

HANDBOOK ON ANIMAL DISEASES IN THE TROPICS

M M H SEWELL and D W BROCKLESBY. 4th Edition, Baillière Tindall, London. 1990. pp ix and 385. Tables 18. Price £14.95
(ISBN 0-7020-1502-4)

This is the 4th edition of the well-known text first published by the British Veterinary Association in 1962. It is divided into sections on diseases caused by arthropods, bacteria, helminths, protozoa, rickettsia, viruses and a short section on other diseases.

The book is well presented and written in a very concise manner. References are not quoted, but a few key references for further reading have been given at the end of each section.

In the preface it is stated that the aim of the book is:

“To provide a concise summary of the more important infections and conditions causing ill-health in domestic animals in tropical and sub-tropical countries, emphasizing the special features applicable in these countries in the case of diseases of a wider distribution,” and that a determined effort has been made to prevent the handbook growing into a tome. This, unfortunately, has been taken too far in some cases and has resulted in a lack of certain important, practical information which would be needed for a veterinarian to cope with certain specific conditions, under field conditions.

Little information is given on the pathogenesis of diseases. In the case of canine babesiosis, it has meant that as pathogenesis is not discussed, there is no information of symptomatic treatment which would be important in the treatment of any severe case of canine babesiosis.

Dosages of drugs are not given, which in many cases is acceptable. However, in specific instances, this can cause problems. For example in the discussion on canine ehrlichiosis, it is stated that tetracycline should be used. There is no indication how long the treatment should be continued. To treat a patient parenterally for 10 days is often impractical. The practical alternative is to use doxycycline at 10 mg per kg per os.

To merely state that: “Post-immunization reactions following heartwater vaccination can be abated with tetracyclines” is probably not sufficient information to enable a veterinarian to proceed with the vaccination of valuable adult animals against this disease.

Due to the lack of detail, this book is mainly recommended for anyone wishing to obtain an introduction to animal diseases in the tropics or as a rapid source of reference for practitioners.

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