

here & there

PET HEALTH

Tick talk

Atlantic Canada in the Lyme-light

**Michelle
Evason**

Animal
Talk

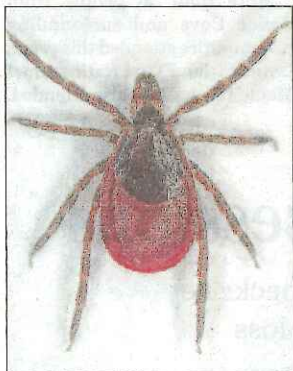


Spring has finally sprung in Atlantic Canada, and along with the influx of tourists there is something small, dark coloured and creepy on everyone's mind. I'm talking ticks, and it's not possible to discuss ticks in this part of Canada without also having a conversation about Lyme disease.

The cause of Lyme disease is a bacterium that is transmitted when a black legged tick, *Ixodes scapularis*, bites, attaches and feeds. Ticks love a hot meal, and for a tick that 'meal' can frequently take the form of a dog, cat, horse or human (adult or child). We humans are even more likely to become a moveable feast for ticks as the weather gets warmer and we head out to work or play in areas that can be tick-infested, such as the forest, long grasses and beautiful nature that surrounds us in this part of Canada.

As a veterinarian, I spend a lot of time talking about ticks, and probably even more time talking about Lyme disease. Unfortunately, despite the attention and concern surrounding Lyme disease, people often forget to take steps to prevent it—for themselves or the family pet. Prevention of Lyme disease is best achieved by remembering to take steps daily to prevent these ticks (or any other ticks that can cause disease) from taking a blood meal in the first place.

A few simple additions to your



DR. KATIE CLOW, UNIVERSITY OF GUELPH PHOTO
Deer or blacklegged tick, *Ixodes scapularis*, that transmits the bacterium that causes Lyme disease



MICHELLE EVASON, UPEI

UPEI is making puppy steps toward improving understanding of Canine Lyme disease. Participating Canadian K9 Lifetime (Lyme) Study puppy – 2018.

If you are TICKED off.... help us to learn more!

In 2017, due to concerns regarding the increase in canine Lyme disease in Canada, veterinarians Michelle Evason and Scott Weese launched the Canadian K9 Lifetime (Lyme) study. The Atlantic Canada branch of the study is now open for enrolment of puppies (older than seven months of age) and their owners through participating veterinary clinics in Atlantic Canada. If you would like to help us better understand canine Lyme disease and dog health, speak to your veterinary clinic about enrolling your puppy. <https://www.canadian-k9.com>

daily routine will provide tick prevention and allow you to enjoy the outdoor beauty of Atlantic Canada, while keeping your loved ones, human and furry family members, and yourself safe.

For people: Wear closed shoes, long sleeves and pants—particularly when walking in long grass, dense brush or forests. Tuck in your shirt and tuck your pants into your socks, and use bug spray with DEET.

For pets: Check for ticks regularly and remove promptly; speak to your veterinarian to ensure you are using safe, effective medication to prevent ticks from causing disease in your pets.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Lyme disease in people: Canada.ca/LymeDisease

Information on ticks and Lyme disease: <https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/diseases/lyme-disease/lyme-disease-awareness-resources.html>

<https://www.pet-sandticks.com>

Pets and ticks, including tick submission information if you want to send in ticks found on your pet. <https://www.pet-sandticks.com>

Preventing ticks in your yard
https://www.cdc.gov/lyme/prev/in_the_yard.html

Next time in Animal Talk:
Proper care of finches

Dr. Michelle Evason is an associate professor at the Atlantic Veterinary College, University of Prince Edward Island, and adjunct professor at the University of Guelph. She is a member of the P.E.I. Veterinary Medical Association, one of the member groups of the P.E.I. Companion Animal Welfare Initiative (CAWI), the goal of which is to improve the

welfare of owned and unowned companion animals on P.E.I. Animal Talk appears bi-monthly in The Guardian. Other members of CAWI are the P.E.I. Cat Action Team, P.E.I.

Department of Agriculture and Forestry, P.E.I. 4-H, Sir James Dunn Animal Welfare Centre at AVC, SpayAid P.E.I., and the P.E.I. Humane Society. For more information, see gov.pe.ca/agriculture/CAWI. Readers may send questions related to the well-being of owned and unowned companion animals to askcawi@gmail.com.

Happy adoption



AMELIA WEBER PHOTO

Boo was adopted in May, 2016. "Boo is like no other bunny, his favourite food is cereal and his best friend is a cat. He's so cuddly and has such a big personality! Couldn't have asked for a better bunny to adopt," Amelia said.