

Red Tailed Hawk: *Buteo Jamaicensis*

By Rosie Ray



Buteo jamaicensis,
red tailed hawk

Home is sky and wind: a mother and baby's story are interwoven in this bird-themed case, which responds to the red tailed hawk

A baby girl aged ten months, fair-haired and sturdy, walking with support, comes to see me. Although I have never seen her before, she immediately smiles at me, pointing things out and communicating. She is the most sociable, outgoing baby I have ever met. She is very inquisitive and communicative, an absolutely delightful child to be with – completely present, bright, no fear. She 'asked' to toddle over to me (supported by father) and then 'asked' me to pick her up. A smiler, she was absolutely enchanting. She is constantly pointing things out and making sounds, e.g. quack, woof, meow, and looking at me and beaming. She engages with both her parents, and me and makes you want to interact with her. She is all over the place, very active, but not in a disturbing way.

The mother is very fine-boned and slender, with fair hair, long enough to sit on. She is dressed all in black. She has a very gentle nature, is soft spoken, open and communicative. She has three gold rings in one ear.

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The mother says: She is waking three to four times a night, often midnight, 3.30 am, 5.30am. Only feeding pacifies her, or being in bed with us (but then she still wakes). She holds on to me tightly. If we put her in her cot, she cries, wants Mum. We're exhausted; we're not getting any sleep. She is very sociable, very bright, two months ahead of average development, very happy.

She likes yoghurt, fruit and vegetables. I'm trying to wean her, only giving her night feeds.

She needs stimulating; she is never still. She was very active during pregnancy, especially at night. It was a difficult pregnancy. I had morning sickness all the way through, and throughout labour. We weren't settled in a house; we were sleeping in someone's living room for the first two months of pregnancy, and then lived in a house that was not suitable. I couldn't eat; I lost weight. I had moments of panic, anxiety to be settled somewhere before she was born. I originally wanted to have her at home but decided against because the house wasn't suitable.

I've had herbal treatment for depression and hormones. I struggled for ten years since my teens before I sought help. For ten years, I would have very black periods of time. I had huge mood swings during pregnancy due to hormones, nowhere to live, nausea and sleeplessness.

In early pregnancy, I was terrified about whether the baby was ok. The first scan was a huge relief. After a while, I settled down, reassured that she was ok. I worried that she wasn't getting enough nutrients because I wasn't eating. In the later stages, I worried about the birth, how I would cope with the pain.

The past ten years, I've flitted here and there, always wanting to be settled. We would move and I could never relax because I knew we wouldn't stay. It was the most important thing to me that I had somewhere *settled*; somewhere I was happy and going to stay.

Dreams during pregnancy? I had two or three about giving birth to black and white kittens; I kept finding them all over the house, and made birds' nests for them to sleep in.

Feeling? Getting flustered, I couldn't gather them up into my arms; I kept losing them.

What is settled? Somewhere you can grow, have a family, and have a home instead of just somewhere to live. Security, not feeling like everything's going to be whisked away. It's not transient and temporary.

Grow means? Growing as a family, being able to grow creatively: music, art, and writing. Somewhere you can make the house an extension of you, make it your own place.

[The baby] likes big noisy toddler groups. She is scared of animals if startled by them, but is generally fearless. She is very brave, for example with her heel test and injections. She copes without me being there if she's with someone she knows. She's only clingy at night or when she's tired.

When she's teething she has red cheeks, late afternoon and evening. She gets upset and wants a feed.

Tell me more about settled? Secure and safe; happy in self; home.

What is home? It is countryside, sky, wind, high places, birds. A buzzard circling looks so peaceful and free.

What is home? Safe, permanent... This is going to sound weird, but it's countryside, sky, wind, high places, birds. A buzzard circling looks so peaceful and free. I have a thing about buzzards. There is a great spirituality about wilderness, mountains. High, wild places, ancestral, where you know you're rooted.

What is the opposite? Sky-rise blocks, noise, pollution, enclosure, being hemmed in and trapped, cut off from the natural world.

