

July 2023

Region 8 Zoonosis Control Newsletter



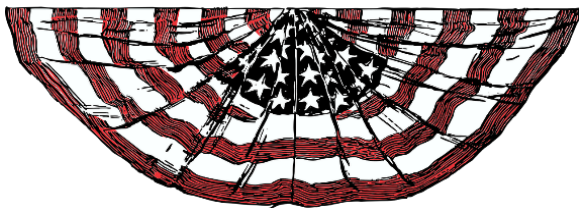
Public Health Region 8 | Zoonosis Control

Texas Department of State Health Services

dshs.texas.gov/region8/zoonosis | Region8.Zoonosis@dshs.texas.gov

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Summertime Sizzle

By: Amanda Kieffer

Welcome to the latest edition of the Region 8 Zoonosis Control Program Newsletter! It's officially summer, which means we are faced with the challenges of hurricane season, pesky mosquitoes, and soaring temperatures. In this edition, we will discuss hurricane preparedness and how to safeguard animals during emergencies. We also provide information on the recent locally acquired malaria cases and what you can do to prevent mosquito borne diseases. As summer temperatures rise, we remind you to keep your animals cool and protected and learn how to recognize signs of heat exposure. Wishing you a safe and enjoyable summer season filled with cool vibes and festive celebrations.

Zoonosis News

Locally Acquired Malaria

On June 23rd, DSHS issued a [health alert](#) identifying a case of malaria diagnosed in Texas in a resident with no travel history. Check out the malaria article on Page 5 for more information on this case and the public health significance.

Skunk Rabies on the Rise

Region 8 has seen an increase in skunk rabies cases this season. To date, we have had 17 cases of rabies in skunks this year, compared to a total of 5 cases in 2022. The majority of cases have been in the Golden Crescent Region, particularly Victoria and Lavaca Counties. Animal Control and Local Rabies Control Authorities should remind residents to avoid contact with wildlife and keep their domestic pets vaccinated.



The Zoonosis Control Team
2023 DIN, San Antonio

*Thank you to Veronica Suarez
from Region 9/10 for the photo!*

For more information, visit: <https://www.dshs.texas.gov/rabies>



Rabies Update

By: Jon Stewart

Annual Rabies Update: April – June 2023

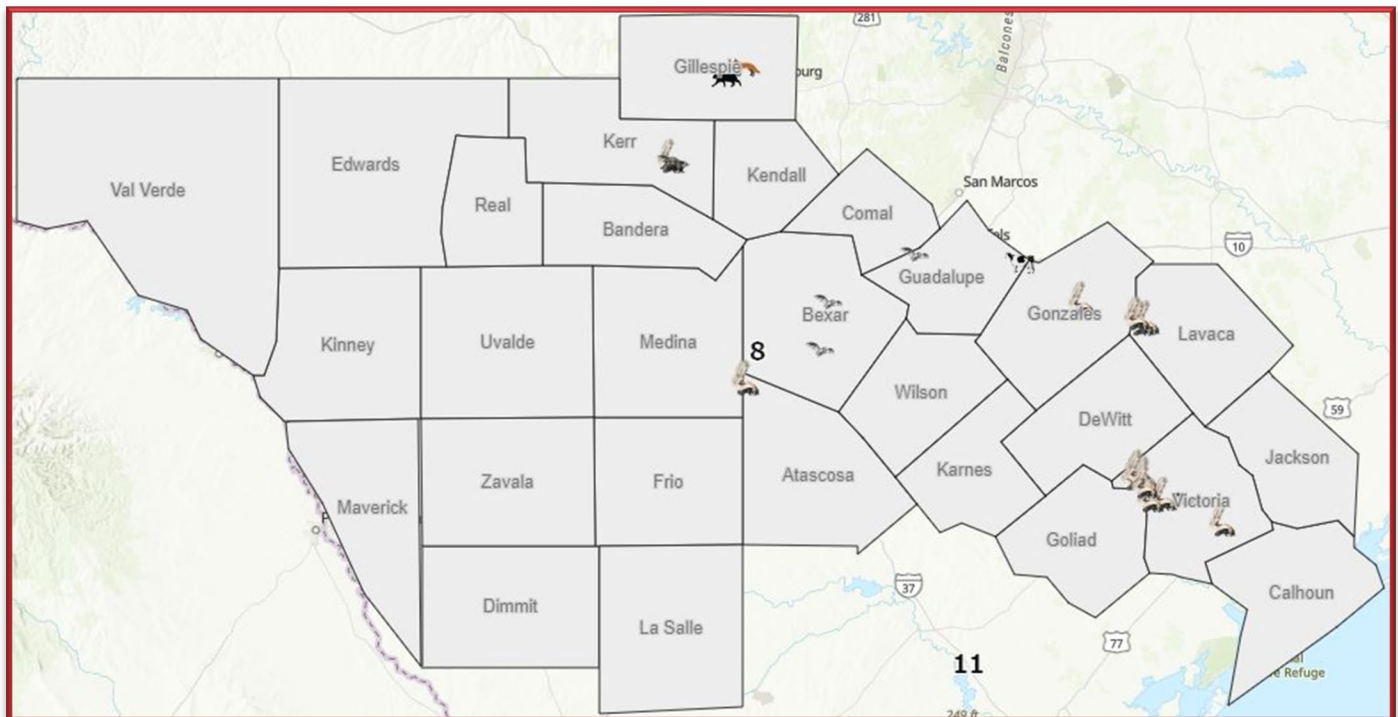
Between January and June of 2023, skunks made up 63% of the positive rabies reports, followed by bats (22%). Then there was only one cat (3%), one fox (3%), one raccoon (3%), and one bovine (3%).

