Congratulations Dr. Miguel Saggese for your oral presentation that included you as co-author which was recently offered by Dr. Pablo Regner at the First Biennial Meeting of the Latin American Wildlife Diseases Association. This meeting took place at the Faculty of Veterinary Medicine of the University of São Paulo, at São Paulo, Brazil, from 19 to 22 of September.

Neutralización de actividades tóxicas de veneno de Bothrops alternatus por plasma de Harpyhaliaetus coronatus (Solitary Crowned Eagles’ (Harpyhalieatus coronatus) Plasma Neutralizes Pit Viper (Bothrops alternatus) Venom)

by

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Dr. Saggese also conducted biomedical studies on the Endangered Solitary Crowned Eagles (Harpyhaliaetus coronatus) since 2007 and has always hypothesized that this species, which includes venomous snakes in its diet, could have anti-venom protective mechanisms in their plasma, as some other species of snake eating mammals have. A few years ago, he contacted colleagues from the Laboratory of Toxinopatology at Facultad de Medicina, Universidad de Buenos Aires, where this hypothesis was tested confronting eagles plasma against Pit viper (Bothrops alternatus) venom. Dr Regner presented results of this collaborative study that confirms Solitary Crowned Eagle’s plasma has a series of components capable of neutralizing different toxic fractions of pit viper’s venom by inhibiting in vitro several enzymes and toxins in a dose-dependent form. Further research is ongoing aimed to isolate and characterize the specific protein fractions present in the Solitary Crowned Eagle’s plasma. Combined with mechanical barriers on the Eagle’s leg skin hunting behavior, the presence of anti-venom neutralizing fractions in plasma may confer the Solitary Crowned Eagle with an ecological advantage that may allow them to feed safely on venomous snakes.

This the first time this property of eagles’ plasma was reported. A short communication about it is already in progress. This study was possible thanks to the support of the College of Veterinary Medicine - Western University of Health Sciences, Park Rangers at Telteca Wildlife Refuge, Schubot Exotic Bird Health Center, Texas A&M University, CECARA, Universidad de Mar del Plata, PCRAR -Fundación Bioandina and Facultad de Medicina, Universidad de Buenos Aires.