Tell about depression? It started in adolescence, age about 15 years. I had no confidence, felt guilt. My brother was going through a difficult time. I always found it hard to ask for help or accept help if it was offered. I kept it from my parents; I thought they had enough on their plate. I was angry with my brother for what he was putting our parents through.

Guilt? About anything and everything. I didn't want to take up anyone's time or bother anyone; plenty of other people were worse off. I would get into a really black pit that I couldn't climb out of. I had recurring dreams about impossible hills – trying to climb up, grassy but vertical, I was terrified because it was so steep that I would fall off. It was like a black pit, I was teetering on the edge: you know if you don't pull back you'll fall down there. I went to see a herbalist because I was terrified of having children, of having depression and inflicting it on them.



Baby's family medical history

- Maternal great aunt had schizophrenia
- Maternal uncle has been sectioned, possibly schizophrenia
- Maternal great-great-aunt died of stomach cancer
- Paternal cousin has Asperger's
- Paternal great-grandmother died of widespread cancer
- Paternal grandfather had cancer of oesophagus.

Analysis

On the basis of the mother's state during pregnancy, i.e. homeless, and the fact that home means sky, wind, high places, birds, being settled and the opposite is being trapped, hemmed in, enclosed, it seemed as though a bird remedy was called for. Spiritual awareness, freedom / feeling trapped are strong themes in bird remedies¹ and I've seen several cases where home, family, responsibility and duty are also important factors: specifically red tailed hawk (*Buteo jamaicensis*) and Andean condor (*Vultur gryphus*).

I considered buzzard (*Buteo buteo*), as the mother had directly mentioned this, but could find no information on it. There is a Hawk case in the Jonathan Shore book² in which the patient talks about loving to see hawks circling, and about "sucking sky". I decided to try red tailed hawk, *Buteo jamaicensis*.

Prescription: *Buteo jamaicensis* 30 - 2 doses 24 hours apart

April 2005, mother's report:

There has been a drastic improvement. Straight away she dropped the 3am feed. We decided to wean her and she has coped really well. She is now completely weaned. She slept right through, the night before last. It's gone down and down. Two or three nights, she was only up once. She is not so clingy; she clings to her bear at night instead of me. She is much more relaxed. A couple of times I heard her wake at night and by the time I got to her she'd fallen asleep again.

I thought the bedtime feed would be difficult to drop, but it wasn't. I just have to sit with her, put my hand on her shoulder. It is much easier to settle her – before I would have been up for an hour.

She is eating a lot more of everything, eating well, vegetables, pulses, and grains. She is playing better by herself, will sit and look at books by her self. I feel I can see ahead now. When I came I couldn't see any way out of it. [This is typical bird language].

The baby's grandmother was also there this time, so I asked her what her daughter was like when younger.

She would wake from 2am to 5am as a baby. She would have five-minute feeds and half-hour naps. She was also very advanced. She was a quiet and shy person, didn't like crowds of people as a child. She had whooping cough at four years' old and took six months to get well. She was intellectual. She wanted to stay close by me. She didn't like lots of noise or lots of people around. She was very creative and imaginative.

The baby is much more settled this time, happily entertaining herself, but still very communicative.

No prescription

June 2005, mother's report:

She had been sleeping well, but the last two weeks, since MMR jab, she has been getting worse

and worse. She has got anxious again, calling for mummy in the night.

She is hard to get back to sleep when she wakes at night; she has to have me with her. She is teething. She is 'mumsy' in the daytime, runs after me, and follows me around. She was confident before. She is fussing in the day – says 'eh, eh' and you don't know what she wants. She's usually very content.

[Baby is emptying the toy box and throwing the toys, not destructively, but not playing with them]. She gets really upset if anyone else goes in at night. She was a bit intimidated by toddler group, clinging to me, where before she would get stuck in. She is more irritable. Her concentration is poor. She sleeps solidly until midnight but will be awake for two to three hours after that.

[Baby wants to go outside, discontented] She'd be outside all the time if she could.

Prescription: *Buteo jamaicensis* 30, 2 doses 24 hours apart.

