INCIDENCE OF OPHIDASCARIOSIS IN A RETICULATED PYTHON

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ABSTRACT

Incidence of ophidascariosis was reported in a reticulated python reared in Arignar Anna Zoological Park, Vandalur. The sub-globular and thick shelled egg with compact yolk confirmed the presence of ophidascarid egg in python and the signs and therapy have been discussed.

Coprological sample was obtained from a reticulated python reared under captive conditions during natural defecation and the fresh sample was investigated, using routine parasitological techniques.

The coprological examination revealed presence of ophidascarid eggs. Despite the presence of ophidascarid eggs, the reptile did not reveal any specific clinical sign of helminthic affections. This was in agreement with the findings of Fowler (1986) who stated the occurrence of non specific signs in cases of ophidascariosis. However, Mader (1996) quoted that the regurgitation of semi – digested food in snakes should be an indication of ascarid infection in snakes. Similarly, malnutrition has been reported as a sign in case of heavy round worm load in reptiles (Wallach and Boever, 1983). Pyrantel pamoate was suggested at the rate of 5 mg per kg body weight orally along with feed, repeated after 17 days. Incidence of ophidascarids in pythons was in accordance with the reports furnished by Mader (1996) who further quoted that the two genera of ascarididae that could parasitize reptiles were Ophidascaris and Polydelphis. The sub – globular and thick shelled eggs with compact yolk confirmed ophidascarid species in this case and was in agreement with the reports, given by Soulsby (1982). Hence, like domestic animals, pythons too require systematic monitoring of parasitic conditions, especially when they are reared under captive conditions.

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REFERENCES


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