NEW TREATMENT FOR PARASITIC WORM INFESTATION

by Jerry Jennings

Parasitic worm infestations have long plagued aviculturists, especially breeders of Psittacine birds. Several products currently on the market, have been successful in treating tapeworm, but are totally ineffective in the eradication of various species of roundworm. Until quite recently, infestations of gizzard worms and intestinal roundworms meant sure decline and eventual death of the parasatized bird. Although roundworms do not generally kill the bird themselves, they so debilitate it, that the bird is highly susceptible to a secondary bacterial infection.

Research into a method for eliminating worm infestations in hoofed-livestock has resulted in the development of the drug – Triamisol. Triamisol is effective in eliminating, not only roundworms but tapeworm, cropworm, and gapeworm. As an all purpose worming medication, it is an invaluable aid to the breeder.

The unusual potency of Triamisol requires its careful use. Unlike other available products, Triamisol penetrates tissues. Proper dosage therefore is important.

Triamisol comes in the form of a water soluble white powder. Proper dilution is one-eighth (1/8) teaspoon per tablespoon of distilled water. A one-half (1/2) ounce eyedrop per bottle is the most convenient size and should be amber-colored, since Triamisol is light sensitive. Proper dosage for finches is one drop administered in the beak. Larger birds require larger doses according to body weight. If there is a heavy infestation, treatment should be administered to all birds in the aviary initially, then again in 30 days. Routine treatment every six (6) months should follow thereafter.

Before embarking on a worming program the breeder should determine whether or not the birds are parasitized. Two methods are in common practice. Moist feces may be examined via a floatation process that separates worm eggs from droppings for observation under a microscope. Less pleasant, but easier to perform is a post mortem examination of crop, intestine, and gizzard. Most worms though quite small can be seen with the naked eye.

Worms are transmitted via eggs passed in the birds droppings, which may contaminate food and water. Uninfested birds eat the contaminated food and become parasitized. An alternative route exists for those worms requiring an intermediate host in their life-cycle. Droppings are eaten by ground-dwelling insects (sow bugs, earwigs, etc.). Then the eggs hatch in the insect, the birds eat the insect, and become infested.

The best cure lies in prevention. Droppings should be removed from feed and water daily, and from the soil on a less frequent basis.

Pain makes man think. Thinking makes man wise. Wisdom is what makes life bearable.
from "Tea House of the August Moon"