

Record-breaking Number of Rabies Cases - All Among Bats

By Don Babwin: The Associated Press

CHICAGO - State health officials and wildlife experts have no answer for a worrisome statistic: The number of rabies cases in Illinois this year is the highest on record.

So far, there have been 99 confirmed rabies cases - all among bats - almost double the previous high of 51, set in 2004 and 2005.

There have been no reported cases of human infections, although a handful of people who came in contact with bats have undergone rabies shots as a precaution.

Officials are warning people not to touch bats and to call authorities if they see bats lying on the ground or flying during the day.

"If you see a bat in the day time, especially on the ground, that's a pretty solid indication they are diseased," said Vic Reato, a spokesman for the Will County Health Department.

A bat found in a Joliet swimming pool earlier this month was the latest confirmed with rabies, state health officials confirmed Wednesday.

They said the reasons for the spike are unclear.

The percentage of bats that tested positive for rabies in Illinois has climbed to 9 percent this year, from the typical 3 percent to 5 percent, state public health department veterinarian Connie Austin said.

One possible explanation is that construction on previously undeveloped land has led to more people sharing land with wildlife, said Reato.

That also might explain why most of the rabies cases have been in rapidly developing Cook, DuPage, Will, McHenry and Lake counties, he said.

Rabies Resource Materials

Earlier this month, ISVMA made available information that veterinary professionals can use to inform their clients about rabies and promote vaccination. Click on the highlighted text to download the following:

1. [Veterinarian Talking Points](#) - please use these talking points to discuss rabies awareness and prevention with your local press.
2. [Rabies Brochure](#) - An excellent and informative brochure developed by the American Veterinary Medical Association that you can share with your clients, community leaders, and anyone else that can benefit from understanding this deadly disease better.

Legislative Action Alert: Ask Your Congressional Representatives to Oppose S.549/H.R.962

The Preservation of Antibiotics for Medical Treatment Act of 2007 was introduced both in the U.S. House of Representatives and the U.S. Senate. Representative Louise McIntosh Slaughter (D 28th-NY) introduced H.R.962 on 2/8/07, and the bill was referred to the House Committee on Energy and Commerce. Senator Kennedy (D-MA) introduced S.549, the companion bill in the Senate on 2/12/07, and the bill was referred to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

The purpose of this Act is purportedly to preserve the effectiveness of medically important antibiotics used in the treatment of human and animal diseases by phasing out use of certain

antibiotics for non-therapeutic purposes in food-producing animals.

While this issue was not part of the Farm Bill on the House side, the Senate is expected to begin hearings on the Farm Bill in October; subcommittee markup, the full committee hearing and Senate floor action are all possible opportunities for this legislation to be submitted as an amendment.

Veterinary professionals oppose this proposed legislation and you can help us defeat it by contacting the members of your congressional delegation. The AVMA position statement is included in a sample email you can send to your legislators by following [this link](#).

You will have to log in to the ISVMA Member Center to send your message to Congress. Contact us at jill@isvma.org if you have any problems logging in.

Thank you for your support and participation in the ISVMA/AVMA advocacy efforts.

Do You Plan to Attend the IVERT Program at the ISVMA Convention?

The Illinois Veterinary Emergency Response Training (IVERT) program will be held in conjunction with the ISVMA Annual Convention for the third consecutive year. The IVERT program will be held in Peoria on Friday, November 2, 2007.

There is no fee for attending the IVERT program and registration at the ISVMA Annual Convention is not mandatory. However, if you choose to attend IVERT and register for the ISVMA Annual Convention, you will receive a \$75 rebate on your convention registration fee.

You can [register](#) for IVERT and/or the ISVMA Annual Convention on the ISVMA website.

More Than Just Another Meeting

While President of the ISVMA in 1904, Dr. J.T. Natress of Delavan, IL summed up the importance of the ISVMA Annual Convention in very few words:

"The Good Book says that it is not good for man to live alone, and this wise saying applies with equal force to the professional man. Mingle freely with your professional brethren, receive new ideas along theoretical lines and learn technical methods of performing everyday work. This smooths the rugged pathway of everyday practice."

Dr. Natress could easily have been speaking from the podium at the 2007 ISVMA Annual Convention which will be held in Peoria on November 2-4, 2007.

There are many reasons to attend the ISVMA Annual Convention. It is a high quality, affordable and local convention with outstanding speakers and session topics. It is also a place where you can network with other veterinary professionals from Illinois and share professional experiences. The informal learning opportunities at the ISVMA Annual Convention are among its greatest features!

If you haven't attended an ISVMA Convention recently, you don't know what you're missing! [Register online](#) today! Early bird discounts end on October 12, 2007.

ISVMA Seeking Items Related to McKillip Veterinary College

The ISVMA is looking for any photographs or items attributable to the McKillip Veterinary College which operated in Chicago from 1892 until 1920. We need these items to display in the Walter E. Zuschlag/ISVMA Veterinary Heritage Collection and Information Commons which will be dedicated at 3:00 p.m. on October 5, 2007 during the University of Illinois College of Veterinary Medicine Fall Conference.

If you have items related to McKillip Veterinary College or have any other unusual, interesting or important items you would like to contribute to the Collection, you may either donate or loan them

by contacting peter@isvma.org.

About the Photo

The Mottled Duck (*Anas fulvigula*) is a medium-sized dabbling duck. It is intermediate in appearance between female Mallard and American Black Duck. It is closely related to those species, and is sometimes considered a subspecies of the former, but they are genetically well distinct.

There are two distinct populations of Mottled Ducks. One population lives on the Gulf of Mexico coast between Alabama and Tamaulipas (Mexico); outside the breeding season individual birds may venture as far south as to Veracruz. The other is resident in central and south Florida and occasionally strays north to Georgia.

The adult Mottled Duck is 15 inches long. It has a dark body, lighter head and neck, orange legs and dark eyes. Both sexes have a shiny green-blue speculum (wing patch), which is not bordered with white as with the Mallard. Male and female are similar, but the male's bill is bright yellow, whereas the female's has a greenish yellow hue.

The plumage is darker than in female Mallards, especially at the tail, and the bill is yellower. In flight, the lack of a white border to the speculum is a key difference. Another is the black spot at the gape of the bill. The American Black Duck is darker than Mottled Ducks, and has a bluer wing patch. The behaviour and voice are the same as for Mallard.

Mottled Ducks feed by dabbling in shallow water, and grazing on land. They mainly eat plants, but also some molluscs and aquatic insects. This duck is fairly common within its restricted range; they are resident all-year round and do not migrate. The breeding habitat is coastal marshes. The nest is built on the ground amongst vegetation.

This Mottled Duck was a stunning surprise at Lake Springfield in Springfield, IL. I photographed it at dawn in the Spring of 2004.

On my way into the office, immediately after taking several dozen photos of this rarity, I was involved in a serious car accident when a UPS truck ran a redlight and struck me at over 40 mph. As a cervical collar was being placed on my neck and I was being strapped to a back board, I was deeply worried...not about my health, but about my cameras! I pleaded with the police officer on scene to gather up my camera equipment and bring it to the hospital so my wife could take it home for me.

And the photos turned out fine! Priorities...

Contact Us

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If you wish to add your name to the recipient list, send an e-mail to info@isvma.org and ask to receive the E-SOURCE newsletter.

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