2023 Rabies Cases in Animals, Region 8 January 1, 2023 – June 30, 2023

	Bat	Cat	Dog	Skunk	Raccoon	Fox	Other	All
Atascosa				2				2
Bexar	3							3
Gillespie		1				1		2
Gonzales				1				1
Guadalupe	1						1 ^A	2
Kerr	1			1	1			3
Lavaca				3				3
Victoria	1			10				11
Totals	6	1	0	17	1	1	1	27

^A – Bovine

Positive Animal Rabies Cases, Public Health Region 8, January 1-June 30, 2023



Human Notifiable Zoonoses

By: Jon Stewart

Reportable Zoonotic Disease Cases in Humans, Region 8* January 1, 2023 – June 30, 2023

Condition	Confirmed	Probable	Suspect	Total
Anaplasma phagocytophilum	1			1
Malaria ⁺	1			1
Q Fever	1			1
Spotted Fever Rickettsiosis Group		1		1
Typhus, flea-borne (<i>endemic, murine</i>)		11		12
Total	3	11	0	16

* DSHS case counts may differ from those reported by local jurisdictions as DSHS does not report cases until epidemiological investigations are complete.

+ Case counts from these conditions include travel-related associated infections acquired outside of Texas or outside of the United States by residents of PHR8.





Disaster & Hurricane Preparedness

By: Amanda Kieffer

Hurricane Season spans from June 1st to November 30th. Do you have a disaster response plan in place for your facility? Below are some recommendations for keeping you and the animals in your care safe.

1. Identify Shelter Sites & Evacuation Routes

Know where temporary shelters will be established if you have to evacuate. A good place to start is with your local Emergency Management Office. Develop mutual agreements with other groups and shelters in your community in the event of emergency or evacuation.

Potential Temporary Shelter Sites:

- ✓ Larger Animal Shelters and/or Veterinary Clinics
- ✓ Livestock and/or Stable Facilities
- ✓ County Fairgrounds

2. Write a Disaster Plan

Know what to anticipate before it happens.

Considerations:

- ✓ Who to contact in an emergency
- ✓ Emergency exit and evacuation plan
- ✓ Shelter-in-place plan
- ✓ Communication backup for network outages
- ✓ Relocation & transportation plan for animals
- ✓ Alternate power sources
- ✓ Hazardous materials and controlled drugs storage
- ✓ Decontamination and disposal
- ✓ Record keeping of animals in your care



3. Create A Disaster Supply Kit

Create a storage area or trailer with a disaster supply kit section. Consider what you would need for evacuation or sheltering in place.

