

March 11th Presenters

Our March PSA meeting presenters were Andy Reed and Mike Rinkevitch. They discussed Ticks in Erie county.

Andy Reed has a background in Wildlife Biology and works as an **Environmental Protection Specialist** with the Erie County Department of Health and is a member of the Northwest Pennsylvania Tick Task Force.

Mike Rinkevitch is a lifelong outdoorsman. He is an **Environmental Protection Specialist** and has worked for the Erie County Department of Health for over thirty years.

Some of the topics discussed included a brief overview of the ticks found in Northwestern PA, prevention of tick bites and tick-borne disease, and the symptoms and signs of Lyme Disease.

3/11/2020 –PSA Membership meeting Presenter Notes (taken from PowerPoint supplied by presenter).

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Ticks, Lyme Disease and You

- Ticks are arachnids—like spiders or mites. Ticks are NOT insects!
- Ticks are external parasites that feed on blood.
- Ticks can carry disease-causing microbes!
- Ticks can be active in winter
 - Adult stage deer ticks will be active on any day that the ground is not snow covered or frozen
 - Deer ticks can survive up to 2 months without feeding



- A Deer ticks life cycle can take up to 2 years for a tick to complete
- Eggs-2,000-3,000!
- Larva-only six legs before developing eight as a nymph
- Nymph-most likely phase to spread Lyme disease
- Adult females lay eggs

How do Ticks find a host?

- Ticks do NOT jump onto people
- Ticks “quest” for a host
- Deer ticks are easy to miss on your skin, they can look like a poppy seed
- Tick bites are generally painless
- Prevention includes creating a “Tick Free Zone”

1	Tick zone	Avoid areas with forest and brush where deer, rodents, and ticks are common.
2	Wood chip barrier	Use a 3 ft. barrier of wood chips or rock to separate the “tick zone” and rock walls from the lawn.
3	Wood pile	Keep wood piles on the wood chip barrier, away from the home.
4	Tick migration zone	Maintain a 9 ft. barrier of lawn between the wood chips and areas such as patios, gardens, and play sets.
5	Tick safe zone	Enjoy daily living activities such as gardening and outdoor play inside this perimeter.
6	Gardens	Plant deer resistant crops. If desired, an 8-ft. fence can keep deer out of the yard.
7	Play sets	Keep play sets in the “tick safe zone” in sunny areas where ticks have difficulty surviving.

Based on a diagram by K. Stafford, Connecticut Agricultural Experiment Station

around your home

Dress Appropriately including:

- Hat, socks and shoes/boots, long pants, long sleeves and Duct Tape pant cuffs.
- Use commercially made clothing with built in tick repellent or
- Treat your own clothes with permethrin for tick repellent

Other Precautions:

- Stay on the marked trails when walking.
- Use insect repellent formulated for ticks
- DEET (20-30%)
- Oil of Lemon Eucalyptus, Cedar oil, Other holistic solutions

(Continued on next Page, page 4)

(Ticks Continued)

- Apply according to manufacturer recommendations
- Dry clothes when you get home, THEN wash
- Deer ticks can survive submerged for 2-3 days!
- Shower once coming indoors
- Check your hairline, ears, and neck
- Check warm, dark places
- Check yourself for ticks after outdoor activities.

Removing Ticks Safely:

- Don't panic if you find an attached tick
- Use fine-tipped tweezers or a tool called a Tick Key
- Grasp tick as close to skin surface as possible
- Pull upward with steady, even pressure
- Do not twist or jerk
- Clean skin with soap and water or rubbing alcohol
- Avoid folklore tick removal practices
- Painting tick with nail polish, applying petroleum jelly, burning tick with match
- Can agitate tick and force it to regurgitate into bloodstream
- Once removed, place tick in a sealed bag or bottle and label with date and location
- Identify the tick that bit you. ECDH will identify ticks for you but does not test for Lyme Disease
- www.ticklab.org East Stroudsburg University will test for Lyme Disease
- Erie County Dept. of Health, 606 W 2nd St, Erie PA 15607
- Contact your physician—early treatment helps in recovery

Lyme Disease:

- Pennsylvania leads the nation in reported cases of Lyme Disease

- 10,001 cases of Lyme Disease reported in PA in 2018
- Lyme Disease is a bacterial disease caused by *Borrelia burgdorferi* bacterium.
- Lyme Disease can be transmitted via deer ticks, *Ixodes scapularis*.
- Deer ticks are not born with Lyme Disease!
- Produces different symptoms at different times.
- Not all symptoms may be experienced.
- Symptoms include:
- Red, expanding “bullseye” rash (only 70-80%)
- Chills, fever, headache, muscle and joint aches
- If left untreated, can result in arthritis, facial palsy
- 24 Hour Rule: For most tick-borne diseases, you have at least 24 hours to find and remove a feeding tick before it transmits an infection.
- Check for Ticks Carefully!
- Treatment is Appropriate antibiotics in the early stages of Lyme disease
- Doxycycline
- Amoxicillin
- Cefuroxime axetil
- Late stage Lyme disease is treated with longer course of antibiotic therapy.
- Other species of Concern in PA. - Blacklegged Tick, Lone Star Tick, Dog Tick

