

The Rabies Reporter

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Rabies in Ontario during the first quarter

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Rabies during the First Quarter Of 2007

The first quarter of 2007 had 17 confirmed cases of rabies, up six from 2006. Although this is an approximately 50% increase from last year, it isn't cause for alarm. Over the past ten years, Ontario has had an average of 24 cases during the first quarter. Prior to rabies control programs, the incidence during the first three months of any year was much, much higher. This is only the fifth time that Ontario has had fewer than 20 cases during the first quarter.

The cases occurred mostly in south-western Ontario where there were 14 cases. There were also two cases in south-central Ontario and a single case in southern Ontario. The 17 cases included nine rabid skunks, two bats, one dog, four cattle, and one horse.

There was one rabid bat each in York Region and Lambton county.

The rabid skunks were scattered throughout Dufferin (1), Wellington (2), Waterloo (2), Perth (2), Grey (1), and Bruce (1) counties.

The rabid dog was from Grey county. It was located near a rabid skunk case from the previous quarter.

The livestock cases were from Waterloo Region (1 horse, 2 cows), Perth county (1 cow), and Durham Region (1 cow). The livestock cases in Waterloo Region and Perth county were closely associated with rabid skunks. The rabid cow from Durham Region was infected with *Arctic fox* strain rabies. Although this case makes it appear that rabies is spreading into central Ontario, this isn't the case. This animal originated from northern Bruce county and was sold through a livestock sales yard in early March. After the steer was purchased,

it was delivered to a farm in the Durham Region. Approximately three weeks after purchase, the animal died of rabies. Since the animal was exhibiting unusual behaviour shortly after it arrived at the farm, it was isolated from the rest of the herd. Since this case, there have been no other cases on either the farm that it originated from or the farm in Durham Region.

For the sixth consecutive quarter, Ontario was free of *mid-Atlantic raccoon* strain rabies. As a result of this success, rabies control operations will be scaled back in eastern Ontario. We will continue to conduct aerial baiting and trap-vaccinate-release programs in the St. Lawrence area this summer but both programs will cover a smaller area.

To help eliminate the remaining pockets of rabid skunks in south-western Ontario, we will be expanding our distribution of ONRAB baits this summer.

These control efforts could help to make 2007 a record low year for terrestrial rabies cases.

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RRDU
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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 Ottawa Laboratory (Fallowfield) 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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Animal Rabies Report: January to March 2007

Animal Type	Fox			Raccoon			Skunk			Other Wildlife			Bat			Dog			Cat			Livestock			Totals			
County or Region	#	Cumulative		#	Cumulative		#	Cumulative		#	Cumulative		#	Cumulative		#	Cumulative		#	Cumulative		#	Cumulative		#	Cumulative		
		07	06		07	06		07	06		07	06		07	06		07	06		07	06		07	06				
Southern																												
Wentworth																									0	0	0	
Haldimand-Norfolk																										0	0	0
Brant																										0	0	0
Niagara																										0	0	0
Elgin																										0	0	0
Oxford																										0	0	0
Middlesex																										0	0	0
Lambton													1	1												1	1	0
Kent																										0	0	0
Essex																										0	0	0
Northern																												
Muskoka																										0	0	0
Parry Sound																										0	0	0
Nipissing																										0	0	0
Sudbury																										0	0	0
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	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Central	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	2	2	2	2
Western	0	0	0	0	0	0	9	9	5	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	1	0	0	0	0	4	4	3	14	14	9	9
Southern	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0
Northern	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Totals	0	0	0	0	0	0	9	9	5	0	0	0	2	2	3	1	1	0	0	0	0	5	5	3	17	17	11	11

Notes for this quarter:

Both bats were big brown bats. All of the livestock cases were cattle except for one horse in Waterloo Regional Municipality.