Disaster Supply Kit Examples:

- ✓ Muzzles, leashes, poles
- ✓ Disinfectants, paper towels, trash bags
- ✓ First aid kits (human and animal)
- ✓ Towels, litter, shredded paper
- ✓ Generator, flashlights, microchip scanner
- ✓ Radios, walkie talkies, batteries
- ✓ Non-perishable food and water



Visit the following websites for more ideas and sample disaster plans:

- <https://www.avma.org/resources-tools/animal-health-and-welfare/disaster-preparedness>
- <https://www.aspcapro.org/resource/sample-plans-evacuation-and-sheltering>
- <https://www.ready.gov/pets>



Locally Acquired Malaria

By: Jon Stewart

Recently, there have been five cases of locally acquired malaria in Texas and Florida, marking the first time the disease has been transmitted within the US in 20 years. Malaria is a serious and potentially fatal disease transmitted through the bite of an infective female anopheline mosquito. Texas averages more than 120 travel-related malaria cases a year but the last locally acquired case in Texas occurred in 1994.

The symptoms of malaria include fever, chills, headache, myalgias, fatigue, nausea, vomiting, and diarrhea may also occur. Symptom onset typically begins 10 days to 4 weeks after infection

If not treated promptly, malaria may progress to severe disease, a life-threatening stage, in which mental status changes, seizures, renal failure, acute respiratory distress syndrome, and coma may occur.

Patients suspected of having malaria should be urgently evaluated in a facility that is able to provide rapid diagnosis and treatment, within 24 hours of presentation

Here are some prevention measures that can be taken to control mosquitoes:

- ✓ Remove standing water – Once a week, empty and scrub, turn over, cover, or throw out any items that hold water like tires, buckets, planters, toys, pools, birdbaths, flowerpot saucers, or trash containers. Mosquitoes lay eggs near water.
- ✓ Use insect repellent: Use an [Environmental Protection Agency \(EPA\)-registered insect repellent](#) to prevent mosquito bites.
- ✓ Wear protective clothing: Wear loose long-sleeved shirts and long pants to cover your skin.
- ✓ Treat clothing and gear: Treat clothing and gear with permethrin if long outdoor exposure is expected. Watch the [video](#), What You Need to Know About Permethrin.
- ✓ Keep mosquitoes out: Keep mosquitoes out of your home by using screens on windows and doors.
- ✓ If you plan on traveling to an area where malaria is common, talk to your doctor well in advance of your departure to see if you should take prescription malaria medication. Strict adherence to the recommended doses and schedules of the antimalarial drug selected is necessary for effective protection.
- ✓ If you are bitten by mosquitoes, avoid scratching the bites and apply over-the-counter anti-itch or antihistamine cream to relieve itching. If you traveled and feel sick, particularly if you have a fever, talk to a healthcare provider, and tell them about your travel.



Visit the following websites for information on mosquitoes and malaria:

- <https://www.cdc.gov/parasites/malaria/index.html>
- <https://www.cdc.gov/malaria/travelers/index.html>



Summer Heat Pet Safety

By: Rachel Panneton

Summer is finally here but so are the hot temperatures! It is important to know the signs of heat exhaustion and heat stroke in pets and how to take help keep them safe.

Heat Stress vs Exhaustion vs Stroke

These are all heat-related illnesses. That starts with **Heat Stress** and at this stage, pets will show an increase in thirst and panting. As the condition worsens, it will progress to **Heat Exhaustion** and then to **Heat Stroke**, which is a very serious condition that can lead to death even with intensive care.

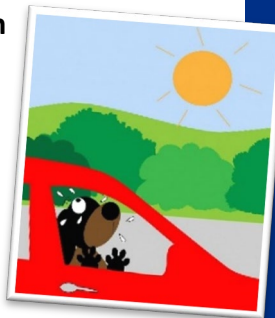
Prevention is the Key!

