CANADIAN WILDLIFE HEALTH COOPERATIVE

CWHC QUARTERLY REPORT
Q4-2020: OCTOBER - DECEMBER

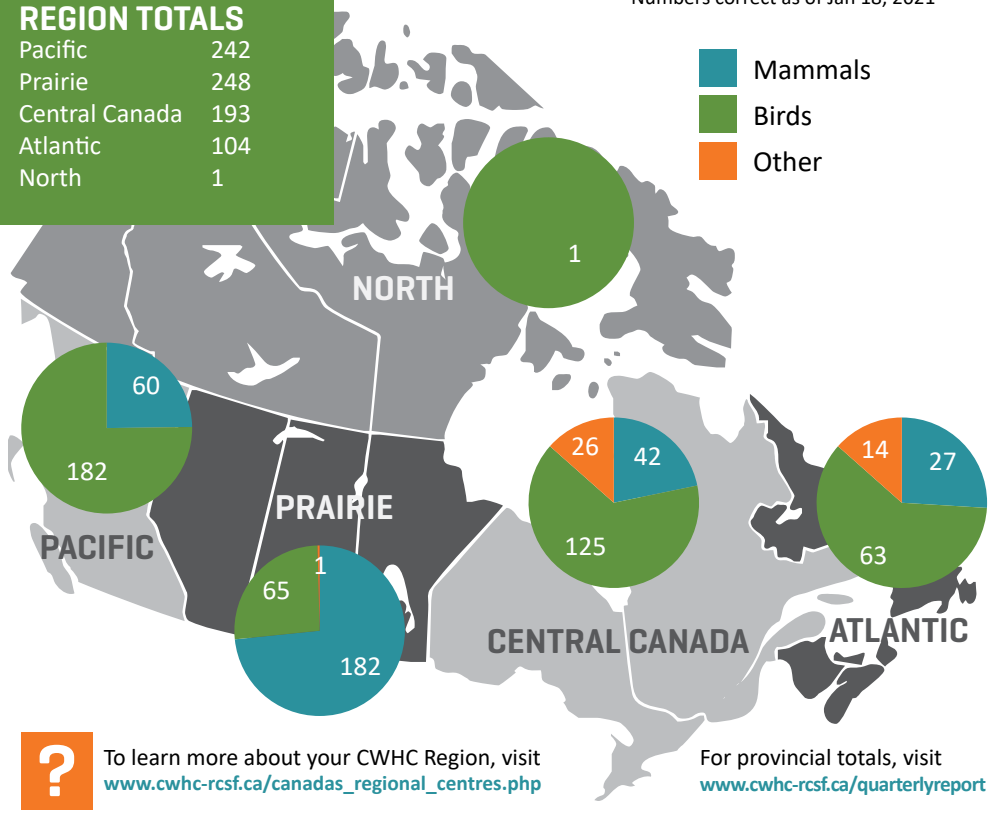
ANIMALS SUBMITTED by region

788 ANIMALS TOTAL

* Numbers correct as of Jan 18, 2021

REGION TOTALS

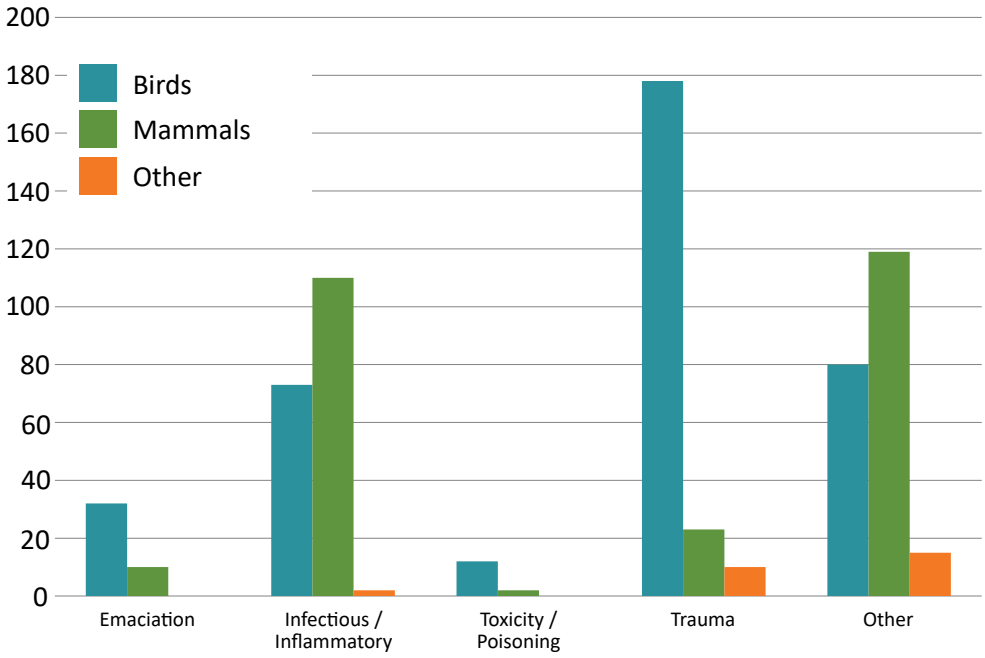
Pacific	242
Prairie	248
Central Canada	193
Atlantic	104
North	1



To learn more about your CWHC Region, visit www.cwhc-rcsf.ca/canadas_regional_centres.php

For provincial totals, visit www.cwhc-rcsf.ca/quarterlyreport

CAUSE OF DEATH category



PLEASE NOTE: An additional 122 cases submitted to CWHC in this quarter are still pending cause of death determination; 61 birds, 47 mammals, and 14 other species. 'Other' diagnoses include neoplastic, metabolic, and degenerative diseases as well as those cases where no cause of death could be determined.

