

Region 8 Zoonosis Control Newsletter



Public Health Region 8 | Zoonosis Control
Texas Department of State Health Services
[Region 8 - Zoonosis Control](#) | Region8.Zoonosis@dshs.texas.gov

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Spring Salutations

By: Amanda Kieffer

Happy Spring everyone! Welcome to the latest Region 8 Zoonosis Newsletter. We are excited to bring you some important updates and new training opportunities. Many of you have been asking for a snake handling course and we are excited to offer that next month! Space is limited so get your registration in soon! This newsletter will also include a summary of our 2023 case data as well as some fun updates on what our team has been up to – from ORVP (Oral Rabies Vaccination Program) to CTOS (Counter Terrorism Operations Support). Wishing you all a wonderful Spring Season!

Zoonosis News

Total Solar Eclipse 2024

Texas and a large portion of Region 8 will be in the “Path of Totality” for the total solar eclipse on April 8, 2024. There will be an estimated one million visitors traveling to Texas for this event, with a large majority choosing our very own Hill Country for the best views.

Wondering how the eclipse might affect animals? Check out this article by USA Today: [April's Total Solar Eclipse Will Bring A Surreal Silence And Confuse All Sorts Of Animals](#)

Rabies Poster Contest

The DSHS annual Rabies Awareness and Prevention Poster Contest is currently taking applications for poster submissions. The deadline is April 1, 2024. You can find more information about the contest here: [Rabies Awareness & Prevention Poster Contest](#).



2023 Rabies Update

By: Jon Stewart

Annual Rabies Update: January – December 2023

Between January and December of 2023, skunks reigned supreme and made up 44% of the positive rabies reports, followed by bats (34%). There were also six raccoons (10%), five foxes (8%), one cat (1%), and one bovine (1%).

Positive Rabies Cases in Animals, Region 8

January 1, 2023 – December 31, 2023

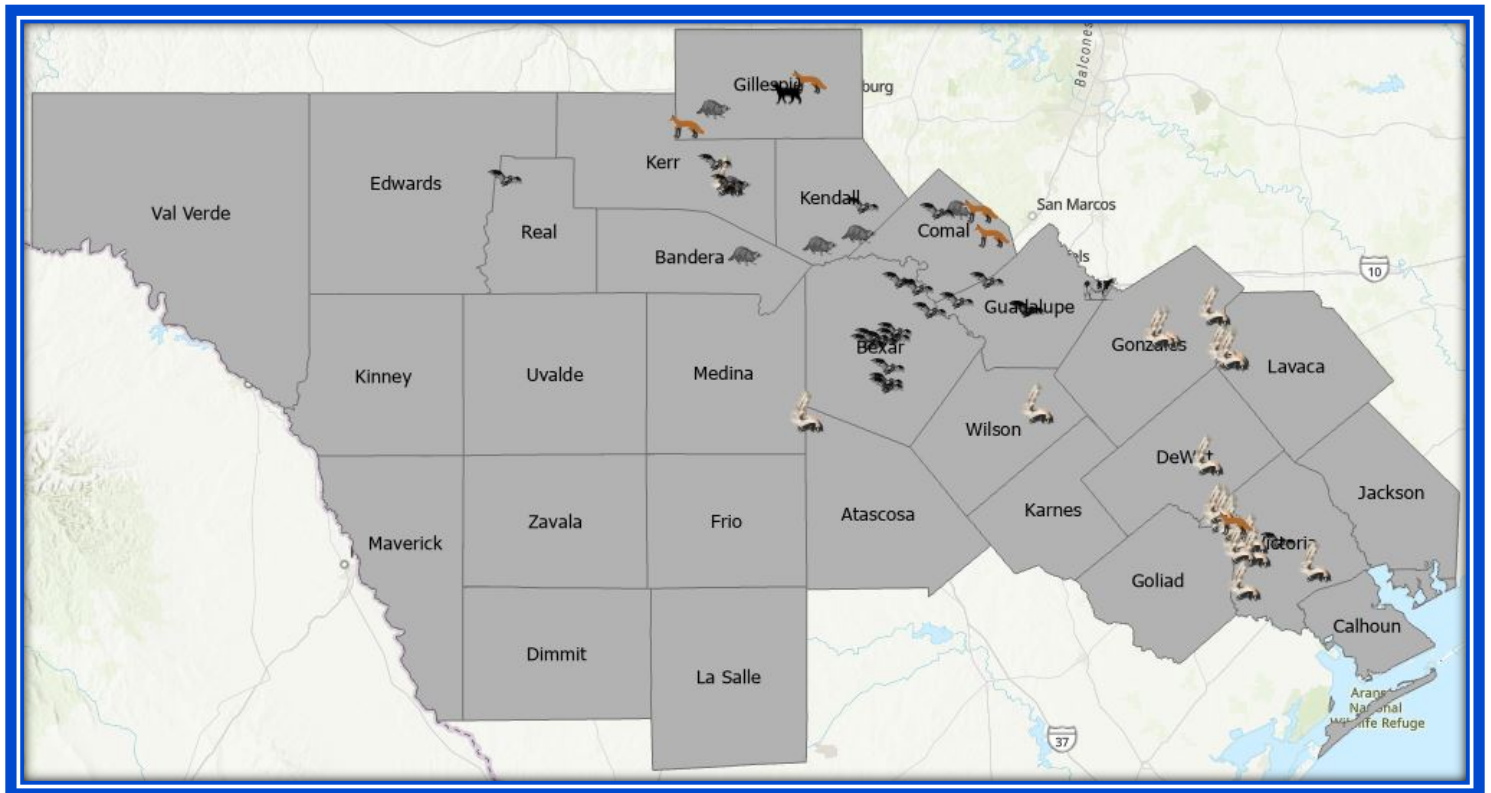
	Bat	Cat	Dog	Fox	Raccoon	Skunk	Other	All
Atascosa						2		2
Bandera					1			1
Bexar	11							11
Comal	1			2	1			4
DeWitt						1		1
Edwards	1							1
Gillespie		1		2	1			4
Gonzales						3		3
Guadalupe	4						1 ^A	5
Kendall	1				2			3
Kerr	2				1	2		5
Lavaca						5		5
Victoria	1			1		14		16
Wilson						1		1
Totals	21	1	0	5	6	28	1	62

