



Public Health Services One Health Epidemiology Program Newsletter

Epidemiology & Immunization Services Branch

Friday, September 26, 2025

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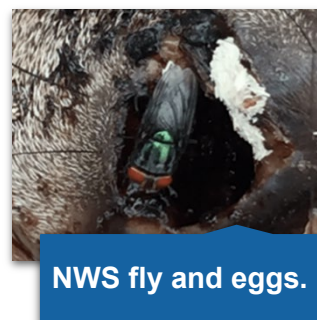
Zoonotic Diseases

New World Screwworm Information and Testing Guidance

Background

New World Screwworm (NWS or *Cochliomyia hominivorax*) is an obligate myiasis parasitic fly whose larvae cause severe damage on living tissue in all warm-blooded creatures. It can have severe health outcomes for birds and mammals (including humans), and it can cause significant impacts to animal welfare and food producing industries.

Since the mid-1960s, a biological barrier has been maintained at the Darién Gap in Panama using sterile flies to prevent the northern spread of the NWS fly. However, since 2022, cases have been spreading north as far as Mexico. Surveillance from veterinarians, animal care givers, local animal health officers, producers, and human medical professionals for this parasite is appreciated to identify suspect cases in our region.



Images from U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA).

Clinical Signs

Mammals and birds typically exhibit:

- Irritated behavior,
- Uncontrollable headshaking,
- Noticeable presence or smell of decay,
- Fly maggots or larvae in wounds, or
- Evidence of a myiasis (fly strike).

Reporting Criteria to California Department of Food and Agriculture (CDFA)

Animal health professionals should report within 24 hours:

- Any larvae that are present on cattle.
- Larvae present deep in the wound that are attached/feeding on living tissues.

- Larvae on any animal originating from Mexico or south of the border including migratory animals.

For cases that meet these criteria, please send notification emails **within 24 hours** to CDFA:

To: Alisha.Olmstead@cdfa.ca.gov; Matthew.Vahabi@cdfa.ca.gov;
Andrea.Garbaba@cdfa.ca.gov; Ann.Ikelman@cdfa.ca.gov;
Laura.Bradley@cdfa.ca.gov
Cc: Emily.Trumbull@sdcounty.ca.gov; Julie.Breher@sdcounty.ca.gov;
phs.ohep.hhsa@sdcounty.ca.gov

Subject line: Suspect New World Screwworm

Body of email: Give a brief history, location where animal was found and include any photos you may have taken.

CDFA will reply and, when appropriate, will provide:

- A partially completed '[VS Form 5 38 Parasite submission form](#)',
- Assign a Foreign Animal Disease (FAD) number, and
- Provide a pre-paid overnight shipping label for you to use.

Complete the rest of the '[VS Form 5 38 Parasite submission form](#)' to the best of your ability (include the FAD number in Box 31).

Specimen Collection

- Wear gloves.
- Gently collect multiple sizes of larvae.
- Place all larvae in a shatterproof vial with 70% ethanol or isopropyl alcohol (**not water or formalin**).
- Make sure the alcohol covers the specimens completely.
- Secure the screw top or tight-fitting lid.
- If flies are present, collect adult flies in a dry vial.
- Label vial(s) with permanent ink.
- Place vial(s) in secondary container with absorbent material (e.g., sealable Ziploc bag containing paper towels).
- Place in a sturdy cardboard box (at least 4x4x3 inches); include completed '[VS Form 5 38 Parasite submission form](#)' in its own sealable Ziploc bag with the shipment.
- Place shipping label on box containing properly packaged specimen(s) and completed submission form.

- Securely seal box with packing tape, and schedule pick up/take to shipping center.

Note that CDFA will handle alerting U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) National Veterinary Services Laboratories (NVSL) regarding the incoming package, as the submission will be officially coming from CDFA.

Treatment

Currently there are no U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) approved drugs for the treatment or prevention of New World Screwworm. FDA has compiled a list of drugs that could be used when appropriate and necessary based on the current literature. FDA will continue to update the [New World Screwworm: Information for Veterinarians](#) page as more information becomes available.

**Human exposures or suspect cases should consult their medical provider.*

Resources

- [About New World Screwworm Myiasis | Centers for Disease Control and Prevention \(CDC\)](#)
- [New World Screwworm Fact Sheet | CDFA](#)
- [New World Screwworm: Information for Veterinarians | FDA](#)
- [New World Screwworm Outbreak in Central America | USDA](#)
- [Resurgence of New World Screwworm in the Americas: What Healthcare Providers Need to Know | CDC](#)

Avian Influenza Updates

Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza (HPAI) outbreaks in poultry and livestock have decreased significantly since earlier in the year. The CDFA continues to manage the dairies that remain affected, and surveillance is ongoing at the creameries. California is enrolled in the [National Milk Testing Strategy](#) that is managed by the USDA. There was a recent (8/15/2025) HPAI detection in poultry in Los Angeles County. In San Diego County, we are continuing to monitor the situation as we move into the Fall migration season which is typically when detections have occurred in our region.

