



BIRDS

Homeopathic Remedies
from the Avian Realm

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H O M E O P A T H Y W E S T

PREFACE

To capture birds in print is a task that turned out to be quite difficult. As soon as an essence of bird is put into final word form, the feeling comes up that we have lost that which makes it vital and living. Birds are about movement, fluidity and freedom. Words are black fixed images on white paper. When reading these captured images, please allow yourself the freedom to fly with the material into the wide-open skies or dive deep into the water to meet the spirit of these creatures.

Judy and Anneke

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FOREWORD

In *Clarke's Dictionary* we find 997 remedies listed. Of these, 589 are from plants, 300 are from minerals and 82 are from animals. In the 1990's, this disproportionate distribution of remedies was noticed as a potential problem by Sankaran, Herrick, Sherr and many others. Great attention began to be placed upon various groups of animals to try to elucidate where our paucity of animal provings should be corrected. Great credit belongs to Jonathan Shore and his colleagues for recognizing that of all the neglected animal groups, the birds had been the most completely ignored. In the present work, 16 bird remedies are discussed, correcting the absence of avian species from our *Materia Medica*. Even more impressive is the fact that the authors are not presenting merely preliminary data. *BIRDS: Homeopathic Remedies from the Avian Realm* takes a giant step toward elucidating the nature of this family of remedies, complete with detailed prescribing tips. The homeopathic profession will long remember this contribution.

Having witnessed first-hand Jonathan Shore's ongoing discoveries into the nature of patients who require bird remedies, I am delighted to make some opening remarks in this book. Jonathan, together with Anneke Hogeland and Judy Schriebman, has brought into being a new class of remedies. This was accomplished first through a series of preliminary provings, then later through the study of natural history and, most importantly, through carefully documented cured cases.

I am certain that every homeopath who tests without prejudice the information and guidelines given here will be satisfied with the results. Clinical results speak more eloquently than words.

In addition to bringing invaluable knowledge to the homeopathic community, the authors have created a template for future homeopathic texts. Homeopathic books should pass one simple test before being written. The prospective author should ask, "Is this a book which I would find an indispensable addition to my practice?" *BIRDS: Homeopathic Remedies from the*

Avian Realm meets and surpasses this test. What makes this book even more admirable is that the authors have aimed it directly at the needs of the practitioner. It is practical and to the point, filled with pearls based upon clinical experience. Following the injunctions of the first aphorism, the authors spend far less time discussing their methodology than in giving concrete prescribing points. The homeopathic community will reward the authors with the highest form of praise: cures of patients who, without this book, would have continued to suffer.

Roger Morrison

Dedicated to all bird beings.

FALCON FREEDOM

*I'm a bird locked away,
I'm a bird who wants to play,
I want to speed among the air,
I want to be freed among the land,*

*Can I be free?
Can I once again soar through the air?
Can I stray again please?
Can I divide the air again?*

*I want to soar through the land,
I want the air to hit my face again,
I want to dive down and strike prey,
I want freedom!*

Poem written by a 10-yr-old boy
after receiving *Falco-p*

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BOOK OUTLINE

INTRODUCTION

An overview of the bird kingdom. This includes bird characteristics, general bird notes and a brief guide to bird nomenclature.

KEY FEATURES

The key points that emphasize the central characteristics of each bird and what makes it unique. It includes natural history and any important mythology and symbolism that shed light on the remedy. This part includes a section of prominent rubrics specific to the bird.

PROVINGS

The actual material of the provings is given; trituration, journal entries, dreams, experiences and physical sensations. This allows for more in depth study of the provers' own language so that it can be seen how core ideas and key aspects have been extracted.

CASES

A selection of edited cases to illustrate how the remedy shows up in practice.



It is our hope that this format will permit the reader in the first instance to easily recognize when a patient needs a bird remedy, and in the second instance, to do a thorough differential analysis to find the specific bird.

INTRODUCTION

“Do you hear that bird?” asked Dan. I told him I did.

“Do you know what he is saying?”

“I don’t speak ‘bird’,” I answered.

“You should,” he twinkled. “Learn a lot. The birds are ‘two-leggeds’ like us. They are very close to us.”

*from Neither Wolf nor Dog: On Forgotten Roads with an Indian Elder,
Kent Nerburn, New World Library, Novato, CA 1994*

The intent of this book is to bring together the currently available information on this group of remedies in a form which will facilitate both a good grasp of the characteristics of the group as a whole and the ability to focus down simply upon its individual members. Thus emphasis is placed not upon the small details but is rather weighted between the generals and the particular individualizing characteristics of each remedy. Although the body of knowledge in relation to these remedies is still in the early stages of development I believe we have sufficient data to paint pictures that are accurate in their broad outlines.

