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RABIES IN A PRONGHORN ANTELOPE, *Antilocapra americana*[†]

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Abstract: A ten week old antelope died from rabies 35 days after being bitten on the left hock by a skunk. The result of the direct fluorescent antibody test for rabies was positive.

INTRODUCTION

There is a paucity of information on the occurrence of rabies in the pronghorn antelope (*Antilocapra americana*) although at least one case is reported to have occurred in the United States.² The purpose of this report is to document a case of rabies in an antelope during July, 1975, in South Dakota.

CASE REPORT

A 10 week-old antelope fawn was found by a child in western South Dakota during the first week of June, 1975. Twenty-one days later, during early evening, the antelope was bitten on the left hock by a skunk, which escaped. The owner observed the incident, which took place in a barn on the owner's premises. Thirty-three days after the bite, the fawn became lethargic and anorectic and died two days later.

Impression smears of the hippocampus were positive for rabies antigen by the fluorescent antibody test (FAT).¹ Three mice were inoculated intracranially with 0.03 ml of a suspension of ground hippocampus in 0.75% bovine albumen solution (pH 7.7, Fraction V). Twenty-five

days after inoculation, one mouse developed central nervous signs. This mouse brain was positive for rabies by FAT. The other two mice failed to develop signs during a 45 day observation period. These two mice were not examined by FAT.

After the hippocampus was removed, the remainder of the brain was fixed in 10% buffered formalin. Hematoxylin-eosin stained sections were prepared by conventional methods from paraffin embedded tissue.

Histologic examination of the medulla revealed severe non-suppurative inflammation characterized by focal and diffuse gliosis, and lymphocytic perivascular cuffing (Fig. 1). Eosinophilic intracytoplasmic inclusion bodies were present (Fig. 2) and were most prominent in large neurons at the approximate level of cranial nucleus X. Small aggregates of lymphocytes were scattered throughout the leptomeninges of the cerebellum and a few Purkinje cells contained intracytoplasmic inclusions. Minimal lymphocyte accumulations were in the leptomeninges of the cerebral cortex, and occasional small lymphocytic perivascular cuffs were in the cerebral white matter.

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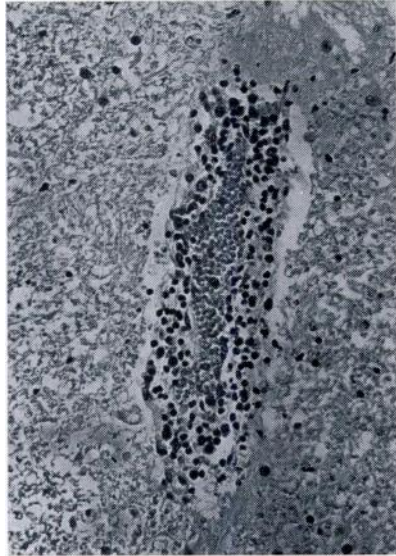


FIGURE 1. Lymphocytic perivascular cuffing of a blood vessel in the pons from a rabid antelope. H-E stain x 80.

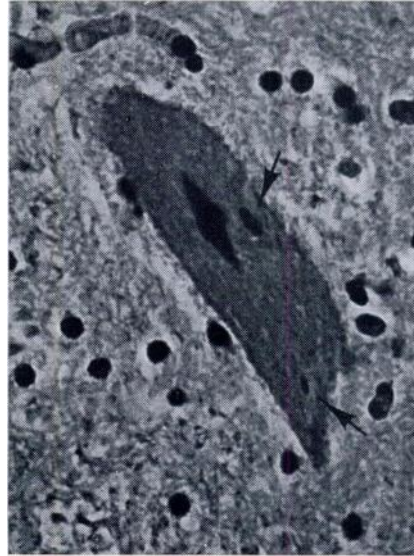


FIGURE 2. Two Negri bodies (arrows) within the cytoplasm of a neuron in the medulla from a rabid antelope. H-E stain x 800.

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