Resources

- [Animal Health Alert: H5 Bird Flu confirmed in Los Angeles County in another domestic cat that consumed commercially available raw pet food | County of Los Angeles](#)

- [Avian Influenza Updates | CDFA](#)
- [Bird Flu | California Department of Public Health](#)
- [H5N1 Influenza | USDA](#)
- [H5 Bird Flu: Current Situation | CDC](#)
- [Protection from Bird Flu | Occupational Safety and Health Administration](#)
- [U.S. Geological Survey science strategy to address highly pathogenic avian influenza and its effects on wildlife health 2025–29 | U.S. Geological Survey](#)

Zoonotic Diseases Detected in Animals in San Diego County

Figure 1. Select Zoonotic Diseases Detected in Animals in San Diego County Reported by IDEXX, January 1, 2025 – August 1, 2025

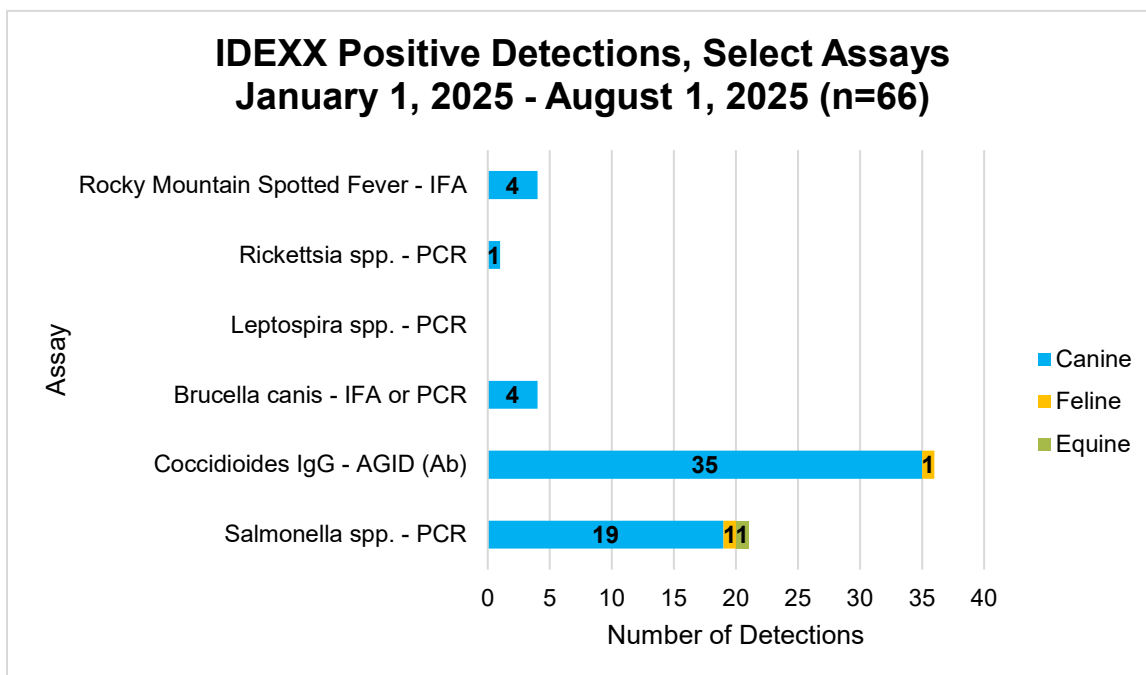


Table 1. Rabies Cases Detected by the San Diego County Public Health Laboratory, January 1, 2025 – August 15, 2025

Animal Type	Negative (n)	Positive (n)	Total (n)
Bat	51	12	63
Bobcat	1	0	1
Cat	89	0	89
Coyote	4	0	4
Dog	182	0	182
Fox	1	0	1
Goat	1	0	1
Opossum	1	0	1
Raccoon	11	0	11
Skunk	21	0	21
Squirrel	1	0	1
Total	363	12	375

**Totals do not include specimens that were unsatisfactory for testing or those found outside of San Diego County.*

For more information on these or other diseases of interest, please contact the One Health Epidemiology Program at phs.ohep.hhsa@sdcounty.ca.gov.

Announcements

World Rabies Day is Celebrated on September 28, 2025

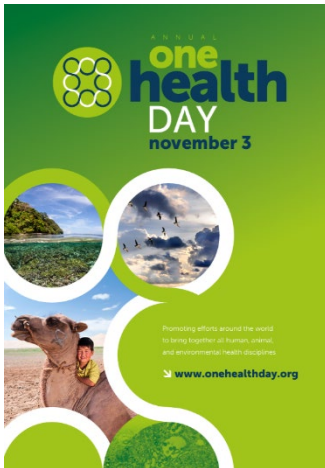


World Rabies Day is Sunday September 28, 2025.

