

The Rabies Reporter

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The Rabies Reporter, a scientific newsletter about current issues in rabies research and control, is a joint effort of the Rabies Research Unit of the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources; the Rabies Laboratory at the Animal Diseases Research Institute of the Canadian Food Inspection Agency; the Ontario Ministry of Health; and the Geographic Information Systems Laboratory at Queens University, Kingston. Articles for future issues will be welcomed by the editor. The Rabies Reporter is not refereed, and should not be cited in papers intended for refereed journals. Send contributions, letters and inquiries to:

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Rabies in the Third Quarter

The third quarter exhibited some interesting and significant changes in the dynamics of Ontario's rabies cases for 2004.

The arctic fox strain of rabies is still persisting at low levels in southwestern Ontario (39 fox strain cases in various species to the end of September 2004). There were six rabid skunks in southwestern and southcentral Ontario during the third quarter bringing the total for 2004 to 15 cases. This is slightly higher than the 2003 total which was 12. However, this strain is still persisting in domestic animals due to transmission from rabid skunks. Fortunately, there was only one livestock case during the past three months for a total of 21 for the year. This is an abnormally high number of livestock cases given the number of rabid skunks and foxes. However, several of these livestock cases were multiple animals from a single farm where rabid skunk contact had been observed.

There was also a rabid cat and a rabid dog during this quarter. The dog had been reported fighting with a skunk in a conservation area near Cambridge but the skunk was not available for testing at the time. The dog was later diagnosed with rabies. Subsequent testing of two skunks from the same conservation area confirmed that both were rabid. The district CFIA vet believes that the skunks were from one family and that the entire family had rabies but they were only able to capture two skunks for testing. This is a good example of why pets must be vaccinated. Several people could have avoided post-exposure rabies treatment if this dog had been vaccinated against rabies. The fortunate timing of this case (approximately two weeks before the start of aerial baiting) allowed RRDU staff to amend the baiting area. Although the conservation area was to be baited, only a minimal area to the south and east were scheduled to be baited. Last minute changes allowed for the expansion of the baiting area to an approximately 50 km

radius surrounding this case.

As is typical for this time of year, there was a substantial increase in the number of rabid bats. There were 35 rabid bats scattered throughout Ontario during the last three months bringing the annual total to 45 which is well behind last year's total at this time of 63. Perhaps, we'll finally have a non-record-breaking year for rabid bats.

Unfortunately, after being raccoon rabies free for 14 months, Ontario was once again responding to four rabid raccoons. All of the raccoons were from the Mallorytown area. The first two raccoons were confirmed during the first week of aerial baiting. As a result of these cases, live-trappers went into the area to conduct a trap-vaccinate-release (TVR) program. During this TVR period, two raccoons were live-trapped, vaccinated and released by the TVR trappers. Both animals appeared normal at the time and were not exhibiting symptoms of any disease. One raccoon was recaptured a day later and the second raccoon was found in a window-well 17 days later. At this time, both animals were exhibiting abnormal behaviour indicative of rabies. The animals were euthanized and submitted for rabies testing. Both raccoons tested positive for rabies. This is incontrovertible proof that even seasoned personnel who are experienced with rabid raccoons are not able to determine when an animal is incubating rabies.

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Animal Rabies Report: July to September 2004

Animal Type	Fox			Raccoon			Skunk			Other Wildlife			Bat			Dog			Cat			Livestock			Totals		
County or Region	#	Cumulative		#	Cumulative		#	Cumulative		#	Cumulative		#	Cumulative		#	Cumulative		#	Cumulative		#	Cumulative		#	Cumulative	
		04	03		04	03		04	03		04	03		04	03		04	03		04	03		04	03		04	03
Eastern																											
Stormont, Dundas & Glengarry														1										0	0	1	
Prescott																								0	0	0	
Russell																								0	0	0	
Ottawa-Carleton												2	5	5										2	5	5	
Renfrew												2	2											2	2	0	
Lanark			1											1										0	0	2	
Leeds and Grenville				4	4	16						5	5	4										9	9	20	
Frontenac													1	2										0	1	2	
Lennox & Addington														1										0	0	1	
Central																											
Hastings							1	4				1	1	2										1	1	2	
Prince Edward																								0	0	0	
Northumberland																								0	0	0	
Victoria												2	2	1									1	2	2	2	
Haliburton																								0	0	0	
Peterborough												1	1	3										1	1	3	
Durham													1	1										0	1	1	
York Region												4	5	4				1	1					3	4	4	
Toronto																								0	0	0	
Simcoe							1	4				2	2	4							1	12		4	18	4	