Why Birds?

My first bird prescription came about in this way: for some 3 or 4 years I had treated a young woman, initially with *Cann-i* and then with *Natrum phosphoricum*. Although the remedies acted well she continued to return with the same complaints. During these years she would tell me of her recurrent dreams of collecting feathers and using them to build a pair of wings. Not having any repertorial references or any satisfactory basis for homeopathic interpretation this data played no part in the choice of remedy. With the passage of time and the influence of Rajan Sankaran, the possibilities of what may or may not be useful information for prescribing took on a new life and the idea of bird entered my mind.

Certain events assume a life of their own, having a potential way beyond our immediate understanding. The next time I saw her she reported a detailed and vivid dream of an eagle. The only bird remedy available at

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that time was Eagle (*Haliaeetus leucocephalus* 30C), it having been recently proven by Jeremy Sherr. The clarity, depth and duration of the response affirmed the correctness of the choice. At this same time one of the students at the Hahnemann College needed to complete an original research project as part of the course requirement. At my suggestion she chose a bird (a red-tailed hawk) for a proving. This remedy was proven both in the classical way by her as well as in the form of seminar provings in Finland and Germany by myself. The collected data was quite extensive and reliably uniform between the American and European experience despite the diversity of methodology.

In regards to the provings, my study at that time was focused on the passage of remedy information and energies between people in groups, and only incidentally on birds.

However, for whatever reason, people began to send me bird feathers, which, somewhat like the original bird dreams, I filed away in some drawer. While struggling with another case I chanced to look at one of the feathers labeled Scarlet Macaw. It was so beautiful I looked this bird up on the Internet and realized this was the remedy for the case at hand. The non-existence of the needed remedy opened a new phase of proving experimentation. It was necessary to make it from scratch and this presented an opportunity for a different kind of proving; one in which the proving and the making of the remedy were the same event. The impact of this experiment on all the participants was profound and changed my attitude toward proving procedure in a fundamental way.

After completing these provings of two quite different birds, Hawk and Macaw, I was struck by the commonality of certain symptoms. In the first proving, the hawk, a notable symptom was stabbing, stitching pain in the eye. At the time the obvious explanation was derived from the fact that the bird was blind in one eye, most likely having been injured by a sharp twig. The appearance of these same symptoms in the second bird proving, the Macaw, threw the initial explanation into question (and in fact raised doubts about the explanations we make up for proving symptoms in general). Another common symptom in these two provings was pain in

the extremities, especially the hip and shoulder. This brought to mind the Eagle proving conducted by Jeremy Sherr, wherein he had concluded that the symptoms of pain in the shoulder and upper limb were caused by the fact that that particular bird had broken its right wing. In fact all three birds had in common: stitching, stabbing pains in the eye, as well as a significant emphasis on pain in the extremities. The recurrence of these specific symptoms in completely different birds was a great surprise, which can best be explained by their being symptoms common to all birds, an explanation indeed borne out by later bird provings. (These facts, combined with an incident from the seminar proving of the hawk, where the main prover had a dream of being connected by a leather thong to a gloved hand, have brought about a much wider perspective in the interpretation of proving symptoms).

Subsequent provings of Owl, Pelican, Penguin and Heron along with a review of the work of others such as Greg Bedayn (Raven), Misha Norland (Falcon), Jeremy Sherr (Eagle), Todd Rowe (Vulture), and Elisabeth Schulz (Dove, Falcon, Condor) confirmed the idea that most of the symptoms arising in these provings were **common bird symptoms**. That is to say, they belonged to the general family of birds, and only a small number (10 – 15%) of the symptoms were directly connected to the nature of the specific remedy. Whether this applies to other groupings or not I cannot say for sure at this point (although among the snakes the evidence is pretty compelling), but within the realm of the birds it is definite.

Whatever has been conjectured in the past and whatever debate occurs in the present as to the existence or nonexistence of kingdom and family classifications, the data presented in this book sets a precedent for the reality of at least one significant family group: the birds. The individualization of a remedy can take place within a field much more limited than the totality of the known *Materia Medica*. The recognition of this situation allows for a much clearer extraction of the central feature or essence from proving data in addition to bringing into the consciousness of the prescriber the idea of bird long before the individual bird itself is identified.