SELECTED disease counts

RABIES

Examined	470
Positive	4

WHITE NOSE SYNDROME

Examined	41
Positive	2

AVIAN INFLUENZA

Examined	347
Positive	1

PLEASE NOTE:
The AI viruses detected were of low-pathogenicity and North-American lineage. Both live bird samples and dead animal submissions are included.

CHRONIC WASTING DISEASE

Examined	1456
Positive	33

BOVINE TUBERCULOSIS

Examined	130
Positive	0

AVIAN CHOLERA

Examined	33
Positive	0

PLEASE NOTE: The cases reported above represent the data that are currently available in the CWHC database and should be considered preliminary. These data do not include all diagnostic testing for the selected pathogens carried out in Canada; additional testing is performed by other agencies and organisations. Examined refers to any candidate species for this disease. Testing is not always performed, unless the disease is suspected during necropsy or histological examination. Numbers are correct as of January 18, 2021.

For more information about positives, visit www.cwhc-rcsf.ca/quarterlyreport

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HIGHLIGHTS

Why did the moose drink the water? Death at a prairie dugout.

In late September of 2020, three moose were reported dead in a dugout in rural Saskatchewan. The moose had been seen alive in the area two days prior by the renter of the land. Local conservation officers from Saskatchewan Ministry of Environment Humboldt field office investigated the scene and did not find any signs of bullet wounds or other obvious cause of death. A water sample was also collected from the dugout and submitted for testing.

Back at the lab, thorough postmortem investigations were carried out on both carcasses. The adult male was in good body condition, which suggests a relatively short illness or sudden death. Gunshot was ruled out and tests were performed to rule out other common causes of sudden death, including lead poisoning, insecticide poisoning, and anthrax. Both animals were found to have toxic, life threatening levels of sodium in the brain. This is an indicator of severe dehydration which can lead to shock and death.

The water sample from the dugout had also been sent out for a water quality assessment, with the hope that the results would shed some light on the circumstances. The results showed several issues with the water source, including extremely high levels of sulfur, sodium, chloride, and sulphate. Although acceptable levels for moose are not available, the levels found in the submitted water sample were above the range noted to cause dangerous health issues in cattle.

Although the water quality seems a likely explanation for the death of these three moose, we were left with one big question: Why would they drink the water? The weather was unseasonably warm in late September (>20oC during the days of the incident) and the moose would have had significant water requirements (20-50 L/day). Unlike cattle, however, moose would be free to roam in search of other water sources as needed. As in many wildlife health investigations, we may never know all the details surrounding the incident and are sometimes left with more questions than answers; however, the incident allowed us to alert the landowner about the unsuitability of the dugout for livestock.

FEATURED project

WILDLIFE HEALTH AND PLASTIC POLLUTION MONITORING PROJECT

In partnership with Environment and Climate Change Canada, the CWHC has been working to increase its capacity to identify and characterize plastic pollution found in wildlife across Canada.

Targeted outreach and educational materials, as well as training sessions have been developed and delivered. Monitoring protocols to ensure consistency in analysis and reporting across Canada have been created and undergone expert review. Th CWHC is actively developing new technologies to store, share, and utilize monitoring and observational data to provide a better understanding of the effects that plastic pollution has on wildlife. Among these, CWHC has developed a website, a mobile phone app, and a module on its wildlife health intelligence platform (WHIP). The module will allow for enhanced monitoring and tracking of plastic pollution in wildlife through partnerships with other agencies and citizen science.

The initial project will run until March 2021, and pending sufficient resources, continued surveillance of plastic pollution can be integrated into the CWHC's already established scanning program on a selective basis.

We also featured the project in three blog posts from the perspective of Jennifer Provencher, the research scientist in ECCC who provided the training; Laura Bourque, CWHC Atlantic pathologist and Sarah Martone, graduate student who both participated in the training.

WILDLIFE HEALTH tracker

Bat Health Webinar

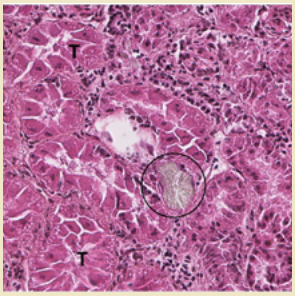
The National Office organized a mini-webinar at which speakers from various agencies and from across the country addressed a wide range of topics relating to bat health in Canada.

Invasive Wild Pig Webinar

Travis Black, Colorado Parks & Wildlife, gave a seminar on identifying the differences between wild and feral pigs and their domestic cousins.

Swollen Muzzle in a White-tailed Deer

An adult male white-tailed deer was presented to the Ontario-Nunavut region with a history of having poor balance while seen walking on a property in London, Ontario.



Calcium oxalate crystals in the kidneys

The presence of calcium oxalate crystals in the kidneys of a sandhill crane recently submitted for necropsy made us wonder about the possible origins of these crystals.

For more information, visit
www.cwhc-rcsf.ca/quarterlyreport

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