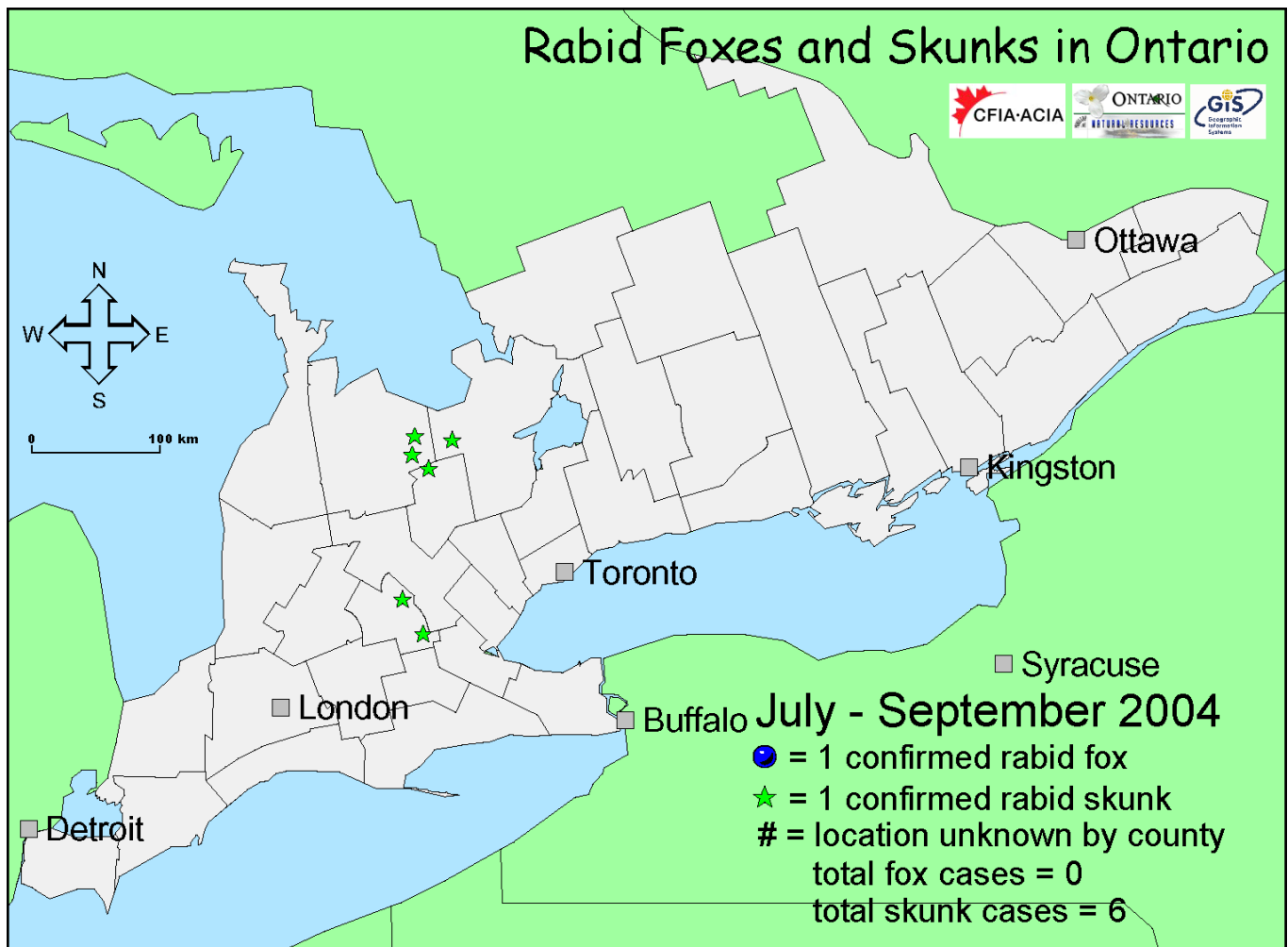
Animal Rabies Report: July to September 2004

