



CANADIAN
WILDLIFE HEALTH
COOPERATIVE

ZOONOSES

CREATING A WORLD
THAT IS SAFE AND SUSTAINABLE
FOR WILDLIFE AND SOCIETY

What are ZOOONOSES?

Zoonoses are infectious diseases transmitted from animals to humans, sometimes by an insect vector. There are a broad range of zoonotic pathogens including bacteria like leptospirosis, tularemia or borrelia [Lyme disease]; parasites like toxoplasmosis or trichinellosis; and viruses such as rabies, avian influenza or West Nile.

Wildlife are an important reservoir for many zoonotic pathogens. Monitoring wildlife health can provide information on disease prevalence, outbreak alerts and new emerging health concerns.

Priority Zoonoses in Canada

Rabies

We track rabies in wildlife, and use bait vaccine to reduce spread during outbreaks, [e.g.: recent cases in raccoons in Ontario], to protect pets and people.



West Nile

Wild bird tests are critical for early warning of virus. We routinely test crows, jays, & raptors Results are shared with public & health officials.



Avian Influenza

Our wild bird survey provides early detection of outbreaks and new strains. Results are broadly shared with agriculture and health partners.



Lyme Disease

Caused by a bacteria borne by black-legged or deer ticks, with a wildlife reservoir. CWHC studies distribution of ticks and the risk of disease in Canada.



WHAT we do

SURVEILLANCE: Tracking of zoonoses in wildlife including live animal testing, discovery of infection rates, and identification of new pathogens.

KNOWLEDGE MOBILIZATION: Ongoing and rapid dissemination of findings and assessment including weekly updates for priority diseases, quarterly reports, an avian influenza information portal and social media capacity.

EMERGING ISSUES: Climate change, rising urban wildlife populations and trade in exotic animals may play a role in emerging zoonoses. CWHC's surveillance tracks changes in wildlife and vector distributions and investigates range expansion of known pathogens and emergence of new pathogens.

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