

Great Blue Heron, *Ardea Herodias*

By Jonathan Shore



Great Blue Heron	
<i>Ardea herodias</i> (Ard-h)	
Order:	Ciconiiformes
Family:	Ardeidae
Genus:	<i>Ardea</i>
Species:	<i>Herodias</i>

A remedy of individuality and detachment: it is completely self-contained. The blue heron follows its instinctive path, disregarding what is common usage or habit, or what others think

The information in this article is abstracted from the book, *Birds - Homeopathic Remedies from the Avian Realm*, and has been edited down to emphasise the more central features of the remedy. This is especially true of the proving information below, as partial data from only two provers has been included. Thus it may be helpful to give some background information about the proving methodology itself. This should be prefaced by the author's opinion that a proving, no matter how carefully conducted, is only the first of three stages in the development of a remedy image. The second stage is the verification of the proving data in clinical experience, whilst the third is the addition of data derived from clinical experience alone (cured symptoms). The initial steps of the second stage have been taken, as an excellent action of the remedy has been documented in a case of autism (yet to be published).

Hahnemann Laboratories provided a mortar and pestle, scales and pre-weighed quantities of *sac lac*. The feather was finely cut, weighed and added to a corresponding weight of *Sac lac* and ground a few times so as to be unrecognisable to the participants. Seven people participated in the trituration of the remedy: five women and two men, ranging from ages of 20 to 55 years' old. The feather came from a blue heron rookery in the San Juan Islands of Washington state.

The provers sat around a table, with each one taking turns triturating for two to three minutes, before passing the mortar to the next person. After seven minutes of grinding, the contents of the bowl were scraped for three minutes, as directed in *The Organon*. At the end of 30 minutes of trituration, a gram of the triturate was removed and mixed with an additional 99 grams of *Sac lac*. This process was repeated three times to arrive at a 3c potency.

Food was provided, and the provers were free to talk, eat, move around the room or go outside. The only instruction given was to take notes of any symptoms experienced, delineated according to each trituration level. One participant was given

the task of keeping time, and another was responsible for entering into a computer both the thread of the general conversation and the details. The process was also videotaped.

At the end of each level of trituration, provers related their experience. The triturate was sent to Hahnemann Laboratories, which then ran it up to a 30c. This potency was provided to each participant who could take it or not, in as many doses as they wished, depending on how they felt. The group met again some 10 - 14 days later. There was one identified supervisor who was in contact with each of the participants, to gather notes and especially to ensure that no one was without support during this time. At this second meeting each prover gave an account of their experience, followed by a discussion of what the remedy might be. The journals were collected and later typed up for further review.

Core Idea: Detachment and Independence

All provers experienced detachment, from friends and family as well as the rest of the world. They did not classify this as negative. They wanted and needed the freedom to go their own way and felt a great inner calm if allowed to do so. They were protective of their own ideas about achieving a task and became frustrated and irritable if hindered. They disregarded what others might think of them and did not feel the need to communicate; they just knew and acted. Although provers had pages and pages of notes describing their experiences, when asked what changes they had experienced, they answered with "not much." They do not monitor the environment to know what needs to be done, rather they initiate and act from intuition and inner direction; they are completely self-contained.

KEY ASPECTS

Connection Versus Detachment

The provers experienced both connection and detachment. By far the majority of experiences were in the realm of detachment, separation and isolation.

Individuality And Independence

The heron follows its instinctive path, disregarding what is common usage or habit, or what others think.

Goal-Oriented Focus, Patience, Waiting

Provers had no problem waiting to get what they needed. They focused on the goal, disregarding hurdles. The great blue heron is very patient when fishing or hunting.

Numerous provers experienced what was referred to as "waiting" in a patient self – possessed way. These experiences were in various situations such as dreams, traffic and social situations. One prover was waiting to hear about a job he had applied for and was very excited about. He found himself extremely tolerant of the waiting period.

Calm Versus Emotional Overwhelm

All provers experienced an emotional calmness in their everyday lives. There were also numerous references to a state of euphoria.

Something Hidden/Activity Below The Surface

Some provers had the feeling of something hidden deep inside them, of something being missed.

