

ABSTRACT

TREATMENT REGIMES AND RECOVERY RATES OF MALLARD (*ANAS PLATYRHYNCHOS*) AND GREEN- WINGED TEAL (*ANAS CRECCA*) SUFFERING WITH AVIAN BOTULISM POISONING, AND CONFIRMATION OF BOTULINUM TYPE C TOXIN PRESENCE

The two objectives of this study were to 1) evaluate different therapeutic treatment regimes for avian botulism, a neurological, paralytic, often-fatal disease, of birds; and 2) to confirm the presence of botulinum type C toxin in biological samples. Over a 4-yr period (2002-2005) 91 mallard (*Anas platyrhynchos*) and 25 green-winged teal (*Anas crecca*) displaying various degrees of intoxication were collected from two study sites and subjected to five therapeutic treatment regimes. Birds lower on a 5-point scale of intoxication, with 5 the greatest degree, had a higher survival rate than more intoxicated birds. The study indicates an inverse relationship between treatment and stage of intoxication. Simple treatment with fluids and shade resulted in a 78.0% rehabilitation success in mallards and 86% success in green-winged teal, compared with fluids, shade, and botulinum antitoxin. All birds given shade only died: if shade alone was eliminated from statistical analysis there was no significant difference between treatment regimes in survival of mallards. ELISA capture tests indicated the presence of botulinum type C toxin in 100% of samples tested.

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