

BOOKS

Parasitology for reptile enthusiasts

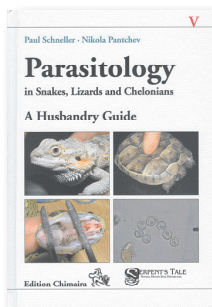
PARASITOLOGY IN SNAKES, LIZARDS AND CHELONIANS. A HUSBANDRY GUIDE

Paul Schneller and Nikola Pantchev

203 pages, hardback, £29.99.

Chimaira Buchhandelgesellschaft. 2008.

ISBN 978 3 89973 473 7



WHAT a pleasure it was to read and look at this book. Reptiles are being increasingly presented in clinical practice, and this wonderfully illustrated text provides a useful 'must have' resource. The authors are experienced

veterinarians, and the text, although aimed at reptile keepers, contains detailed content, so this book should be on any reptile veterinarian's bookshelf. It has been translated from German so some of the text does not flow well, but this does not detract from the information relayed.

A liberal number of colour photos is a must for a parasitological textbook, and this book does not disappoint; in fact, I was overwhelmed by the number of clear images that can be used to assist in parasite identification.

The book is split into three sections. The first deals with general principles of parasitic disease and covers control measures and host-parasite interactions. From the outset, the authors encourage the reptile keeper to seek early veterinary attention and discuss when faecal analysis should be performed in order to prevent disease. They also encourage the reader to think objectively about whether the reptile requires treatment, and the book has some lovely photos of transitory parasites that would have had you reaching for that bottle of dewormer! At no point is routine deworming advocated and, given the toxicity of some agents used to treat parasitic infections, this is most welcome.

Routine hygiene is discussed with protocols provided, and these are thorough and safe despite the use of organophosphates being advocated. Drug therapies are mentioned, including their spectrum of activity, but the dosing regimens are omitted and so any reptile keeper will need to visit their veterinarian for specific advice on treatment regimens.

The second section details each parasite specifically, their host range, how common they are and potential treatment options. This is welcome information that acts as a useful resource when advising keepers on control, and ties in nicely with the third section, which details zoonotic parasites and preventive measures to take. It would appear that we have more to consider than *Salmonella*!

Finally, there is a glossary of terms, which again is more aimed at the keeper than the veterinarian.

Should you buy this book? Yes, if for nothing more than the photos. It is the best reference book that I have for faecal parasitology in reptiles and it should be in your lab (after you have read it first, though!).

Kevin Eatwell

Update on vectorborne diseases

EMERGING PESTS AND VECTOR-BORNE DISEASES IN EUROPE: ECOLOGY AND CONTROL OF VECTOR-BORNE DISEASES, Volume 1

Edited by Willem Takken and Bart G. J. Knols

499 pages, hardback, €94.00.

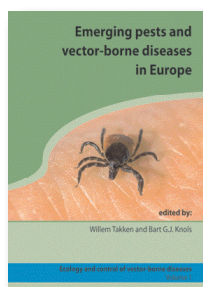
Wageningen Academic Publishers. 2007.

ISBN 978 90 8686 053 1

THIS book is the first of an intended series of books on the ecology and control of vectorborne diseases. It collates a wealth of knowledge on this topic and provides a one-stop shop for veterinary surgeons, epidemiologists and policymakers wishing to update themselves on emerging diseases.

This authoritative book collates the relevant information from the literature, and condenses it into targeted chapters, written by 62 contributing authors, which have been reviewed by 19 specialists in the specified areas of interest. The book's table of contents can be previewed at www.wageningenacademic.com.

Although the vectorborne diseases that are of specific interest to veterinary surgeons form only approximately one-quarter of the book (bluetongue, West Nile virus, leishmaniosis, avian malaria, ovine psoroptic mange and Usutu virus, for any wildlife enthusiasts), the issues relating to the ecology of these



diseases seem to be comprehensively covered. Moreover, there is a lot to be learned from other sections of the book that focus on medical conditions, as the superior resources that provide information on the investigation

and control of human vectorborne infections provide valuable pointers to the most effective and practical interventions that can be used in a veterinary context.

In addition, it is useful for veterinary surgeons to keep abreast of changes in the distribution and current understanding of important human pathogens such as Lyme disease, tickborne encephalitis and malaria (as well as the lesser known mosquito-borne infections that have real potential for becoming indigenous in southern Europe, chikungunya and dengue).

Monitoring systems for our six- and eight-legged cohabitants are also discussed,

along with mosquito control in Europe, and there are wider issues deliberated upon in relation to the effects of the world we live in (modern transportation, land utilisation and climate change). Some topics are of only tangential interest to all but the most inquiring or lateral-thinking veterinary surgeon (bed bugs, head lice and house flies), but nearly all the chapters in this book present some unique points of interest that broaden the mind and in-depth knowledge of the reader who has an interest in vectorborne diseases.

If I have one criticism of the book, it would be of the formatting of the main text. The small font size with narrow line spacing, along with fully justified paragraphs, make it easy to lose your place and, therefore, you have to really concentrate while reading the detail within each paragraph. However, the fact that the book is packed full of information that is fully referenced more than makes up for this slight flaw. The book is adequately illustrated by monochrome pictures and diagrams, and a lot of summary information is presented in tabulated formats.

All in all, it is a good read for those interested in vectorborne diseases as it provides up-to-date information that can be hard to collate from any other specific source. To this end, the book fully achieves its objectives.

Fraser Menzies