^A – Bovine

2023 Rabies Update *cont.*

By: Jon Stewart

**Map of Positive Rabies Cases in Animals, Region 8
January 1, 2023 – December 31, 2023**



2024 Rabies Update

By: Jon Stewart

Annual Rabies Update: January – March 2024

Between January and March of 2024, the eleven skunks make up 46% of the positive rabies reports, followed by eight bats (33%) and five foxes (21%).

Positive Rabies Cases in Animals, Region 8

January 1, 2024 – March 22, 2024

	Bat	Cat	Dog	Fox	Raccoon	Skunk	Other	All
Bexar	3							3
Comal	1			2		1		4
Gillespie						1		1
Gonzales						2		2
Guadalupe	2							2
Kendall				3				3
Kerr						4		4
Lavaca						1		1
Medina	1							1
Victoria	1					2		3
Totals	8	0	0	5	0	11	0	24





Human Notifiable Zoonoses

Reportable Zoonotic Disease Cases in Humans, Region 8*

January 1, 2023 – December 31, 2023

Condition	Confirmed	Probable	Suspect	All
Anaplasma phagocytophilum	1			1
Chagas	1			1
Brucellosis	1			1
Ehrlichiosis		1		1
Lyme	1			1
Malaria ⁺	7			7
Typhus, flea-borne (<i>endemic, murine</i>)	3	41		44
West Nile Virus		1		1
Total	14	43	0	57

January 1, 2024 – March 22, 2024

Condition	Confirmed	Probable	Suspect	All
Malaria ⁺	2			2
Typhus, flea-borne (<i>endemic, murine</i>)		2		2
Total	2	2		4

* DSHS case counts may differ from those reported by local jurisdictions as DSHS does not report cases until epidemiological investigations are complete. Totals listed do not include those investigated by other Local Health Departments (SAMHD).

+ Case counts from these conditions include travel-related associated infections acquired outside of Texas or outside of the United States by residents of PHR8.



Canine Respiratory Disease

By: Amanda Kieffer

Canine Infectious Respiratory Disease Complex (CIRDC), more commonly known as “kennel cough” is a contagious sickness of dogs that affects the respiratory system. This illness can be caused by a combination of viruses and/or bacteria. The classic signs of CIRDC include flu-like symptoms such as cough, sneezing, and runny nose or eyes. Most dogs recover uneventfully with supportive care such as anti-inflammatory medications to reduce fever and fluids to treat dehydration. Antibiotics may also be used when bacterial infection is involved.

Cases of CIRDC have been gradually increasing in recent years. In late 2023, a more severe form of CIRDC was reported in sporadic outbreaks across the country. This more severe form was resistant was linked to severe pneumonia and in some cases, death. Investigation is ongoing to determine if there is a new pathogen linked to the increased outbreaks. For more information on these studies, click the links below.