Your pet does not regulate their body temperature as well as you can. So, when the temperatures are above 75 F or if humid outside your pet's risk increases, but you can help your pets "beat the heat" and stay safe.

Tips to "Beat the Heat":

- ✓ **Keep pets indoors**, when possible, in a well-ventilated space with a fan or air conditioning
- ✓ Always allow access to fresh, clean **water**
- ✓ Make sure there is access to **shade & shelter**
- ✓ Keep your pet **off the pavement**, to prevent their paw pads from burning, instead **walk your pet on the grass**
- ✓ **Walk your pet during the cooler parts of the day**
- ✓ **Limit your pet's exercise/play time outdoors**
- ✓ **Wet your pet down** or allow them to **swim**

NEVER leave pets in a **car** without air condition for **ANY** length of time!



Visit the following websites for information:

- <https://www.texvetpets.org/article/heatstroke-heat-can-be-fatal-to-your-pet/>
- <https://texasforthem.org/heat-stroke-in-dogs/>
- <https://spca.org/pet-tips/heat-stroke-warning-signs-prevention/>
- <https://www.akc.org/expert-advice/health/heatstroke-in-dogs/>

The Dogs **MORE** at Risk:

- **Flat face breeds** (e.g., Pug, Bulldog, Boxer, etc.)
- Fur that is **dark and/or thick or long**
- **Puppies & Older dogs** (7+ years old)



Know the Signs & Symptoms:

- Heavy panting
- Increased thirst
- Fast breathing/difficulty breathing
- Excessive drooling or thick, sticky saliva
- Vomiting and/or diarrhea
- Bright red tongue
- Red or pale gums
- Unsteadiness or staggering
- Low energy/Weakness

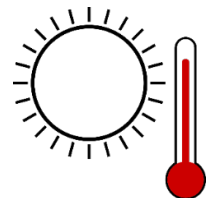
What To Do:

- Move pet to **cool, shaded area**
- If possible, **take their temperature** and record it
- **Cool your pet down** with a fan and/or get them wet with **cool water** (**NOT cold or ice water**) to reduce their body temperature
- **Take your pet to the nearest veterinary facility. ASAP!**

The Dangers of Heat Stroke

If a dog has a temperature of 104 F for 15 minutes or more can lead to:

- **Collapse**
- **Seizures**
- **Organ Failure**
- **Coma**
- **Death**





Announcements

Mosquito Traps Available

The PHR8 Zoonosis Team can provide technical assistance to local jurisdictions to assist with mosquito surveillance, arboviral disease investigations, and educational outreach materials. We can also provide mosquito trapping kits and training upon request to interested jurisdictions. **The kits include:**

- BG-2 Sentinel Mosquito Traps with Lures
- CDC Mini Light Traps with Dry Ice Dispensers
- Gravid Mosquito Traps
- Aspirators
- Trap Batteries

If you would like more information on vector control and surveillance opportunities, please contact us at Region8.Zoonosis@dshs.texas.gov.

Reminders on Adequate Shelter

With rising temperatures, it is important to remember the proper care and protection of animals from the heat. According to [Health and Safety Code Chapter 821](#), dogs must be protected from harsh weather conditions and cannot be restrained outside and unattended without adequate shelter, shade from direct sunlight, and access to clean drinking water. In addition, [Texas Administrative Code 169.26](#) requires shelter facilities to protect animals from extreme temperatures. If the ambient temperature exceeds 85F, external cooling and/or ventilation must be provided. By adhering to these regulations and taking proactive steps, we can ensure the well-being and safety of animals during hot weather conditions.

Future CE Course Topics

If you have any suggestions or requests for future CE Course topics, please let us know by emailing us at: Region8.Zoonosis@dshs.texas.gov

For More ACO CE Course Information:

<https://www.dshs.texas.gov/idcu/health/zoonosis/education/training/aco/>



ACO Manual Online

The ACO Training Manual is available for **free** on the [DSHS website](#).

***Note:** Updates to the manual are posted and represented by dates in parenthesis beside each chapter.*

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