Rabies vaccines have reduced the occurrence of human and animal rabies cases. Dog bites account for most human rabies cases abroad.

In the United States, dog rabies vaccine requirements and animal control efforts have eliminated dog-transmitted rabies to humans. Ongoing rabies prevention efforts include vaccinating pets, respecting the space of wildlife, human pre-exposure prophylaxis, and post-exposure prophylaxis.

One Health Day is Celebrated on November 3, 2025



[One Health Day](#) is Monday November 3, 2025. One Health is an ancient concept acknowledging the interconnection between human, animal, and environmental health. This concept has been named 'One Health' in recent western culture. Humans have always been dependent on animal life and environmental health.

Today, we acknowledge the need for re-uniting sectors that have been isolated into silos. When the health of environmental and animal health is advanced, people benefit.

View the 2025 Zoonoses & One Health Updates (ZOHU) Call Webinar Series

The latest webinar took place on September 3, 2025. Veterinarians from the CDC and USDA discussed New World Screwworm and drug-resistant *Campylobacter jejuni*. Each webinar is recorded and will be posted online.

View [ZOHU webinar recordings](#) to learn more about zoonotic diseases and One Health issues. Veterinarians can receive one hour of continuing education credits for attending future webinars by creating a login and taking a quiz through [CDC Train](#).

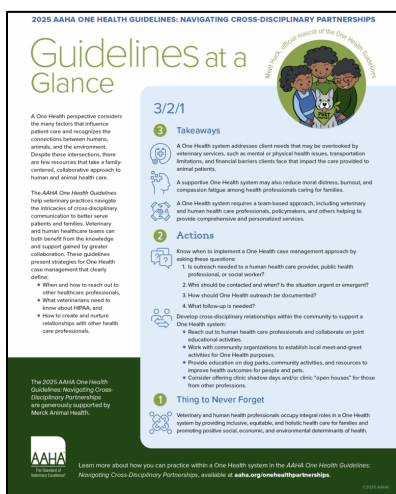
View the 2025 ZOHU Webinars Today!

View the CDFA Animal Health Branch Newsletter



Check out the [CDFA Animal Health Branch Newsletter](#) to stay informed about Bird Flu in California, unofficial tag use in cattle, and more!

View the 2025 American Animal Hospital Association (AAHA) One Health Guidelines



The AAHA has created [One Health Guidelines](#) for veterinary professionals. This document was created with a range of human and animal medical professionals to develop a consensus on communication strategies to improve human and animal health outcomes.

County Resources

County Resources to Check Out

Rabies

Page last updated 07/25/2025

Rabies is a fatal but preventable viral disease. It can spread to people and pets through the bites and scratches of an infected animal. Rabies affects the central nervous system. If a person does not receive prompt and appropriate medical care after exposure to rabies, and before symptoms start, the virus will progress to the brain. This almost always results in death.

On this page:

- [Transmission \(Spread\)](#)
- [Prevention](#)
- [Symptoms](#)
- [Evaluation](#)
- [Information for Healthcare Professionals](#)
- [Information for Veterinarians](#)
- [Resources](#)

Transmission (Spread)

In the United States, rabies is mostly found in wild animals like bats, skunks, raccoons, and foxes. In California, rabies is mostly found in bats and skunks. Rabies in pet dogs and cats is possible, but less common because many pets are vaccinated against rabies.

People and animals can get rabies if an animal with rabies:

- Bites them, or
- If saliva from an animal with rabies gets into a break in a person's or animal's skin or into their eyes, nose, or mouth.

People and animals can't get rabies just by touching or being near an animal with rabies. But rabies exposures in pets and livestock may not always be noticed by their owners and caretakers. It is important to work with a veterinarian to prevent rabies in animals.

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How to Contact Us

For more information, contact the San Diego One Health Epidemiology Program through our [contact form](#), via e-mail at phs.ohep.hhsa@sdcounty.ca.gov, or call the Epidemiology Unit at (619) 692-8499.

We want to know if you are seeing any unusual, new, or emerging animal disease or outbreak. We can provide consultation, help investigate these diseases, and provide resources. Keeping us informed helps us protect our human and animal community.

[Sign up for our One Health Epidemiology Network Updates](#)

Community Highlights

How to get Featured in the OHEP Newsletter

We would love to feature your work in our newsletter! Please send photos, videos, and short descriptions to phs.ohep.hhsa@sdcounty.ca.gov so we can highlight the work you do around the County.

Thank you!

If you have any questions about the content of this newsletter or the One Health Epidemiology Program, please email phs.ohep.hhsa@sdcounty.ca.gov.



The Public Health Services department, County of San Diego Health and Human Services Agency, has maintained national public health accreditation, since May 17, 2016, and was re-accredited by the Public Health Accreditation Board on August 21, 2023.