July 2005

She has been steadily improving; more relaxed, less irritable and clingy, content to amuse herself. She has slept though for the past four nights, woke briefly the night before that, and slept through for three nights before that.

No prescription.

I find treating children challenging, particularly young ones where there may be very little on which to prescribe, and they can't tell you what the matter is. What I've found to be very valuable is observation of the child, and taking the mother's case during pregnancy and birth. Of course, the mother can influence the baby, for example if she has had a particularly shocking experience. But equally the baby can influence the mother, in the form of unusual sensations, cravings or dreams.

Prescribing For Mother & Baby

Prescribing on mother's picture is something I do a lot with very young children, particularly where there is a paucity of characteristic symptoms. I have a high success rate with this approach. I prefer to see something in the child's state that echoes the mother's. For example, the case of a six-month-old baby brought with eczema: Much of the mother's story pointed clearly to *Carcinosin*, and what was striking in the baby was how passive and undemanding she was. Just after birth the mother was ill with bowel problems and would have to unlatch the baby when feeding her, to dash to the toilet. The baby would patiently wait until the mother was able to return to feeding her. I have never come across an infant like that! I prescribed *Carcinosin*. The eczema disappeared and the infant became brighter and livelier, more outgoing, with a sense of coming out. Sometimes a child may seem more like the father, but I have had far less success prescribing this way. I sometimes give the remedy to the mother, where the child is solely breastfed, but only where there is a clear understanding and agreement between us during the consultation that the mother would also benefit from treatment, and where I feel I have a complete enough case.

Rationale For Choice Of Remedy

I used my understanding of Sankaran's method of analysis by Kingdoms. The issue for the mother was about not having somewhere she could be settled (she used this word many times, in various contexts) and not having a home. When we explored the ideas of settled and home, she went to 'security' and 'safety' and 'creativity'. This is not an issue of the plant kingdom, which is one of sensation and sensitivity, how their environment affects them and their reactions to it (they tend to feel things strongly and over-react). It could at this point have been a mineral issue, which is concerned with structure. However, as we went deeper, she explained her feeling as one of being trapped/free, and where she felt 'at home' (i.e. safe and secure) was in high, wild places and she immediately and spontaneously made the connection with birds and buzzards. This was not, therefore, an issue with the structure of home. Animal issues are those of competition and survival, hierarchy and attractiveness, victim and aggressor, although these themes can apparently be much subtler in the bird kingdom than in other animal remedies (e.g. snakes) and were not strong in the mother. However, discounting plant and mineral kingdoms left me with animals and the issue of being trapped / free. I made the connection to bird remedies because the mother herself took me there.

Jonathan Shore says of bird remedies in general:

A strong sense of spirituality is often present in the case.... This search for spirituality is a unifying expression of many bird characteristics; including the need for freedom... They are by nature family-oriented, caring, protective and helpful. Relative to humans, birds have a very light bone structure... Although diathesis finds its place only among the confirmatory symptoms and should not be used to exclude a remedy, there are classical features that appear in archetypal cases... People are fine-featured, delicate, light-boned. Strong desire for open air.

I found these characteristics in the case and they encouraged me to try a bird remedy. I have seen cured bird cases where creativity, particularly in music, was a strong concern, and hawk cases where home and being in nature was a strong issue.

Jonathan Shore says of hawk: *They feel a very strong sense of responsibility to family. More than a duty, they naturally want to care for and support members of their families. This tends to be in a material way, not so much spiritual. They have a great desire for freedom and being carefree. They are unable to be carefree because they feel a strong sense of responsibility... The emphasis is on individual rather than group relations, coupled with the strong yearning for freedom. The hawk is a strong individual, always having to struggle between following their personal will versus taking care of dependents. This characteristic seemed to me to emerge in the mother as needing a home for her family (responsibility), which also gave her freedom (mountains, wild places, wind).*

References

Birds: *Homeopathic Remedies from the Avian Realm*, By Jonathan Shore, MD, Judy Schriebman and Anneke Hogeland, Homeopathy West 2004

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