[Colorado Department of Agriculture](#)

[University of New Hampshire](#)

What Can You Do To Protect Dogs From CIRDC?

Most cases of CIRDC are spread through close contact with infected dogs. The risk of infection is higher in kennel and shelter settings. Below are some tips on protecting dogs from infection:

- **Vaccinate** – Vaccines reduce the chances of dogs becoming sick and spreading infections to other dogs. Because the CIRDC illness can be caused by a combination of different viruses and bacteria, multiple vaccines can help prevent illness. All dogs should receive the recommended “[core](#)” vaccines and dogs that are in multiple-dog settings should also receive the *Bordetella* (kennel cough) vaccine. If canine influenza virus is circulating in the community, that vaccine is also recommended. Your veterinarian can help you decide which vaccines are best.
- **Separate** – Shelters should isolate sick dogs from healthy dogs and quarantine all new intakes to watch for possible symptoms. Pet owners should keep dogs away from sick or unfamiliar dogs.
- **Educate** – If you plan to travel, educate yourself on potential outbreaks in the area. Delay or avoid travel with your dog to places where outbreaks are occurring. Stay informed by asking your veterinarian or checking veterinary resources.

For more information:

[AVMA - Pet Toolkit, CIRDC](#)

[AAHA - What We Know About the Outbreak](#)

[Colorado Department of Agriculture](#)

[University of New Hampshire](#)

CTOS – Center for Radiological/Nuclear Testing

By: Jon Stewart

Counterterrorism Operations Support (CTOS) conducts training courses to first responders and other support personnel who provide immediate support services during prevention, response, and recovery operations.

I was able to participate in the three-day training course led by instructors who trained students how to deal with incidents involving radiological or nuclear weapons of mass destruction (WMD). It was divided into different levels and is aimed at various types of responders like firefighters, medical workers, law enforcement, and public health practitioners.

The course enabled us to learn:

- Recognizing incidents and knowing how to respond.
- Understanding the protective gear needed.
- How to decontaminate people in these situations.
- How to set up zones during these incidents.
- How to use certain devices to find harmful materials.
- How to search areas for dangerous substances.
- Evaluating the effectiveness of response actions and knowing how to end the emergency phase.

The training is valuable because it equips responders with the knowledge and skills needed to effectively deal with incidents involving radiological or nuclear WMD. By understanding how to recognize and respond to these threats, as well as knowing how to protect themselves and others, responders can mitigate the risks and consequences of such incidents, ultimately enhancing public safety and security. Additionally, the course helps establish coordinated response protocols and procedures, ensuring a more efficient and effective emergency response in the event of a radiological or nuclear WMD incident.

Funding provided by the Federal Emergency Management Agency/National Preparedness Directorate (FEMA/NPD) U.S. Department of Homeland Security.

For more information: <https://www.ctosnnsa.org/pdfs/Resident%20Course%20Flyer.pdf>



2024 Oral Rabies Vaccination Program

By: Rachel Panneton

What is it?

The DSHS Oral Rabies Vaccination Program (ORVP) aims to control and prevent domestic dog/coyote variant rabies and gray fox variant rabies in Texas.

This Year Summary

The 30th annual ORVP bait airdrop occurred January 9 – 20, 2024, with operations out of Edinburg, Del Rio, and Alpine. The project was completed 2 days earlier than scheduled due to clear weather and efficient flying. The map represents the Border Maintenance Zone encompassing this year's ORVP mission.

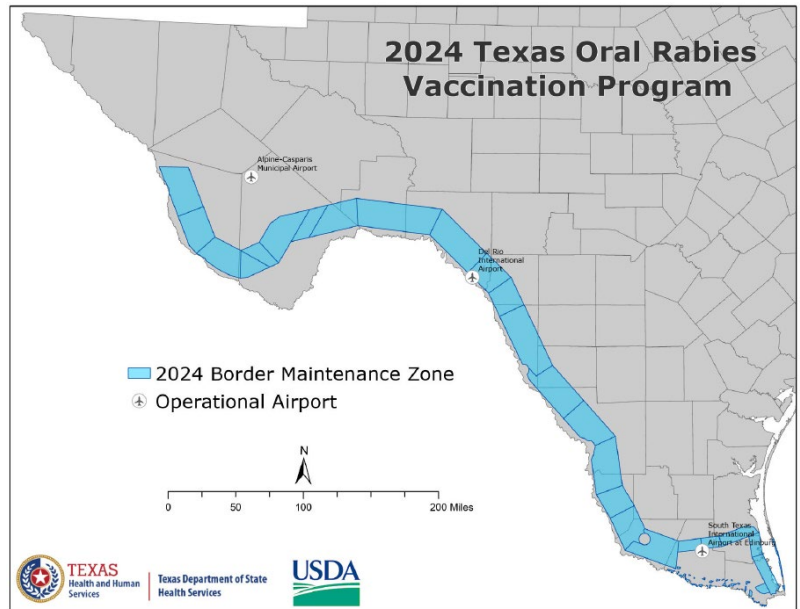
The team conducted between 8 to 12 flights per day at 500 to 1,000 feet above ground level along half-mile interval lines and dispensing around 64-70 baits per square mile. In total, there were 83 separate flights that flew 29,343 miles for over 216 hours. There was over 12,488 square miles baited in 18 different counties with 820,200 oral rabies vaccine baits.

