



Crow River
Animal Hospital
& Dental Clinic

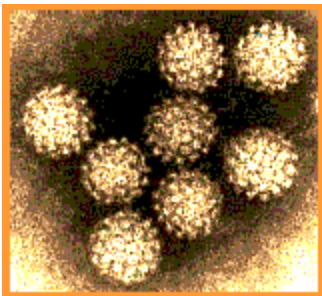
Friday Fun Facts – Number 26:2010

Melissa Shelton DVM – Emmett’s Story – Essential Oils and Birds

Disclaimer: All of the information provided here is intended for educational purposes. The information is not intended to diagnose, treat, or prescribe for any illness. Please seek the advice of a qualified health care professional in your area of concern if you or your pets have a health challenge.

Emmett’s story remains one of my favorite stories, and it is still progressing. When we presented his story at the Young Living International Grand Convention in June of 2010, it literally brought tears to the audience’s eyes. His story is one that shows the medical power of aromatherapy, as well as the immense emotional benefits that it can bring. Here is Emmett’s story...

I had known Emmett’s owner for well over 8 years. She is a wonderful woman who has owned and rescued parrots for many, many years. She is dedicated to giving them an amazing and full life, where they have had nothing before. Any veterinary care that they required was provided. I had examined Emmett when he first came into her life. A time when all I had were traditional tools for diagnostics and treatments. We had determined that not only was he a feather picker, but he had a pretty advanced case of papillomatosis – a contagious viral form of avian (bird) warts that can affect the entire digestive tract of a bird. He had them in his mouth, presumably down his throat, and all the way to his vent (which is the correct term for a birdy butt hole).



Papilloma Virus



Avian Papillomas affecting the feet (Severe Case)



Avian Papilloma in the Vent (Minor Case)

At this time, I had nothing to offer her but to encourage the good care, food, and immune-supporting supplements that she already provided to her birds. Occasionally, surgery could be performed to cut or burn the warty tumors away, but the results were usually short lived, and not without risk. Our goal was to keep Emmett as happy as he could be, for as long as possible; until the time that the papillomas became so severe, that we would have to put him to sleep. His time appeared to show up, two years later.

I had never really known Emmett's full story. I guess we had never really discussed it. When the time had come to put Emmett to sleep, it just so happened that I had started to treat many animals with essential oils in our clinic. Of course putting a bird to sleep (or any animal for that matter), is never easy. We question whether there is anything more that can be done. Well, I had never tried treating "birdy warts" with essential oils, but since this was the first way that I had ever experienced the use of essential oils – in order to clear my fiancé's warts – I got a crazy notion in my head. If the essential oils could clear my husband's warts...could they be used to get rid of this bird's warts? We really had nothing to lose.

However, most bird owners will tell you, there is no way that you can use essential oils around birds. Most won't even own a bottle of air freshener or potpourri. There are also many rumors and reports of eucalyptus and other oils being toxic to or even killing birds. I began to think things over in my head. I had heard reports of people using Lavender, Lemon, and Orange oils, and spraying birds directly with a watery mixture. I knew that birds chew up plants and fruits, which surely contain essential oils. How different could it be for a bird to perch in a very fragrant eucalyptus tree in Australia – than to get eucalyptus oil diffused in the household? Chewing through the rind of an

orange, would certainly get essential oils sprayed into and onto the bird. How could birds possibly have issues with essential oils when every branch they chewed, and nest they built were almost definitely exposing them to essential oils of those plants?



Cockatoo - Perched in and Chewing on a Eucalyptus Tree in Australia



Amazon Parrot Chewing Through a Citrus Peel

Well, in humans Oregano or Clove essential oils are most commonly used to get rid of warts. Unfortunately, both of these oils are pretty “hot”, and so a challenge became how to administer the beneficial oils to the bird. Since the papillomas act like a tumor; I thought of the most mild oils that I could, and derived what I thought was a brilliant plan to apply the oils to the feet of the bird. Emmett was not a cuddly parrot as some birds are. He stayed in his cage and couldn’t be handled. I decided we would mix 20 drops of Frankincense and 5 drops of Copaiba into a 4 ounce glass bottle of distilled water. Then this mixture would be “sprayed” onto his feet – thus allowing him to have his oils absorbed by his feet (the safest place to apply oils in a human). I had picked Frankincense as it is a powerful anti-tumor oil, as well as gentle enough for newborn babies. I also picked Copaiba for its gentleness, magnifying properties of other oils, and anti-inflammatory action. Certainly these tumors had invaded many areas, and were surely causing massive inflammation and problems. Of course, the plan was to aim for his feet when spraying him, but I was concerned...“what if we got this spray into his eyes?” Well I am not one to ever

do something to an animal that I wouldn't do to myself. So, I sprayed it directly into my eyes. Nope, no pain ☺ Test one, completed...

