A song of note.

How marvellous to be woken in the morning with bird song, and the first to greet the sun in Johannesburg is the Cape Robin (Cossypha caffra) with its lilting whistle, perhaps not as versatile as the Chorister (Cossypha dichroa), nor indeed the Whitethroated Robin (Cossypha humeralis), but nevertheless a welcome melody at the break of day. Endeavours to reproduce the song of the Cape Robin result in a mixed reaction, it is quite possible to discern incredulity in the quizzical gaze the bird directs at this impertinent and inept mimic, and then the feeble attempt to match the genius of birdsong is tossed aside with an outpouring of magnificent calls.

I am sure that has been the experience of all fortunate enough to reside in leafy gardens in Johannesburg!

Why is it that the human larynx, capable of such versatile accomplishments as the top C, the marvellous contralto, the rumble of the lower bass, the wondrous tenors, the capacity to shout from hilltop to hilltop, ranging to the merest whisper, how then that the birds outdo us in ability to sing?

In a word, it is the SYRINX (Greek for Pan pipes), birds have this vocal organ located at the base of the trachea, just above the bronchial openings. That immediately offers an advantage for the bird may use one, the other, or both bronchi. The openings may be unilaterally controlled and altered and some birds are so expert that they can in this way produce two notes at the same time! A trick called lateralisation. But the main anatomical feature contributing to song are the membranes surrounding the syrinx. The bird uses these flexible membranes in a manner similar to the human vocal chords. The tensions and shape of the membranes, termed membrana tympaniformis, are altered by a series of associated muscles. In the true artistes of bird song there may be five to nine sets of muscles lateralisation. But the main anatomical feature contributing to song are the membranes surrounding the syrinx. The bird uses these flexible membranes in a manner similar to the human vocal chords. The tensions and shape of the membranes, termed membrana tympaniformis, are altered by a series of associated muscles. In the true artistes of bird song there may be five to nine sets of muscles. The bird uses these flexible membranes in a manner similar to the human vocal chords. The tensions and shape of the membranes, termed membrana tympaniformis, are altered by a series of associated muscles. In the true artistes of bird song there may be five to nine sets of muscles.

How punctilious is the discipline in meticulously investigating the commonly practised cleansing of endodontic files. A postulate has been that the presence of a heavy dentition in the head of a flying creature may have caused unwieldy aerodynamics. Accepting that avian song is not limited by a lack of a dentition, explore why indeed teeth have been lost. A postulate has been that the presence of a heavy dentition in the head of a flying creature may have caused unwieldy aerodynamics. Accepting that avian song is not limited by a lack of a dentition, explore why indeed teeth have been lost. A postulate has been that the presence of a heavy dentition in the head of a flying creature may have caused unwieldy aerodynamics.

Humans have limited pharyngeal openings, and they have teeth. And there certainly have been times when those teeth have contributed directly to songs, but songs of agony, especially when a root canal is infected and swollen and, sore, very sore! Recent issues of the Journal have included papers on Endodontics and this issue actually carries two articles dealing with different aspects of the discipline. It is indicative of the advances made in this demanding treatment modality that explicit research is being carried out and that there is genuine excitement at the enhanced opportunities to resolve challenging problems. The papers present an unusual divergence, for most positive clinical excellence is evident, vide the new material Biodentine and the efficacy of treatment of a double rooted canine, whilst a very practical problem is unveiled in the inefficiency of much of the commonly practised cleansing of endodontic files. How punctilious is the discipline in meticulously investigating every aspect, positive or critical. That that example is carried through in all aspects of Dentistry will have been evidenced by the papers presented at the 2018 Congress of the Dental Association of South Africa. Progress can be made only if the errors as well as the successes are recognised. We can then, despite the limitations of our vocal chords, sing the praises of our profession!

Bibliography


Bill Evans: Managing editor, E-mail:bill.evans@wits.ac.za