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The 15th International Symposium on Diseases of Zoo Animals

The 15th International Symposium on diseases of zoo-animals, arranged by the Institute for Vertebrate Research, Department of Diseases of Zoo Animals and Wildlife in collaboration with the Veterinary Institute, Stockholm and the Zoological Garden at Kolmården, was held at the town Norrköping from June 27 to July 1 1973. It was attended by more than 200 specialists and a total of 40 papers were presented at the meetings. The Proceedings (390 pp.) containing all papers received, were on sale at the opening session. The working programme of the first day of the symposium was devoted to ruminant diseases, that of the second day to diseases acquired during transport; the programme of the third day was polythematic.

On the first day papers were presented on cases of infection with atypical mycobacteria, which have increased in frequency during recent years, on necrobacillosis, on the etiology of the weak vitality of newborn ruminants, on the pathophysiology of the rumen; of interest was the report on intoxication with berberine, a toxic substance contained in plants of the family Ericaceae. Attention was given also to herbicide intoxication.

Injuries acquired during transport and followed by the outbreak of latent diseases are often responsible for losses. This accounts for the large number of contributions dealing with the various methods of capture and transport, quarantine measures in order to prevent the spreading of infection and its introduction to the livestock, and a statistical evaluation of transport losses. The fact that excessive physical and mental stress may frequently be responsible for the outbreak of a latent parasitic infection which, generally, is lethal, received particular attention. This applies to all groups of animals. E.g., Zwart et al. (Holland) observed in 13 of the 16 recently imported demoiselle cranes a lethal infection caused by *Hexamita* sp. The birds died of catarrhal-necrotic enteritis and heavy liver damage. The remaining three birds, although heavily infected, were cured successfully with 50 mg/kg l. w. of metronidazole (Emtryl).

The third day was reserved for lectures dealing with a variety of topics such as infectious meningo-encephalitis of unknown origin in the lion and tiger (Melchior, G.F.R.) killing 50 lions and three tigers in a safari park within three years. Although the symptoms suggested a virus infection, the virus could not be isolated. Therapeutic experiments using serum of recovered lions and a specific vaccine from the brain of dead lions, did not give satisfactory results. Other reports dealt with spontaneous Newcastle disease in ornamental birds, the incidence of tumours in captive wild animals and osteoporosis in juvenile carnivores. The contribution by Nickel and Schwartz (GDR) suggesting a systematic, planned control of helminthiases in zoological gardens, was of interest particularly to parasitologists and veterinarians. The authors stressed the importance of regular coprological examination, and pointed out that ecological conditions in the zoological garden play an important role in the origin and maintenance of parasitic infections. Dollinger (Switzerland) presented his results with the anthelmintic Mebendazole tested in a number of zoo animals. The drug was readily administered, and no side-effects were observed. In monkeys it was very effective against *Strongyloides*, Strongylidae and Trichostron-