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Statistics

Over a 10-year period from 1985 through 1995 I kept a record of all prescriptions that I considered had brought about a definite amelioration in the case. These amounted to some 1150 prescriptions. My statistics for the top 10 remedies compared almost identically to records kept by the Hahnemann Pharmacy of all prescriptions filled during the same time period. The remedies were widely spread throughout the *Materia Medica*; the most common being *Sulphur*, constituting just under 6% of all prescriptions. The Kali salts as a group, all taken together, formed 3% of the total. If at that time I had prescribed as many bird remedies as I have during the past 7 or 8 years, birds as a group would weigh in at a little over 1.25%, as compared to spiders at 1%. Although these are not precise statistics, they do give a sense that birds as a group should be somewhere in the median range of prescribed remedies.

Are New Remedies Needed?

While an ongoing growth of detail and complexity is the result of a creative process, it is by no means evidence of evolution or of a movement towards a unified understanding. Life around us is becoming increasingly complex. We are exposed to influences and pressures that were unimagined a few 100 years ago.

Any discipline, any practice, any living process has no choice but to fall under the influence of the age in which it lives. Thus if the science of Homeopathic Medicine is to live, it must also correspond to the world around it. Now I am not suggesting that it become other than what it is. There is no inherent demand to step outside itself and take on characteristics of another discipline, i.e., become closer or more acceptable to allopathic medicine or any other science. The only and unavoidable demand of life is for it to respond to the 'spirit' or moving force of the time.

In the realm of human life we can see clearly the multiplication of facts, of information, and the demand on our minds to grasp, sort and integrate all this new data from telephones to computers. Some resist this and call it bad, others enthusiastically embrace it as the good, and between the

two camps there is ongoing struggle. In homeopathy we have experienced an immense growth of information. Much has been added to 'old' remedies and so many 'new' ones are described that computer databases are almost essential to store and organize this data. Thus we have added new information about already existing remedies and new information about new topics simply as a response to the demands of the time.

There exists another demand, simultaneous but not inevitable: a demand to unify all this data, to enfold this complexity in a movement back towards the simple underlying principles of all life, so that our perceptions and understanding may penetrate ever more deeply to the heart of things.

In this work we have attempted to document the results of these two movements; the natural outgrowth of a creative engagement with the world around us and an attempt to unify the resulting data so that it leads us back to the source, to the experience of the mystery of life.

Nature, Essence and the Vital Force

In the 1970's and 1980's, with the revival of homeopathy, George Vithoulkas reintroduced the concepts of essence and of vital force. These were, right at the outset, of great value as abstract intellectual concepts, as opposed to living experiences. That is to say, the time required between the grasping of an idea by the mind and its assimilation or transmutation into a direct experience of the organism, as a whole spans many years of effort.

We are still far from a direct experience of the essence of things, "that by which a thing is what it is," but are in fact beginning to approach a feeling for the transformation and expressions of the vital force.

The descent of undifferentiated life energy into matter is a complex process which may be crudely visualized as follows: if life is to take on the form of a tree, it must first take on the form or materiality of all trees, then enter into the form of a certain class of trees, say Conifers, then more specifically a Sequoia and finally manifesting as this or that individual Redwood. This process holds for all forms of matter: minerals, plants or animals.

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Thus any remedy must in its nature express all these levels of differentiation. This can be clearly seen in the Bird remedies, which express primarily the particular or specific characteristics of birds as a group and then in more precise and differentiated detail the uniqueness of their particular family. Thus it will be seen from the proving data that the majority of symptoms in any one proving are those which are **common to all bird provings**, and only a much smaller number are those which express the individuality or distinguishing characteristics of the family or bird.

There are two main points which arise from the above discussion. One is the importance of a careful study of the natural history of our remedies. The other is the potential value of family groupings as an aid to remedy identification.

Value of Family Grouping

When much time has passed in the use of a certain remedy it can be perceived directly.

The remedy is known and thus can be recognized when it comes before us. Prior to this stage of familiarity it can be very helpful in the analytic process to be able to identify the broad grouping of which it is a member. For example, on listening to the case we begin to sense that the vital force expresses itself first through the animal, and more specifically through the bird realm. Now when the feeling for bird is present, when the evidence or data in the case begins to take on the shape of bird, then even if the remedy is scarcely known, the number of substances to be researched and studied becomes manageable.

Jonathan Shore, MD