Book Review

Medical Emergencies Caused by Aquatic Animals: A Zoological and Clinical Guide, 1st edition

By Vidal Haddad, Jr.

New York: Springer International Publishing AG, 2016
USD \$109 (hardcover), 112 pages, 286 illustrations (279 in color)

The marked rise of aquatic-related human activities in recent decades has led to growing numbers of untoward encounters with hazardous aquatic animals. These encounters involve diverse and often species-specific morbidity, knowledge about which is outside the training and experience of most clinicians. *Medical Emergencies Caused by Aquatic Animals* helps fill this void.

Authored by Vidal Haddad, Jr., a physician-investigator in the Department of Dermatology at the Botucatu Medical School in São Paulo, Brazil, the book reflects more than 20 years of experience treating and studying hazardous aquatic animal encounters in Brazil and elsewhere. Brazil's diverse marine and freshwater environments offer a robust setting to observe such incidents, and Brazil is one of the few countries that tracks, albeit incompletely, the frequency and severity of aquatic animal-related injuries.

The short book seeks to be a guide for emergency personnel and ambulatory care practitioners who may be the first to see aquatic animal-related conditions. It provides key information about the offending species, the mechanism of injury or illness, first aid and emergency care, and treatment alternatives. While the book focuses especially on Brazil's fauna, the injuries

and illnesses caused by the involved species are not clinically dissimilar elsewhere.

The book's content is organized into 5 chapters, dividing the subject matter largely along phylogenetic lines. Following a succinct introduction, the second chapter focuses on invertebrate aquatic animals (eg, sponges, jellyfish, starfish, and octopuses); the third covers injuries caused by vertebrate animals (eg, lionfish, sharks, weeverfish, and alligators); and the fourth addresses various toxidromes resulting from ingestion of poisonous aquatic animals. The fifth and shortest chapter (4 pages) covers aquatic-related bacterial and fungal infections, providing very brief coverage of this important topic. If there is a second edition, this chapter should be materially enhanced. Each chapter includes multiple illustrative clinical case summaries and numerous references. In considering the epidemiologic data about species-specific incidents that are presented in the chapters, the reader will need to keep in mind that the incidence of untoward events may be very different in locations other than Brazil. Particularly helpful and a distinguishing feature of this book is its large number of color images, many of which were photographed by the author.

Overall, this should be a useful primer for students, emergency personnel, and diverse types of medical practitioners who may be called upon to treat persons who have been injured by aquatic animals.

Kenneth W. Kizer, MD, MPH
Sacramento, CA, USA