Study of the causes of anal prolapse in Flower-Horn Fish

Objective: Flower-horn fish is considered to be the result of cross breeding between the Cichlasoma trimaculatus and Cichlasoma festae. Several flower-horn fish were brought to the aquatic animal health department of Tehran University with a prolapsed anus. These fish showed listless, lethargy, and anus prolapsed while demonstrating minimal desire for food. Method & Materials: In order to identify the cause, a bacterial culture from the rectum was performed with negative end result. In wet smear of most of the flower-horn fish free living organism was observed and in one case it was identified as protozoan parasite Balantidium. Results & Conclusion: According to fish owners, beef heart and meat were the only food given to their flower-horn fish. Similar to all other cichlids, flower-horn fish is omnivores and requires a balanced diet including some plant material and algae. Lack of green food (as it causes constipation in humans) can over long periods, make the digestive track of the flower-horn fish more sensitive to bacterial or protozoal infections. Eventually, the "bloom" of micro-organisms in the bowel causes the anus to prolapse and get exposed. Any factor that increases the chance of bacterial or protozoal infections, such as poor water quality, can trigger the problem. An effective treatment should include the use of green foods only, such as cooked spinach, until the condition is improved. Fifty percent weekly water changes and the use of Epsom salt treatment were also recommended. The treatment proved to be successful. Finally we concluded that imbalance food and lack of adequate fiber to be the most important cause for anal prolapse in flower-horn fish.

Keywords: cichlid, Flower- horn fish, anal prolapsed, treatment

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