Pike County Ticks Exceed PA State Average for Carrying Tick-Borne Diseases

Blacklegged Deer Tick (Ixodes scapularis)

The results of a study to collect ticks from Pike County, Pennsylvania, conducted by the Northeast Wildlife DNA Laboratory of East Stroudsburg University included real time PCR analysis of ticks countywide. The county was divided into 9 grids, each with several collection sites. The sites were based on use by community members and presence of favorable tick habitat and included: state parks, state game lands, township buildings, schools, township parks, communities and hiking trails.

All life stages of *Ixodes scapularis* ticks (deer tick) were collected, but only nymphs and adults were tested. Other tick species were collected and counted but were not tested for organisms. *I. scapularis* samples were tested for *Borrelia burgdorferi*, *Borrelia miyamotoi*, *Anaplasma phagocytophilum*, *Babesia microti*, *Bartonella* species, *Mycoplasma* species, and Powassan Virus lineage ll.

Borrelia burgdorferi prevalence in *I. scapularis* ticks overall

was 39%, with *Bartonella spp*. next with 18.5%. Percentages were significantly less for the other organisms tested.

Further publications by the University on this study are expected within the next few months.

The Centers for Disease Control & Prevention (CDC) recognizes that ticks carry *Bartonella* but does not believe there is evidence proving transmission to humans at this time.

In 2018, the Lyme Disease Association, Inc. awarded a grant to Pike County to help support this project.

News Report

https://www.poconorecord.com/story/news/healthcare/2020/10/28/esu-tick-study-shows-percentage-have-tick-borne-diseases-pa/3760342001/