

Rocky Mountain Spotted Fever - IDPH Request for Information

From Connie Austin, DVM, ACVPM, Illinois Public Health Veterinarian

Local and state health departments have noted an increase in Rocky Mountain spotted fever in southern Illinois residents (humans) in 2008 as compared to past years. If veterinarians in this area have noted a similar increase in dogs with positive laboratory tests and clinical signs consistent with Rocky Mountain spotted fever the Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH) would appreciate it if they could drop us a note about how many they diagnose in a typical year versus this summer. Please contact Lauren Gross (e-mail: lauren.gross@illinois.gov) or call at 312-814-8463. Your information will give Public Health a better indication of Rocky Mountain spotted fever activity in this region of the state.

ISVMA Board to Meet with Students

The ISVMA Board of Directors is meeting at the College of Veterinary Medicine on Wednesday, September 10, 2008. After conducting Board business, they will host a lunch and open forum discussion with veterinary students. The purpose of the Open Forum with Students is to engage them in a discussion of issues that are important to them as the future leaders of veterinary medicine. This is the fourth consecutive year that the ISVMA Board of Directors has shared this event with the veterinary students.

Also, ISVMA Executive Director Peter Weber and Dr. Gregory Mauck, ISVMA Board Liaison to the College, are invited every year to participate in the orientation program for first year veterinary students. Dr. Rosemary LoGiudice, Director of the Membership and Field Service Division of AVMA, also participates. They welcome the students to the profession and share with them the importance of supporting organized veterinary medicine through membership in their local, state and national veterinary associations.

Dr. Mauck holds a series of CE programs for students each year that are sponsored by the ISVMA. He focuses on issues and experiences that the students will likely encounter in practice. Peter Weber has been invited for each of the last three years to instruct a class on "The Politics of Veterinary Medicine" that is sometimes as frightening as it is relevant and important.

These opportunities to engage students are critical to developing a future generation of leaders in the veterinary profession and assuring that organized veterinary medicine will continue to effectively advance the well-being of the veterinary profession, animals, the public and the environment.

The ISVMA very much appreciates the support of Dean Whiteley, the faculty, students and staff at the College of Veterinary Medicine. We have developed a very strong and productive relationship that benefits all veterinary professionals in Illinois and the students wherever they choose to practice.

ISVMA Practice Survey - Please Provide ISVMA with Important Updates

The membership renewal period is always very stressful for ISVMA staff. At this time every year, we learn about veterinarians that have changed jobs and/or locations since the last renewal period. If practices do not inform us of their staffing changes, it results in a chase for information that can become never-ending:

*Doctor "Smith" decides to leave Practice A to fill a vacant position at Practice B.
Practice B has a vacancy because one of their doctors went to work at Practice C.
Practice A hires a new doctor from Practice D to fill their vacant position.*

This job-change carousel can go on and on and on...

Please help by asking your practice manager to [fill out the survey](#) created by ISVMA intended to

help us update our database with information on your practice.

Additionally, please remember to contact ISVMA whenever you have a staffing change at your practice that involves a licensed professional (DVM or CVT).

ISVMA Convention Registration is Open - Don't Delay!

The ISVMA Annual Convention is being held at the Westin Yorktown Center in Lombard, IL on November 7-9, 2008. The printed prospectus (with detailed program descriptions and a registration form) will be mailed in the next few days. However, you have a chance to get an early jump on your colleagues and [register today!](#)

Early registration is strongly recommended if you wish to participate in one of the nine (9) wet labs being offered. The ISVMA wet labs have been very popular and sell out quickly. A description of each of the wet labs is available on the online registration form. ISVMA is still securing contracts and session descriptions from speakers; however, we have created a [list of speakers and topics](#) that we have already confirmed.

ISVMA has built a reputation for providing a high-quality, affordable and accessible continuing education program for its members. The ISVMA Annual Convention is the highlight of our education program and the ISVMA Education Planning Committee has put together a program based upon the expressed needs and desires of our membership. We have recruited well-known, highly-rated speakers to address topics that are relevant and important to you and your practice. The wet-labs have expanded each of the last three years and we are now offering them on all three days of the convention.

The increased requirements for CE in Illinois make it even more important that ISVMA continue to provide a high quality, affordable and accessible CE program for its members. You and your staff can attend the ISVMA Annual Convention without the high cost of airfare, extended hotel stays, and costly per diems. You can also **FULFILL YOUR ENTIRE CE REQUIREMENT** by attending the ISVMA Annual Convention each year.

We know that you have many options to meet your CE requirements. We hope that you will support ISVMA by attending our convention - it is for you!

About the Photo

The [Black-throated Sparrow](#) (*Amphispiza bilineata*) is a handsome sparrow that is primarily found in the southwestern United States and Mexico. It is commonly referred to as the "Desert Sparrow" due to its preferred habitat of arid desert scrub.

Despite its vivid markings, the Black-throated Sparrow is often difficult to detect among the rocks and scrub, especially when it is not moving about. However, it may be observed when it mounts a bush or rock to sing its pleasant song. The Black-throated Sparrow is well adapted to the extremes of its habitat. Studies have shown that it has a great tolerance for heat and drought. During the hot months of late summer and early fall it maintains itself on dry seeds and drinks regularly at water holes. After the rains, these sparrows scatter into small flocks and feed on vegetation and insects, from which they derive all the moisture they need. They raise their young in the dry upland desert.

It reaches a length of about 4.5-5.5 inches, and is pale gray above, with a distinctive black and white head pattern. The sexes are alike and immature birds are similar but lack a black throat. Black-throated Sparrows typically travel in small groups, though larger groups may accumulate around sources of water in the desert.

The start of the breeding season for Black-throated Sparrows is determined by the onset of midsummer rains in the desert, with second broods common in years with plentiful rainfall. Nests started later in the season have a greater chance of being parasitized by Bronzed and Brown-headed Cowbirds. Altered fire regimes have caused declining habitat quality throughout their range. Frequent, cool-burning fires produce the best combination of open areas and short shrubs, but fires

are now both less frequent and hotter.

I photographed this Black-throated Sparrow in Portal, AZ in May 2008.

Contact Us

Please feel free to forward this issue of the E-SOURCE to veterinarians that are not receiving ISVMA's electronic newsletter. Any ISVMA member may subscribe to the E-SOURCE for free:

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.

ISVMA values your membership and does not want to send you any unwanted email. If you would like to be removed from this member service, please email info@isvma.org.