

Concussion

If you see a pigeon with concussion you would be forgiven if you thought - mistakenly - that it had broken its neck and that there was no hope for it. But they can make a partial recovery within 24 hours and a complete recovery in a matter of days!

In her booklet **Homeopathic Treatment for Birds**, Beryl M Chapman describes concussed birds as standing with the head hanging down between the legs, or as lying down with wings extended and with its head twisted or held against its neck. She also says that they can be found fluttering in circles with their legs dragging behind them. When I found a concussed wood pigeon she was lying on the ground, flapping ineffectually with her eyes closed. Her neck was limp.

It is important that a pigeon suffering from concussion is not out under a heat lamp or on a heat pad.

Because they have probably suffered a blow to the head they will have a bad headache and will need to be somewhere cool, quiet and dark to recover.

I placed the wood pigeon in a towel formed into a "donut" shape, so that her head was supported and the danger of food or liquid spilling from her crop and being accidentally inhaled (which would be fatal) was reduced. I was lucky to have Beryl M Chapman's book and some homeopathic remedies, so in accordance to the book's instructions I gave her Arnica 200, giving her one pillule, once an hour for three hours. After that I reduced to the 30th potency 4 times a day.

(Since then I have been informed that the main remedy for concussion is **Hypericum** which works best if given concurrently with **Arnica** (both together also work very effectively as a pain killer) . The 200 potency is necessary as the lower potencies would be ineffective. Both these should be kept in the home of bird rescuers as they are bound to be useful.)

I mixed up some rehydration solution (1/2 pint warm water, 1/2 tablespoon Glucose (or you can use honey, or sugar) and 1/2 teaspoon of salt. I dipped

her beak in the mixture without allowing the water to cover her nostrils and was surprised to find that even though she couldn't lift her head she could sip and swallow water. She drank eagerly.

Once I had established that she could swallow I gave her a single drop of Metacam that I had for the dog, placing it at the very front of her lower beak.

During the day I kept an eye on her, making certain that she was comfortable and that her head was propped up, dipping her beak in the rehydrating solution regularly. When I went to bed that night she was still unable to lift her head, but when I checked up on her at 2 am she was holding it in the normal position and I was able to offer her food (birdseed and defrosted peas) in a dish which I placed within easy reach of her beak. .

It took her a few days to recover her ability to stand, and then to walk and then to fly but within a week she was back to normal.