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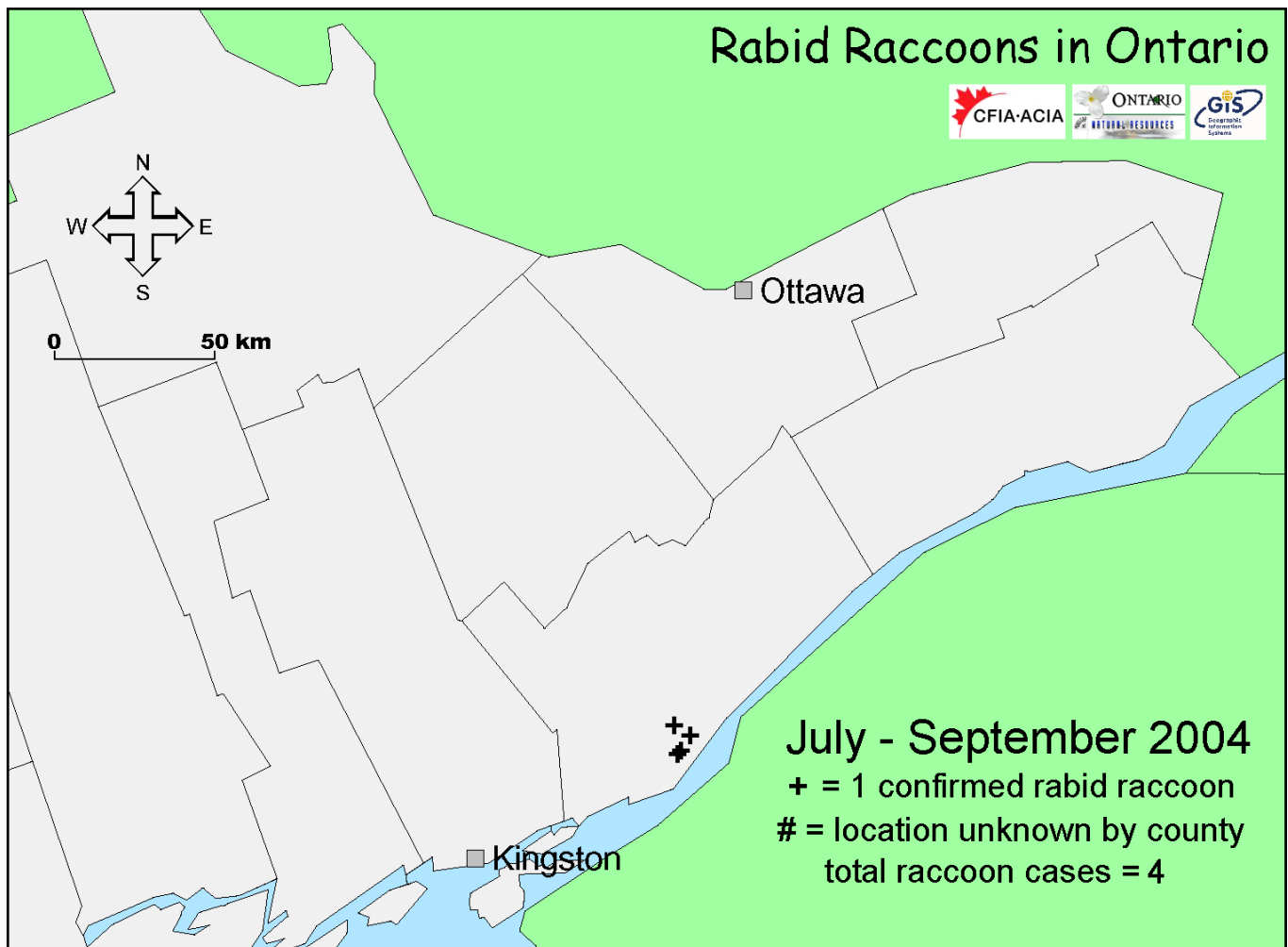
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		04	03		04	03		04	03		04	03		04	03		04	03		04	03		04	03			
Northern																											
Muskoka												1	1											1	1	0	
Parry Sound																								0	0	0	
Nipissing																								0	0	0	
Sudbury											1													0	0	1	
Cochrane																								0	0	0	
Timiskaming																								0	0	0	
Algoma																								0	0	0	
Thunder Bay																								0	0	0	
Rainy River																								0	0	0	
Kenora																								0	0	0	
Regional Totals																											
Eastern			1	4	4	16							9	13	14									13	17	31	
Central							1	4					10	12	15				1	1		1	12	1	11	27	16
Western		1	2		1		5	11	12				5	7	10	1	1						9	6	11	30	30
Southern													12	14	24										12	14	24
Northern												1	1	1											1	1	1
TOTALS	0	1	3	4	5	16	6	15	12	0	0	1	35	45	63	1	1	0	1	1	0	1	21	7	48	89	102
Notes for this quarter: One bat in Muskoka and one in Renfrew county were little brown bats. All other bats were big brown bats. The livestock in Simcoe county was a cow.																											





GIS Lab, Queen's University
Data Source: Ontario Laboratory-Fallowfield (CFIA)



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