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The rabies reporter

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July - September 2010

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; and the Ontario Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care. 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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Positive rabies cases in the third quarter

During the third quarter of 2010, the number of positive rabies cases increased from 17 in total to 32. This time last year, there were 41 positive cases reported in the province. The majority of the third quarter cases were found in bats.

Out of the 15 positive cases found between July and September, 13 were bats while only two were skunks. The two rabid skunks were discovered in Grey County where all of the terrestrial cases have been so far this year. Both skunks were infected with 'Ontario fox' strain rabies.

The first skunk was discovered northwest of Owen Sound in late July. This case was located approximately 50km from the cluster of skunk cases in southern Grey County. The animal was discovered in a relatively unpopulated area near a cluster of cottages. If not for a cottager's dog, this animal may have gone undetected. An 8km by 8km plot surrounding this case was baited by helicopter shortly after the case was detected with 300 ONRAB® baits/km². This field season marked the 5th year that ONRAB® vaccine has been used and it has shown promising results in skunks.

The distance of the first case from the other skunk cases found earlier this year, suggests that rabies is still persisting throughout all of Grey County but some cases are going undetected. As rabies positives become less numerous, it becomes more important for each case to get reported; MNR's annual rabies control efforts are based on the location of rabies cases from the current and previous year.

The second skunk was diagnosed on September 14th. Fortunately, this was during the annual aerial rabies baiting program and we were able to respond the following day. The entire area surrounding the cluster of rabies cases in the Mount Forest area was blanketed with 300 ONRAB® baits/km². Traditionally, baits are distributed at 20 baits/km² for foxes but skunks have a smaller home range than foxes so more baits are required.

People often find bats in their cottages and homes during the summer months, which explains the seasonal rise in reported bat cases each summer. If there is a bat in your home, remember to always wear gloves and other protective clothing when attempting to remove it. If anyone has had direct contact with a bat, the bat should be safely captured and not released. Contact your local public health unit or your doctor for assistance in evaluating potential rabies risk and submitting the bat for testing. For more information about bat-human conflicts, visit the Living With Wildlife Species Factsheets page on the MNR website.

Animal Rabies Report: July to September 2010

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Animal Type	Fox			Raccoon			Skunk			Other Wildlife			Bat			Dog			Cat			Livestock			Totals		
County or Region	Cumulative			Cumulative			Cumulative			Cumulative			Cumulative			Cumulative			Cumulative			Cumulative			Cumulative		
	#	10	09	#	10	09	#	10	09	#	10	09	#	10	09	#	10	09	#	10	09	#	10	09	#	10	09
Southern																											
Wentworth													1	1											1	1	0
Haldimand-Norfolk														1											0	1	0
Brant																									0	0	0
Niagara													1	1	1										1	1	1
Elgin															2										0	0	2
Oxford																									0	0	0
Middlesex													3	3	1										3	3	1
Lambton														4	1										0	4	1
Kent													1	1											1	1	0
Essex																									0	0	0
Northern																											
Muskoka																									0	0	0
Parry Sound																									0	0	0
Nipissing															1										0	0	1
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	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	2
Central	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	6	9	5	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	6	9	6
Western	0	0	2	0	0	0	2	8	7	0	0	0	1	3	10	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	7	3	11	26
Southern	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	6	11	5	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	6	11	5
Northern	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2
Totals	0	0	3	0	0	0	2	8	7	0	0	0	13	24	24	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	7	15	32	41