"Like one of those deep undercurrent things that you did not see was coming, but then when it comes you say: 'I've been working on that for a week.' It was all very clear when it exploded, but it was like I had no warning, it did not relate to my life."

"I have the feeling I am missing something, like something going on, sort of under the surface and I am not in that place to contact it."

Seeing Versus Not Being Seen

"I parked right in the middle of the driveway, and still felt stealth, and felt I would not be seen."

"I could sneak out and sure enough, they were right there, but I got out without them seeing me."

"She could not see me and I could see her."

"It was his studio, in the house. He had been living with us for five years, but I'd never seen him or his rooms."

"We moved down to the front, to a private area where we could see dancers and performers no one else could see."

Head And Neck

"Constriction in the throat, tight, hard to swallow."

"Heat rising up to face and neck."

"Sound awareness, breezes, computer clicks, wind in the trees."

PROMINENT RUBRICS

Note: Rubrics marked with an * indicate suggested new rubrics.

MIND

Absorbed; buried in thought, general

*Alone; sensation of being alone

Colors; desire for, green

Company; aversion to, agg.; solitude, fond of

Delusions, imaginations; abused, being

Delusions, imaginations; body, body parts; enlarged

Delusions, imaginations; body, body parts; expanded is

Delusions, imaginations; suffocated, she will be

Delusions, imaginations; watched, that she is being

Dreams; affectionate

Dreams; animals, of; cats, felines

Dreams; indecent behavior of men and women

Dreams; lewd, lascivious, voluptuous

Expectation, sensation of

Fear; general; suffocation, of

Fear; general; opinion of others, of

Handle things anymore, cannot, overwhelmed by stress

Industrious, mania for work

Introspection

Irritability; general

Irritability; general; driving a car, while

Patience

Rage, fury

Rage, fury; paroxysmal

Rage, fury; uncontrollable, can scarcely be restrained

Sensitive, oversensitive; general; certain persons, to

Separate, feels

Suicidal disposition

Talk, talking, talks; indisposed to, desire to be silent, taciturn

EYES

Heat, general

Inflammation; lids, blepharitis

Pain; burning, smarting, biting

Pain; stinging

Lachrymation; constant

Tears; acrid

Tears; salty

VISION

Field of vision; sees objects beside

Large; field of vision

TEETH

*Rubbery, sensation of

*Folded in, on themselves, sensation of

Displaced, as if

Location of teeth has changed, as if

THROAT

Choking, constricting

Constriction; uvula

Constriction; tonsils

Constriction; throat-pit

Pain; sore, bruised

MALE

Sexual; desire; increased

Sexual; desire; excitement of, easy

Erections, troublesome; strong, morning

BLADDER

*Urination; dysuria, erection with

Urination; incomplete; obliged to urinate five or six times before the bladder is empty

Almost a fear of judgment, almost like: you can look and see all the details, but don't look, just dream back, don't see. Kind of dreamy state. I wouldn't call it detachment, but floating, just floating out of it.

GENERALITIES

Clumsiness, unwieldiness
 Food and drinks; fish; desires
 Food and drinks; nuts, desires
 Food and drinks; olives, olive oil; desires; olive oil
 Food and drinks; spices, condiments, piquant, highly seasoned food; desires
 Food and drinks; vegetables; aversion
 Heat; extending; upward

Wrap-Up Conversation After Triturations

Prover # 3

Yesterday I was with my family; they were playing golf, I don't play. But I played. My eyes focused in a strange way on the orange ball. I was aware that the focus went in and out of this ball. I was so calm and so relaxed. **I sent the ball to the green every time.** I was playing with two men who are wonderful golfers and their play fell apart watching me. I didn't care, I never got frustrated, never got upset, watched them fall apart, I kept focusing on the ball.

I woke up last night around 5 o'clock, **my eyes were burning so badly** I thought I must be sick; it hurt so much I could hardly go back to sleep. When I got here tonight I was aware that my perspective on things was moving way out, back and above and I was **becoming some kind of an observer.** I experienced falling into details, music, shine of an apple, all these facets. I was aware of all of them individually without blending in together. **I had heat in my body.** I had a sense of my emotional body vibrating in some kind of expectation, especially while pressing the powder.

