

# BiTeRS

Vol. 1 Issue 1

Fall 2021

Border Tick  
*Rickettsia* Surveillance

## Welcome to the BiTeRS Newsletter!

This newsletter is a place for all things tick-related in the southwestern US, as well as a way to stay in contact with program news.

## Keep Collecting Those Ticks!

As we move into fall, brown dog ticks will become less active. In cooler, more humid areas, the western black-legged tick will begin to emerge, and we may continue to see American dog ticks through the fall. Because of this, year-round tick prevention for people and pets is important!

## Tick Training and Tick Hunters Available

Do you wish that you knew more about ticks? Does your organization or workplace have tick-related concerns? We can help! BiTeRS offers:

- Tick collection team: We come to you, collect your ticks, and test them for diseases!
- Tick education: Courses customized to your needs, location, and tick-related concerns
- Assistance setting up tick surveillance plans

Contact us to discuss options!

Questions? Comments? Want more information? Contact us at [Calticks@pacvec.us](mailto:Calticks@pacvec.us) (California) or [AZTicks@pacvec.us](mailto:AZTicks@pacvec.us) (Arizona)

## Tick of the Month: The Brown Dog Tick

Like its name suggests, the brown dog tick is brown in color and prefers to feed on dogs. It often lives in homes, yards, and kennels. It is responsible for spreading Rocky Mountain spotted fever to humans and dogs in western North America.



Did you know: The scientific name for the brown dog tick is *Rhipicephalus sanguineus*, and it is actually two species. However, they look almost identical and apparently spread the same diseases.

## Ticks by the Numbers

So far, the BiTeRS program has identified...

- 450 ticks from Arizona and California
- Three different species of ticks
- Four types of *Rickettsia* bacteria
- Approximately 9% of ticks so far have been positive for at least one *Rickettsia* species bacteria

## Tick Fact of the Month

Not all *Rickettsia* species of bacteria cause disease. Many of the rickettsial bacteria we identify in ticks are a normal part of the tick's flora and don't cause illness in humans.

## In the BiTeRS Spotlight

Janet Foley is a veterinarian, mistress of all things tick, and the leader of BiTeRS. Her laboratory is the home for BiTeRS tick ID and testing at UC Davis, where she has been a faculty member since about 2000. She has done tick-related research on species ranging from voles to horses and everything in between! Her favorite tick species is *Ixodes angustus* and her favorite non-tick critters are Misty the dog and Piper the cat.



Dawn Gouge is an entomologist who works on pests that negatively impact human health. Dawn's lab is located in Maricopa Arizona. Since 2000 she has worked with communities to reduce health risks related to pests and pest management practices.

Maureen Brophy is a Ph.D. candidate in Kathleen Walker's lab at the University of Arizona Department of Entomology and Insect Science. Passionate about vector-borne disease prevention and all things data, she has supported tribal public health in Arizona since 2013 through her roles as an epidemiologist, health communications specialist, and overall advocate. In her free time, she spends her days with her family, outdoors, or trying new recipes - often a combination of the three!



Stay tuned to meet more team members in the next issue!

Visit our webpage at  
<https://pacvec.us/biters/>

We're adding content regularly. What tick related info would you like to see on the website? Let us know!



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