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Book Reviews

Source: Journal of Wildlife Diseases, 25(3) : 446-447

Published By: Wildlife Disease Association

URL: https://doi.org/10.7589/0090-3558-25.3.446

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Journal of Wildlife Diseases, 25(3), 1989, p. 446
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BOOK REVIEW . . .

Field Guide to Wildlife Diseases. Volume 1. General Field Procedures and Diseases of Migratory Birds, Milton Friend (ed.). U.S. Department of Interior, Fish and Wildlife Service Resource Publication 167, Washington, D.C., USA. 1987. vii + 225 pp. $16.00 U.S.

The title of this book is a little misleading since the coverage is limited to only a small number (14) of the diseases of migratory birds and these are primarily diseases of waterfowl in North America. This problem is clarified somewhat in the Introduction where it is stated that the purpose of this volume is to provide "practical information on selected diseases of free-living migratory birds . . . to assist National Wildlife Refuge managers and other users of the National Wildlife Health Center." The book consists of two sections, one on general field procedures (five chapters) and one on diseases of migratory birds (14 chapters). The first section contains chapters on recording and submitting data on specimens, collection, preservation, and shipment of specimens, disease control operations, and euthanasia. The second section has chapters on avian cholera, botulism, tuberculosis, salmonellosis, chlamydiosis, duck plague, inclusion body disease of cranes, pox, aspergillosis, *Sarcocystis* infections, gizzard worms, nasal leeches, lead poisoning, and oil toxicosis. At the end of the book are five appendices giving samples of forms, sources of diagnostic assistance in the U.S., sources of supplies, common and scientific names of wildlife, etc. These are followed by glossaries of technical and animal terms and a 10 page index.

The physical appearance of the book is quite attractive, although the soft-back covers of my copy are already beginning to curl. The photographs are in color and are excellent, some of the best I've ever seen. The maps, bar graphs, line drawings, and tables are also superb. I particularly like the use of tables which include sketches of the hosts concerned and visual representation of the frequency of reports or relative occurrence of various diseases.

The chapters were prepared by 10 different authors, all of which are, or were at one time, associated with the National Wildlife Health Center, although except for the editor, this affiliation is not presented anywhere in the book. It would have been helpful to donate a page or two to listing names, current addresses and affiliations, and brief background sketches of each of the contributors as is often done in multiple-authored books today.

The book reads well and it is obvious that it has been edited carefully. I noticed only a few misspelled words, one erroneous reference, and one incorrectly cited figure, but these are not serious problems. I do not agree with the definition of "prevalence" on page 211. Prevalence is usually understood as the ratio (expressed as a percentage) of diseased versus non-diseased animals in a given sample or population (see Margolis et al., 1982, Journal of Parasitology 68: 131–133). The definition given in the book is closer to that of the term "incidence."

Although the book contains a large amount of important information and the main features of each disease are discussed, its utility could have been improved by documentation of the sources of information. Even though several references are listed at the end of each chapter for further reading, these are not always the publications from which data are taken and cited in the text. In a number of cases very specific data are presented in tables and figures without giving credit to the sources.

Probably the most serious fault that I find with the book is the choice of diseases which are covered. Some topics such as inclusion body disease of cranes and nasal leeches of waterfowl seem to be of somewhat limited importance, whereas other parasites and diseases of greater significance are omitted entirely. These include, for example, leucocytozoonosis in waterfowl (especially Canada geese), trichomonosis in columbiforms and raptors, disseminated visceral coccidiosis in cranes, malaria in passeriforms and eustrongylidosis in wading birds and waterfowl. Neoplasia is omitted as well and very little is said about environmental contaminants such as carbamates, organophosphates, and chlorinated hydrocarbons.

It is much easier to criticize than to create and I hasten to congratulate the authors of this book on producing a useful volume. It should fulfill its proposed purpose, and at the price that is charged, it is a real bargain. Apparently additional volumes are planned and I shall look forward to seeing them.

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BOOK REVIEW . . .

Salmonellosis Control: The Role of Animal and Product Hygiene. Report of a World Health Organization Expert Committee. WHO Technical Report Series, No. 774. World Health Organization, WHO Publications Center USA, 49 Sheridan Avenue, Albany, New York 12210, USA. 1988. 84 pp. $8.80 U.S. (Available in English; French and Spanish in preparation.)

The *WHO Technical Report Series* summarizes the findings of international groups of experts who provide the World Health Organization with advice on a variety of medical and public health topics. Members of these expert groups serve without pay, and function in their personal capacities, rather than as representatives of governments or other organizations. This eight-person Expert Committee met in September 1987, and was composed of professionals in food hygiene, zoonoses control, and livestock development. As stated in the Introduction of the report, the purpose of this Expert Committee was "to discuss salmonellosis control in terms of veterinary public health aspects of food hygiene, with particular emphasis on epidemiological trends and the application of new and existing methodologies of prevention." In particular, the Committee evaluated the veterinary public health significance of recent strategies and techniques in salmonellosis control among animals and in certain slaughter procedures and meat-processing systems. The main target audience appears to be veterinarians for the agricultural industry and public health officials concerned with food-borne diseases. As written, this book has only limited value for most wildlife disease professionals.

The book is divided into 13 chapters. It opens with a review of recent knowledge about the bacteriology, pathogenicity and immunology of zoonotic salmonellae that is relevant to their control. A section on epidemiology ties the biology of these salmonellae to the prevalence of public health problems. Particular attention is given to biological and social factors affecting the spread of infections in developing countries. Measures currently available for the prevention and control of salmonellae, involving veterinary sanitation, good farming practice, and proper antemortem and postmortem inspection of food animals, are then presented. Additional chapters are concerned with veterinary measures related to immunization and feeding with competitive intestinal flora; preventing the spread of contamination during slaughtering and processing; precautions required when handling close-contact animals; and international transfer of animals, feed, and food of animal origin. There is some discussion of drug resistance among the zoonotic salmonellae, and the cost-effectiveness of veterinary measures aimed at reducing the risk of transmission of these bacteria to humans.

The figures are of good quality, and illustrate their intended points. There are no photographs. The quality of the paper used for the report is good. However, the binding does not appear able to withstand extensive use.

A major problem of this report is that it covers a broad range of topics in a relatively short space; consequently, it provides little depth on any one topic. Another concern is that only 34 literature citations are reported; the great majority of assertions in the text are undocumented. While one may acknowledge the expertise of the Committee members, there is little opportunity for the interested reader to find and explore pertinent literature on topics of concern.

The lack of information about free-living animals limits the value of this volume for most wildlife professionals. Further, it is disappointing to see little evaluation of the environmental consequences of the strategies recommended by the Committee for the control and prevention of salmonella infections.

Despite these limitations, the report provides a short, broad overview of an important problem among zoonotic diseases. For those concerned about the control of salmonellosis among domestic animals, and reducing its transmission to humans, this volume offers a current assessment of strategies by a well-qualified group of experts.

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