



TORTICOLLIS IN A COTTONTAIL

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TORTICOLLIS IN A COTTONTAIL

We should like to report a case of torticollis (wryneck) in a wild cottontail (*Sylvilagus nuttallii*) which was trapped near Eden, Idaho, November 4, 1964. The animal's head was twisted to the right, the right front leg was drawn to the body, and the right eye was partially closed from the lower side. The rabbit was unable to stand or hop, its only movement being a twisting sideward flop. These symptoms are similar to those reported by Ferris *et al.* (J. Wild. Mgmt. 24: 179-184, 1960) who suggested viral etiology.

Four days after capture the cottontail was able to sit by leaning against the side of its cage, and a day later it began to eat and drink. After 8 days the torticollis had decreased, and the animal could stand and move normally. The right eye was completely open but had turned milky and was exuding viscous matter. On the tenth day, Dr. B. N. Carle (Pathologist, Magic Valley Memorial Hospital, Twin Falls, Idaho) made a culture from this material and identified it as nonhemolytic *Staphylococcus albus*. Since this was the suspected etiological agent, we did not investigate the possibility of viral etiology.

Sixteen days after capture the right eye had cleared, the torticollis had disappeared, and the animal appeared normal and remained so for the next 10 days. Further observations were prevented by the animal's escape.

In domestic rabbits (*Oryctolagus cuniculus*) torticollis is not an uncommon condition, but it is usually associated with middle ear in-

fections, or mites, or both (Allen, J. Amer. Vet. Med. Assoc. 119: 274-277, 1951; Hagen and Lund, "Common Diseases of Domestic Rabbits," USDA-ARS 45 - 3 - 2.) 1964; and L. Karstad, personal communication). R. L. Van Wormer and P. L. Hegdal, Bureau of Sport Fisheries and Wildlife, Jackrabbit Research Station, Twin Falls, Idaho. 22 Sept., 1965.

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