

Wilson Bull., 93(1), 1981, p. 109

Trichomoniasis in Bald Eagles.—The protozoan parasite *Trichomonas gallinae* has been reported causing disease in the upper digestive tract of a variety of birds including the Golden Eagle (*Aquila chrysaetos*); the Rock Dove (*Columba livia*) is its primary host (Levine, Protozoan Parasites, Burgess Publishing Co., Minneapolis, Minnesota, 1973). This flagellate, in birds of prey, causes a disease called "frounce," characterized by yellow caseous nodules in the upper alimentary canal and emaciation (Stabler, *Exper. Parasitol.* 3:368–402, 1954). This note reports 2 cases of trichomoniasis found in Bald Eagles (*Haliaeetus leucocephalus*) that were subsequently treated with Emtryl (1,2-dimethyl-5-nitroimidazole, Dr. Salsbury's Laboratory, Charles City, Iowa). Stabler and Kitzmiller (*N. Am. Falcon. J.* 7:47–48, 1967) recommend this drug as a safe and effective treatment for trichomoniasis in hawks.

On 25 February 1977, a debilitated 6.3 kg adult Bald Eagle was found in Sullivan County, New York. The bird was treated for shock and given an antibiotic by a veterinarian. When the senior author examined the bird on 27 February 1977, yellow-brown caseous lesions were present over most of the surface of the hard palate, and the saliva was blood-tinged. Numerous live trichomonads were demonstrated microscopically from the lesions and saliva, and lesion smears stained with Giemsa stain showed organisms fitting the description of *T. gallinae* (Levine 1973). The bird was given orally three 125 mg tablets of Emtryl. On 1 March 1977, the mouth lesions were nearly gone. However, rare trichomonads were found microscopically from material taken from the esophagus on 4 March and 3 more 125 mg tablets were given. This was repeated on 5 March. No ill effects were noted from the medication. The eagle rapidly gained strength and showed greatly increased aggression toward its caretakers. Further examination for trichomonads were negative, and the bird was released to the wild on 11 March.

The second Bald Eagle was an immature, captured in a weak, emaciated condition in a farm field near Cutchogue, Suffolk Co., Long Island on 26 July 1978, after it flew weakly against a slow moving pick-up truck. This bird was treated for shock and x-rayed at the North Fork Animal Hospital, Southold, Long Island. No broken bones, or reason for the sickness were found. On 28 July 1978, the bird was transferred to the Delmar Wildlife Resources Center at Delmar, New York. The eagle was thin (3.6 kg), weak and had numerous yellow-brown circumscribed lesions on the hard palate, pharynx, tongue and anterior esophagus. Microscopic examination of oral scrapings revealed numerous organisms typical of *T. gallinae*. Five hundred mg of Emtryl were administered to the bird on 28 July by mouth. The dose was repeated 24 h later as the lesions were disappearing. The eagle showed no untoward effects from an approximate dose of 278 mg of Emtryl per kg of body weight given in a 24 h period. The bird fed voraciously on venison and fish, and appeared stronger. On 31 July the lesions had almost entirely healed and the bird was given another 250 mg of Emtryl. No trichomonads could be found in the mouth or esophagus. The bird gained weight and vigor, remained negative for trichomonads and was released on 10 August at Shelter Island, New York.

The eagles may have contracted the trichomoniasis from eating Rock Doves and/or Mourning Doves (*Zenaida macroura*). Tangredi (*N.Y. Fish and Game J.* 25:89–90, 1978) reported trichomoniasis in Mourning Doves from Long Island, and many Rock Doves were seen near the capture site of the eagle from Sullivan County.

These seem to be the first cases of trichomoniasis reported in the Bald Eagle. Emtryl appears to be a very quick and effective way to eliminate trichomoniasis in this species.—WARD B. STONE AND PETER E. NYE, *N.Y.S. Dept. Environmental Conservation, Delmar Wildlife Resources Center, Delmar, New York 12054. Accepted 27 Nov. 1979.*