Trituration 1:

I had a real sense of this vibration I was into experiencing. It had not been able to fully express itself in this dimension. There was **this quality it had, this vibration to all of us that was not able**

to be expressed, to be accepted. I had a sensation of tearing (eyes), yawning, wetness, something happening to my thymus, thyroid gland. My breathing deepened, I was not pressing to breathe deeply, but I was **breathing more**

and more deeply, taking longer and longer breaths. I really experienced my breath. I had a tightness in my solar plexus at the beginning that cleared. I had this **stiffening at the back of my neck to my scapulae.** It felt like an **all over allergic reaction** to something. I was continuing to yawn.

Trituration 2:

I had a sensation of being watched, even hunted; I wanted to get away, to leave. I wasn't feeling frightened, I just didn't want to be here anymore. I wanted to leave. I was kind of aware of some kind of energy to do with rules, expectations, even perfection; it wasn't moving. There was a 'something' that was beautiful, but the energy itself was not moving. I felt suffocated in my body, I wanted to get away and I **felt unable to express myself.** Again: sounds.

Totally in my head. **My eyes are burning, vision spread out.** Static feeling, temporal pressure, shoulders, a lot of burning, tensions into the kidneys. Yawning, start to release. **Deep breathing, feeling of pulling air into the body** to keep myself here. A lot of **burning in the eyes, a lot of heat** there.

Trituration 3:

I was totally aware that my eyes were still not focusing. I had that **panoramic vision,** an awareness about that. Dullness in my head, experiencing that I was unable to take any thought; that dullness which is like a curtain had fallen, I was just watching everything at that table, and it was very funny for me. I had more tingling in my fingers, and a sense of just wanting to get out and away. There was a heaviness present in my body that I was aware of. I mentioned the hiding, that strong sense of this not being expressed, this vibration. I again had this strong sense of expectations, judgment about not being able to speak, express this vibration out. I did not really have a strong sense of my body, of isolation. I couldn't feel the judgments, I wasn't in the pain, I floated out of it. I did not really have a strong sense of isolation in my body. I could see the isolation, I could just see it; my body was kind of numb. I was aware of the isolation, vibration, but my body was numb to it, floating. It almost felt like I was on drugs.

Jonathan: The issue of *absinthe* was raised. This was no accident; I felt it very much.

Hiding, this is an energy that I call hiding. It is oppressive. Everyone is just sitting, looking around, quietly engaging, eating, like a family dinner, a gathering, a group of people not having seen each other or have seen each other. There are a lot of things going on in the room. **People talk about or below it, but no one is talking to it.** What is going on, what is happening in your body, what is your body feeling? It is uncomfortable.

Prover # 7

Trituration 1:

Felt excited, joyful, mood uplifted, more energy, more awake. **Body temperature rose,** awareness of heart, lungs, throat; euphoric sensation, energy coming up the legs. **Lost focus easily, scattered,** became dreamy, pressure on eyes. **Wanted to start flying.**

Trituration 2:

More dreamy. Vision of ocean and nature, euphoric, spacey and quiet.

Trituration 3:

Tired, memory got short, **vision wider**, pressure on skull, pain in the eardrum, awareness was above me, withdrawn, sensation of being alone, heart beat faster, sadness, **separation from the group, burning eyes**, calm. I have the feeling that I am way up here (shows up), and a part of me is feeling what is here. Something up in the sky. I look around up there, vision of the sky, vision of the ocean. Sensation that this creature got separated from his group.

Follow-Up Sessions Two Weeks Later

Prover #7

I was very sensitive through all of it. I was not insensitive to other people, but I actually became more detached from other people than I usually am. Especially from people that I actually have very strong attachments to, I became detached in a very nice way. I just became more sensitive to myself and my own emotions. I have had a lot of releases in my body and on a spiritual level. I was very emotional the whole time; it was very consistent. I did not have a lot of energy and my body was tired. With the changes that were happening in my body, I was tired the whole time. I had a lot of body pain, but I was very emotional and that was great, that was really interesting. A lot of my dreams were emotional; a couple of dreams I was angry and yelled at people I had wanted to yell at, which was great. My eyes have been sensitive the whole time. My appetite has been very awkward, I can't handle a lot of food; I had to have small amounts of food. I didn't want to eat fruit, and usually I eat a lot of fruit. I am a smoker and I didn't want to smoke or only in very small amounts. It totally changed for me.

