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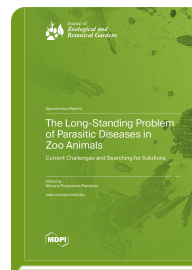
The Long-Standing Problem of Parasitic Diseases in Zoo Animals

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Parasitism is a widespread biological phenomenon and is an inseparable part of life in zoological gardens. The negative effects of parasite infestation in zoo animals can be: the development of secondary deficiencies and other infections; impaired reproduction and a risk of death in cases of massive and dangerous parasitoses. Zoos are also places where wild animals come into close contact with humans. This significantly increases the risk of parasitic zoonoses spreading, which poses a threat to the health of the animals themselves, to the zoo staff and to visitors. The control of parasitoses in zoos is subject to various challenges, such as inadequacies in prevention programs, untimely or inaccurate diagnoses, the introduction of parasites via intermediate hosts, paratenic hosts or mechanical vectors (snails, ants, cockroaches, worms, rodents, etc.), persistent infections (e.g. soil-transmitted helminthoses), the need to adapt antiparasitic treatment to a specific species, the development of drug resistance, etc. Success in this battle requires the combined efforts of all zoo professionals: managers, curators, keepers and veterinarians. Scientific advances are also important, though sometimes the courses of action that can be taken are unclear. The Special Issue titled “The Long-Standing Problem of Parasitic Diseases in Zoo Animals: Current Challenges and Searching for Solutions” was created, aiming to collect scientific articles on the topic. We hope that the developments presented will contribute both to the fundamentals of parasitology, to management practices in zoos, and to a better future for animals in captivity.



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