MULTIPLE SUBCUTANEOUS ABCESSES CAUSED BY
EDWARDSIELLA TARDA IN CAPTIVE GRASS SNAKE (NATRIX NATRIX)

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SUMMARY

Bacteria from the family Enterobacteriaceae are part of the normal flora of the oral cavity and intestinal tracts of the snakes (Goldstein et al., 1981, Blaylock, 2001; Köbölkuti and Czirják, unpublished data). Often they are considered opportunistic pathogens, causing different clinical diseases under the stress of the captivity.

Species from the genus Edwardsiella are associated with aquatic habitats, two ecological groups of hosts, cold-blooded animals (amphibians and reptiles) and fishes, could be considered as reservoirs of this bacteria (Sakazaki, 2005). Edwardsiella tarda is causing intestinal and extraintestinal infections in humans and different clinical entities in fishes (mostly salmonid fish), but to our knowledge, no clinical disease has been reported at snakes.

A case of multiple subcutaneous abscesses was described at a female captive grass snake (Natrix natrix). The abscesses from the different body regions were surgically cleaned and samples were collected for further microbiological examination. Using API 20E, Edwardsiella tarda was identified as casual agent of infection. Based on antibiogramme we started a treatment using Enrofloxacin generally (10mg/kg i.m.).

In spite of treatment and improvement of environmental conditions, the health status of the animal deteriorated, and because of ethical considerations, we were forced to use euthanasia. At the gross pathology examination, besides the multifocal granulomatous dermatitis, granulomas in the coelomic cavity, liver steatosis, gutous nephrosis and massive Rhabdias fuscovenosa infection is the lungs were described (Catoi et al., 2006).