My emotions are stronger or maybe I was more in them than I usually am. Call it anger, not that I was sad; emotions I can't describe, probably **emotions in my body that I don't have a name for, not in my mind**, but it was a really great angry state and I was in a dream and **I did not care how senseless it was**. It was me. I was in the dream space; **I got to do wild things that would maybe not be ok in my dreams**. Usually everything is ok in your dreams, but I got to try some raucous things that I wouldn't say on the tape. The anger part was good. *Jonathan: The wild stuff had to do with criminal activities, sexual activities, torturing?* (Laughs....) I do have to say it was **exploring emotions inside of me that were taboo**. I do not have anything else to say because I got real sick.

I got very sick with a temperature. I felt awful; I had a high temperature and could barely move. *Jonathan: This actually began before we met?* Yes, but I think it had to do with what we are doing here; I just started it before I came. *Jonathan: What makes you think it has to do with what we are doing?* Because I look at it and that's what I see. I know what is going on with me and I know why.

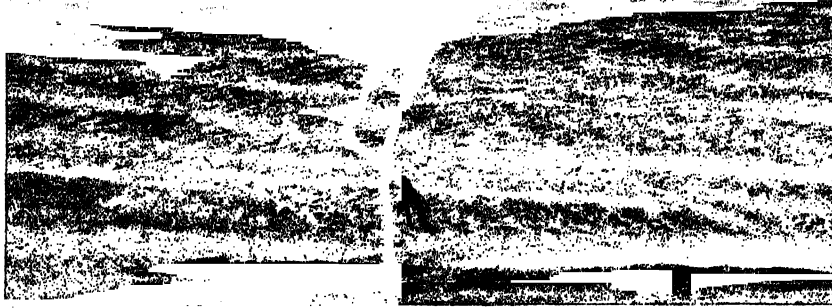
Prover #3

Well, I'm trying to put together the week, some interesting things. I lost my purse the day before the proving and it had both

of my watches in it. I went to buy another watch and just couldn't buy it. Which has made me late or early for a lot of things. I actually experienced a lot of emotions. A spaciness; **detached to schedule** is what I would call it. I did go through a period of hopelessness on the Friday after being here. If you would have asked me I wouldn't have been able to find any reason to stay in this hideous world. That's just the way I saw it. **There was nothing worth sticking around for. I was left alone**. Everyone was gone from the house for a few days, except for my cat. She bugged me no end. Screaming at me, waking me up at 5am. In my face. So I threw her out. I had some **violent bursts of anger**. I told M (fellow prover) I was struggling with my toothpaste. It just wouldn't come out. I just screamed and threw it into the garbage, cursed it. That kind of thing. Where did that come from? So I've had some of those, and I've had a general sense of overwhelm. **I've preferred to be alone**. I haven't really solicited any kind of contact in my life. I've just been very happy doing the kind of things that I do. It became very important for me to simplify my life. I just didn't want a lot of business. At one point I decided to move from where I was living. I just did not want to be there anymore. So I threw out a lot of things. I don't have many things, and I packed them into boxes, so I could quickly do anything I wanted.

I was talking to some people today about what I was observing. My observation today made at least 4 or 5 people burst into tears. The thing that I'm most aware of is this coming together of where I dream and where I go into my imagination and would just call it an energy there that has been controlling me. Out of my body and the energy has been coming into my body and exhausting my body. I haven't been able to make a separation between—I haven't been able to protect or detach my body from what's happening in my dreams. Now I know why I'd been feeling exhausted. I've been experiencing some nausea but mostly what I've had is intense tiredness, and so I've been in my detachment of people. Which is not totally about them. I care. I'm just not getting drawn in. It's like I'm a witness and I just tell them what's happening and then I have this response, and in a way I'm doing that for myself, so I'm able to create it out here and it's profound. So whatever it is that is controlling me, it is very old and deep, and it's not from this life at all, and it's on the planet. It's very here! For me it has an almost Tibetan, Buddhist, ethnic quality to it and that information has been more important than mine.

