

PROGRAM ACTIVITY REPORT (PAR)

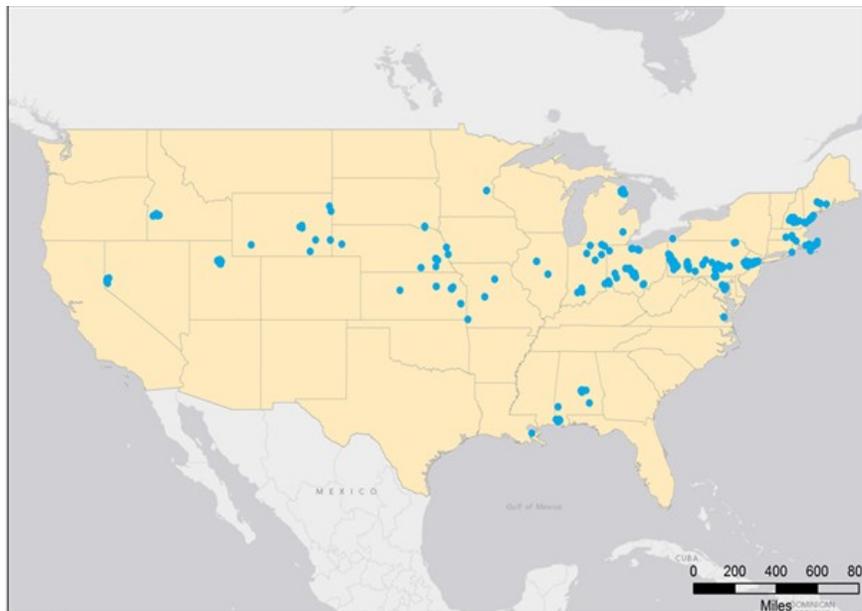


Baylisascaris procyonis

During the last decade *Baylisascaris procyonis*, commonly referred to as raccoon roundworm, has become recognized as a cause of a severe debilitating disease, Baylisascariasis, in humans and in multiple animal species. The definitive host, raccoons (*Procyon lotor*) are pervasive throughout rural, suburban, and urban settings. Raccoons readily adapt to living in peridomestic settings; exploiting opportunistic food sources (gardens, compost bins, bird feeders, garbage, and pet food), building dens in attics, crawl spaces, under porches, and benefiting from a lack of predation and hunting pressures.

B. procyonis is geographically distributed across the United States with prevalence estimates ranging from 10%-82%. Local prevalence rates can vary over time due to natural migration and translocation of animals (either accidental or intentional.) Thus, it is imperative that public health and school officials, physi-

cians, wildlife professionals, and veterinarians are aware of the potential health risks *B. procyonis* can pose to both humans and animals.



• Baylisascaris samples

Distribution of the *Baylisascaris* species samples submitted from June 2011 to June 2012. (Note: Samples submitted from Florida are not represented on this map.)

The NWDP initiated a *Baylisascaris* surveillance project in June of 2011 in order to determine the apparent prevalence and distribution of *Baylisascaris* species in raccoon and skunk populations at a national scale; to identify and document factors associated with *B. procyonis* expansion; correlate human cases with infection rates in

wildlife and domestic animals; and compile risk assessment maps for humans living in endemic areas. The *Baylisascaris* surveillance project will end July 13th. Thus far, NWDP biologists and cooperators have submitted over 1,295 samples collected in twenty-three states.

Wildlife technician, Emily L. Blizzard, is working on completing the screening process and compiling results for the *Baylisascaris* surveillance project before she starts a doctoral program in the fall. Emily will be joining the Department of Microbiology, Immunology, and Pathology at Colorado State University

where she will conduct research on vector-borne diseases.

For more information contact Emily Blizzard.

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The original artwork on this page was created by the National Wildlife Disease Program's Erika Kampe and Sarah Goff