We began spritzing him with this mixture, and all was going well. Although, he was not aware that I had set the rule that we were only going to spray his feet. He began to open his mouth, and purposely catch the oil mix inside of his mouth. Even when we only sprayed his feet, he would bend down his head to intercept the oil spray, effectively coating the large warts within his oral cavity. At first the owner was quite concerned. I was too; however, sometimes you just have to trust that an animal's instincts may just be far superior to our book smarts. We decided to let him continue his own treatment method. Twice a day he would get sprayed, and he continued to get at least 4 sprays (by his choice) directly into his mouth. After about a month, we were definitely noticing differences. Prior to treatment, he had so much obstruction in his mouth and near his airway, that the owner would actually hear him breathing two rooms away! The sounds of his labored breathing would actually wake her up at night!

About the time when he had improved so much, that his breathing could no longer be heard; I was contacted to speak at the Minnesota Companion Bird Association on holistic bird care. Emmett's case was fascinating, and I was so impressed that he "knew" to open his mouth to treat his papillomas – I wanted to present his case. And of course, being a "power point nerd", I wanted a picture of him opening his mouth to catch the oils. But, I knew that I only had a limited amount of time to get the picture, and would have to have one really great camera! I asked a friend of mine who is a professional videographer, if she would be willing to go to his home with me to capture some pictures or a video of his "to be famous" instincts.

Of course as an animal and oil lover, she said yes! We arrived at his house with cameras, video equipment, myself, my friend (a total stranger), and my two kids (then 7 and 4 years old). As any bird owner will tell you, not an ideal set up for a "demand performance". But Emmett obliged us. We sprayed him with the Frankincense and Copaiba spray, and he opened his mouth, bent down, and made sure to coat his mouth with the spray. He only did it for about 4 sprays, and then he was done. We thought we had gotten a picture of it, along with a little video. Hopefully we could freeze frame some of the video to get a decent picture, but we wouldn't know for sure until we got home to check it on the computer. We had been using a different spray for a few of the other birds in the



Emmett – Catching the Papilloma Spray in his mouth.

house; a preening spray made of 20 drops each of Lavender angustifolia, Lemon, and Orange oils in a 4 ounce spray bottle of distilled water. I got the bright idea that maybe if he was sprayed with something else, he would open his mouth again, and we could try for a few more pictures.

It was purely a selfish notion on my part. I wanted that picture. We had coordinated the trip, and driven out to see him. I didn't want it to turn out to be a waste of time. So, we got the other spray and were ready with the video camera. Well, as it turns out, he DID want to catch these oils as well. However, his reaction to this spray seemed quite different. He started to fluff out his

feathers, and bob his head. He seemed to perk up quite a bit more for this particular oil combination. It was kind of interesting to see, but we didn't think much of it at the time. When he was done "performing" we decided to take some pictures of the other birds for my lecture. There were many wonderful breeds of parrots in this household, so it was a perfect opportunity to get some nice pictures for my slides. We moved into a different room to view more birds. As a previous bird owner and avian veterinarian, I usually watch pretty closely what is going on around parrots. I have had to treat plenty of birds whose feet got bitten through another parrot's cage bars, my counters and doors have been chewed up by powerful parrot beaks, my clothing has been grabbed through cage bars adding "new button holes" to them, and my feet have been attacked by wandering parrots. Emmett's cage door had been left open, so I logged that into my head...warning....parrot on the loose....

Sure enough, about 5 minutes later, Emmett was out of his cage. I asked the owner, "Oh, Emmett is out of his cage, is that okay?" She said, "WHAT?!" Well, in bird speak, that means something bad, almost certainly! I immediately thought we better hit the deck or protect the valuable camera equipment. But, this was not the case. The owner proceeded to explain to us that Emmett had not left his cage in over 2 years!! And, it was not for lack of trying. The owner had left the cage door open for days on end. She did everything except drag him out of the cage, since his health was so frail – she didn't want to stress him.