Today I was walking by a market and there was something that said just walk over there. So I walked over and there was this little thing that said something about a woman and an **autistic child**. I've always been interested in autism. I don't actually see it like other people do. I see it as something like Alzheimer's, as something some beings do when they don't want to participate. **They actually detach**. I ripped off this information, and went home and called the woman and talked with her for a while. She said: "My daughter is coming along, but there are students and kids out there that aren't making it." I thought oh, I can easily communicate with these kids. I just heard myself say this and said, "Give me the worst ones you have." Gave them my number and hung up, and thought, where did that come from? That's it for examples of what's happened. I seem to have found this place within myself that is calm and isn't concerned with what people think, and feel very much; like it wants to express itself, but it's not pushy. I'm not on a cause to save the world at all.



Blue heron landing at the shore line

CONDITIONS TO CONSIDER

Autism: In many bird provings issues of working with autistic, retarded, handicapped or abused children arose. Consider bird remedies if you see a strong focus in this area.

Hay fever/Allergies

Natural History

Hérons and their ancestors have been around for between 40 and 70 million years. The great blue heron is native to North America and Canada, migrating from Alaska in summer to Central and South America in the winter months. This lean, long-legged bird is the largest water bird in North America. The males are indistinguishable from the females, except for being slightly larger. Herons can be found in a variety of habitats, such as edges of saltwater bays and estuaries, lakes and ponds, freshwater rivers and small streams, marshes, meadows and at times dry, upland fields where they engage in catching small rodents. They stand like silent sentinels, gazing into the water in search of food. They are solitary birds during the day when they hunt, but they live together in a 'family' in the rookery at day's end.

They stab their prey with their rapier bills and then struggle to swallow their catch.

The long beak serves multiple functions. Not only does it spear and gather food, it is also a vicious weapon and nest-building tool, and is crucial for grooming. While fish are the primary food, herons are truly omnivorous, eating almost anything that will fit in their gullets. One of the threats to herons is the problem of trying to swallow something too large and choking to death. The heron does not like eating living food and will play with the catch until it dies.

Hérons have long legs and can get into some deeper water than most, perhaps four feet. When it

hunts, it moves very, very slowly if it moves at all. It is like someone has put the bird into slow motion, frame by frame. And at all times, the bird is in **balance** and harmony. When it walks, it very slowly pulls its foot up and out of the water. As it places its foot down in the mud of the bottom of the creek, river or lake, it *never* stirs up the mud.

The great blue will 'freeze' when a victim swims by. Even in mid-stride, one leg up, and balancing only the other, it never loses its balance.

With a minimal body weight of 5 - 8 lb., a six- to seven-foot wingspan, an 18-inch neck and a lanky 4ft frame, they are physically perfect for long distance flight. They fly about 25 miles an hour. Their enormous wingspan seems too big for their skinny bodies, but is perfect for the long distances they cover.

Their wing movement is unusual. When you watch a great blue fly you will immediately notice it never unfurls or uplifts its wings like an eagle, condor or buzzard will do. Because they never **extend** or **stretch** out the full length of their wings, they chug along in the sky like an overweight boxer that needs to lose 50lb before the match. If they don't keep pumping those wings, they will drop like a rock! They never soar and they can't glide.

Great blues will migrate when necessary from north to south and back. However, whenever possible, they will stay put, even when temperatures dip around 20 degrees in the winter, and prefer to hang around in their "summer headquarters" instead of flying south. Great blues are wary. They have acute hearing and their eyesight is excellent. At the slightest different sound, they bolt into the air.

At the rookery, just as night falls, they chatter and squawk a lot. Otherwise they are silent all day long. You never hear a great blue chattering when in the water.

Hérons nest in large colonies, called rookeries. The nesting trees are repeatedly used throughout dozens of generations of birds. They become so coated with guano over the years that they turn nearly luminescent, white and leafless. The nests can be 4ft wide and several feet deep, with a soft bed of moss inside.

Great blues live approximately 20 years. A hundred years ago they nearly became extinct when the plumage of these birds became a popular fashion for hats. Estimates are that as many as 20 million birds were sacrificed for this fashion. The British Royal Society for the Protection of Birds and the US Audubon Society were formed specifically as a result of the movement to stop the slaughter of herons.

References

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