

Arnica Montana for a Traumatized Fish

By Anne C. Hermans, DVM

A healthy young *Semaprochilodus taenurus* fish (Amazon basin species) in a healthy 110-gallon freshwater tank suffered severe trauma when he was sucked into a defective intake valve and wedged at the largest point of his body. When he was found he had been stuck for an unknown amount of time. After being extricated from the valve he sank to the bottom of the tank and was assumed dead, but weak fin movements were shortly detected. Visible injuries included extensive abrasions and bruising to the face and head, bruised gills, bleeding into and around the eyes, and everted, severely swollen and bruised lips. The fish was dazed, disoriented, and not able to swim in a coordinated fashion or maintain normal balance. As he was observed over the next few minutes, he began to make feeble attempts to get away and hide from the other curious fish in the tank as they approached. He normally swam peacefully with the group.

An analysis was done using the following rubrics: GENERALITIES, shock, injuries from; GENERALITIES, injuries, blows, falls and bruises, soft parts, of, contusions; GENERALITIES, wounds, swelling, with; EYE, inflammation, injuries, after; and MIND, aversion, approached, of being. The analysis confirmed the most compelling acute remedy choice in this case, arnica montana, based on the keynote symptoms of shock, trauma with extensive bruising and bleeding, and fear of approach. As a clean container was not readily available to segregate the injured fish, approximately 15 #10 pellets of arnica montana 1M were sprinkled directly into the entire tank. 1M was the highest potency available at the time.

Aconitum napellus would have also been an appropriate choice to address the initial shock and eye trauma, but the logistical challenge of changing remedies directed the selection of the best fitting remedy overall.

Within an hour, the affected fish was swimming and interacting normally with his companions, demonstrating encouraging early improvement on the mental/emotional levels. By the end of the day, his mouth was considerably less swollen. By the next day, his lips were no longer everted, the mouth swelling was unnoticeable, and he was eating normally. Thirty-six hours after the remedy was given, he sloughed his entire slime coat. This sloughing may be interpreted as a healing response by the body in the form of a discharge. Over the next few days his bruises completely faded, including the interior eye bruising.

His vital force must be very strong, to have withstood the initial trauma, and heal so effectively. It is of interest that none of the other fish in the tank were apparently affected by the remedy, and the patient in this case did not seem adversely affected by the continued presence of arnica montana 1M in his milieu. A single dose of a high potency remedy would not be expected to affect individuals to whom it has no similarity, as evidenced here. However, continued exposure (repetition) to either a similar remedy, or to the simillimum, could cause a homeopathic aggravation, or else a proving of the remedy, in the patient or in a sensitive healthy individual. It is possible that as the injured fish rapidly healed, he passed out of the state to which arnica montana corresponded initially. He is healthy to this day, 10 months later.

REFERENCES

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