This project included collaboration of agency staff from the Texas Department of State Health Services (DSHS) Zoonosis Control (ZC), U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), USDA National Rabies Management Program (NRMP), Texas Wildlife Services, Texas Military Department, and as well as flight staff from Dynamic Aviation.

For more information:

<https://www.dshs.texas.gov/rabies/oral-rabies-vaccination-program-orvp>

<https://www.dshs.texas.gov/rabies/oral-rabies-vaccination-program-orvp/summary>





Continuing Education (CE) Courses

Diseases in Nature Conference (DIN)

DIN is a conference highlighting epidemiological investigations, clinical case studies, basic and applied research, and other topics in emerging and current zoonotic and environmentally-acquired infectious diseases. The conference's goal is to increase knowledge and awareness of these diseases within the veterinary, medical, public health, and academic research communities.

Location: Texas A&M Hotel and Conference Center
177 Joe Routt Boulevard, College Station, TX 77843

Date: May 22nd – May 24th, 2024

For more information: <https://www.diseasesinnature.com/>

Spring 2024 Vector CEU Workshops

Registration is open for the Spring Vector CEU workshops. Each class is 5-hrs long and will include breakfast and lunch. 5 CEUs will be available for AG pesticide, SPCS, Animal Control, Code Enforcement and Registered Sanitarian.

Location: San Antonio, TX

Date: April 4th, 2024

Register at: <https://agriferegister.tamu.edu/ento-ev-064>

Registration fee is \$50.00.

Advanced Mosquito Identification Course

Texas A&M AgriLife Extension and the City of New Orleans Mosquito, Termite and Rodent Control Board and Mosquito BEACONS is hosting an Advanced Mosquito Identification Workshop in San Antonio, Texas at the San Antonio Garden Center. This course is a one-and-a-half-day event offering a comprehensive overview of mosquito biology, mosquito-borne diseases, QGIS for mapping, operational integrated mosquito management, and common and invasive mosquito species of the Gulf South identification workshops via microscopy and genetic analysis, among other topics.

Location: San Antonio, TX (San Antonio Garden Center)

Date: August 28th – 29th, 2024

Register at: <https://agriferegister.tamu.edu/ento-ev-074>

Registration fee is \$75.00.



Region 8 Courses

Snake Handling Class*

April 9th, 2024 | 1:00 – 4:00pm | San Antonio

Learn about the most common snakes encountered in Region 8 and how to safely handle and relocate them. Course will include classroom instruction and live snake handling demonstration.

**Participants will have to sign a waiver to register for course*

ACO Basic Course

May 7th – 9th, 2024 | 9:00 – 4:00pm | Seguin

The ACO Basic Course will meet the training requirements of HSC Chapter 829 and will include 12 hours of classroom instruction on the 1st and 2nd day with testing on the 3rd day.

LRCA CE Course

July 24th, 2024 | 12:00 – 4:00pm | Universal City

The Local Rabies Control Authority (LRCA) course will cover the following topics:

- Rabies Statistics and Trends
- Texas Rabies Laws and Administrative Rules
- Rabies Lab Submission
- Case Scenarios/Investigations

To register for any of the above three courses,

Contact Rachel Panneton at:

rachel.panneton@dshs.texas.gov / 210-774-1653

Future CE Course Topics

If you have any suggestions or requests for future CE Course topics, please let us know by emailing us at:

Region8.Zoonosis@dshs.texas.gov

For More ACO CE Course Information:

<https://www.dshs.texas.gov/notifiable-conditions/zoonosis-control/education/animal-control-officers/dshs-aco-training-course>



ACO Manual Online

The ACO Training Manual is available for **free** on the [DSHS website](#).

Note: Updates to the manual are posted and represented by dates in parenthesis beside each chapter.

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