What I hadn't known about Emmett, was the whole story about how he had come to live at this house. He was always a sickly parrot. He was actually born with papillomas, which were transmitted from his parents to him. As he grew up, he proceeded to be bounced around to a few homes, never quite finding the place for him. When it seemed that maybe he had found his forever home, tragedy occurred. His owner died right in front of him. And not only did he die, but he fell and lay at the foot of the cage for about 3 days before anyone found him. Even if you are not a bird person, one can comprehend how horrible this must have been for a bird with a similar mentation of a 4-5 year old child.

Poor Emmett proceeded to be bounced around to a few more homes after this tragic event. Finally, he ended up in his current home, which is where I met him. The current owner had been told, "Either you take him, or he is getting put to sleep". Emmett had been so depressed, but we always assumed it was due to his medical condition. We never put thought to his emotional state. But when we used the preening spray that contained Lavender known for calming and relaxing, Orange known for antidepressant-like activity, and Lemon which is also uplifting – Emmett's whole life changed. I am so fortunate that my patients

can teach me valuable life lessons. Caring for an animal's emotional state, can be just as important as caring for their physical state.

Emmett not only came out of his cage that day, but he started preening and dancing on the top of his cage. He started to play with toys again. But wait – you don't have to take my word for it!!! Remember, we had the cameras rolling. This amazing and beautiful footage can be viewed at www.Youtube.com ... just search for "Bird Video for Melissa" and this video will come right up for you! Fair warning...you may need a box of Kleenex.

Needless to say, we incorporated the preening spray into Emmett's daily life. We know realize, that the spray is so much more than a "Feather Picker Spray", or a "Preening Spray", or an "Anti-Depressant Spray". The Orange and Lemon oils also have great anti-tumoral properties. All essential oils have such a broad base of activity – we sometimes can't even imagine the benefits that one oil may contain. Likely, this basic spray mixture should just be called "All Around Bird Spray". We continued Emmett's treatments with both sprays, and he continued to improve, making huge strides every week.



Emmett – out of his cage for the first time in years!

Before treating his Papillomas with essential oils, Emmett couldn't talk or scream. The tumors were obstructing his ability to make even the normal noises that parrots make. After several months of treatment, he could now scream and talk. He actually can't be kept IN his cage!! Every time that cage door is open, he is out and playing. He is a completely different bird today. We incorporated several other essential oil therapies into his regime. Into his daily oatmeal, we added some Clove oil. I figured if we could coat the warts directly in the digestive tract, we would be doing even more good. Even with a full, undiluted drop added into a small amount of mush, he ate it right up. He even ate Oregano oil in his oatmeal or cream of wheat. It was amazing how readily he accepted all of the oil treatments – and with absolutely no ill effects. He only continued to improve and improve, with every addition we make. During his therapies we also continued to support him with Omega fatty acids, Digestive Enzymes, NingXia Red, and Sulfurzyme (MSM).

Emmett's story continues to evolve. We are not done treating him, and likely won't ever stop supporting his previously damaged immune system with essential oils. At the date of writing this – Emmett's papilloma - that was so obvious in his initial video – is completely gone. The hope that this gives to all birds suffering from Papilloma Virus – is jaw dropping. When I graduated from veterinary college, it was with a distinct interest in Avian Medicine and Surgery. I had planned to become the first Board Certified Avian Vet in Minnesota. However, I quickly became frustrated with the lack of results that traditional avian care offered my patients. Essential oils have renewed my hope in finding effective natural treatments for birds; for conditions that currently have no options.



Conure Chewing on a Flower – Getting Exposure to Essential Oils

Please remember – that I only recommend the use of Young Living Essential Oils for your human family and your animal family. With this recommendation, I am certain that you will have safe and powerful oils, with consistent results. I never have to guess at the quality of the oil that you have... If they are Young Living Oils, I know that they are medical grade, and I don't even have to question it.

Feel free to contact our office for more information on how to order Young Living Essential oils, or for consultations on how to use essential oils for the health of your entire family – two legged and four legged (and on our farm, sometimes three legged!).

“Mother Nature gave us the gift of healing. Providing our bodies with the nutrients, substances, and care required to heal, lies in our own actions.”

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