beads, and a depiction of how to prepare the beads is a nice addition to the chapter. Brief additional discussions of analgesics, supportive care, and nasolacrimal duct flushing are also included in this chapter.

Dental instruments and equipment are detailed in Chapter 11. Pictorial illustrations of all the instruments necessary to perform proper dental procedures are provided; many of these illustrations depict the instruments in use during surgery. A few manufacturers are identified in the photographs, and the majority of these are from the United Kingdom.

Chapter 12, “Dental Procedures,” provides an in-depth discussion, through the use of photographs and schematics, of pulpectomy, reduction and reshaping teeth, occlusal adjustment of cheek teeth, and extractions. The illustrations appropriately guide the reader through each procedure.

The last chapter, Surgical Treatment of Periapical Abscessations, provides information on patient selection, options for surgical treatment, complications encountered, and photographs of postsurgical healing responses, which are a welcome addition to the chapter.

The illustrations provided in this text are detailed, high-quality color photographs. This makes up for the relative lack of text, which in other textbooks would be a significant error, but for this format, the reviewer believes that most clinicians will gain more insight into evaluating and treating dental problems in these small animals.

Although the text is written for the small-animal practitioner, most zoo veterinarians work with enough rodents and lagomorphs to warrant having this extremely well-