

# I-TICK NEWSLETTER

SUMMER 2021



## I-TICK UPDATES

Thank you for your interest and participation in the I-TICK program!! As we are still in tick season, the I-TICK team wants to first remind everyone to perform tick checks after activities in natural areas!

For those who have been participating in the I-TICK program since 2018 or 2019, you may know that we distributed “tick kits” to “Hubs” throughout Illinois. Due to COVID-19, we have transitioned to focus more on participation via The Tick App to satisfy social distancing protocols. Download The Tick App now to report your tick encounters which will help our research tremendously. With The Tick App, you can learn about how to remove ticks safely, how to identify ticks, and more. Below are just a few great features on The Tick App include:



### Daily Log

Complete logs to learn about your outdoor habits!



### Report a Tick

If you find a tick, you can report it here.



### Tick Activity

Find information on tick activity and nearby tick encounters.





### Remove a Tick

Find out how to safely remove a tick if someone is bitten



### Tick Prevention

Find information on tick safety and how to prevent tick bites



### Tick 101

Find information on how to identify ticks

Participants may still send ticks through the mail. The only difference is we are no longer providing kits to the hubs throughout Illinois. For the new guidelines on how to mail your ticks, please check our FAQ section on our website: <https://vetmed.illinois.edu/i-tick/faqs/>.

## I-TICK Field Team

Our field team has been working hard this summer dragging and identifying ticks in the lab! We've caught Lone star, Deer, Dog, and most recently, Gulf coast ticks! We also came across our first "tick bombs" of the season during our last drags in sites across Southern Illinois. The bottom right photo is an example of what a tick bomb looks like after it's been lint-rolled. Those tiny reddish-brown specs are actually tick larvae that were collected from our drag!



Some of our team identifying ticks in the lab.



Dragging at Sibley Pheasant Habitat Area.



Collecting a female Lone Star tick crawling on a drag.



Some recently hatched tick larvae on a lint roller. They're so small that we aren't able to grab them with tweezers!



# NEWS AND PUBLICATIONS



Dr. Rebecca Smith, Program leader and epidemiologist

The Chicago Sun-Times recently published a story on ticks, I-Tick, and The Tick App! In it, experts, including Program leader and epidemiologist at UIUC, Rebecca Lee Smith, discuss tips on avoiding ticks, the rise in Lyme disease cases, and how The Tick App is helping researchers understand the prevalence of these blood suckers. Read the article [here](#).

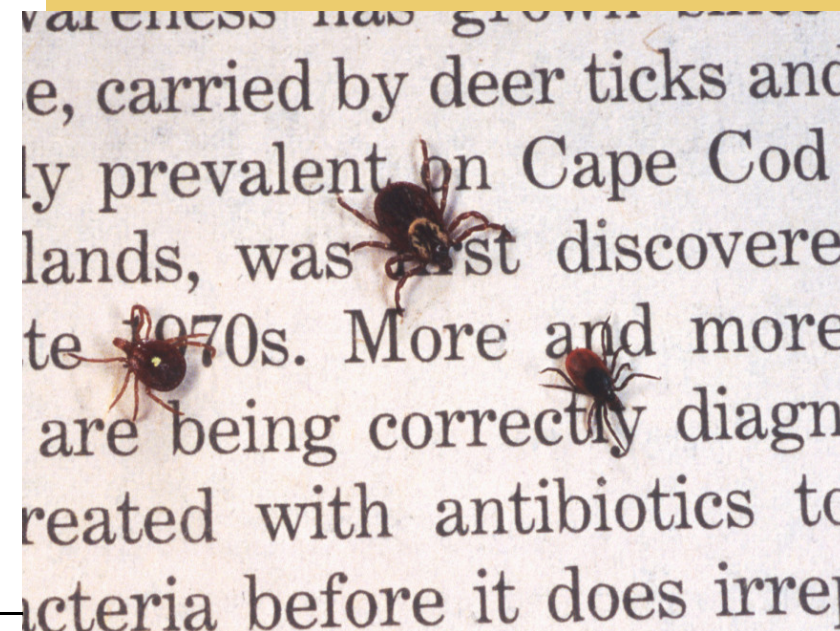
We'd like to give a huge congratulations to one of our amazing I-TICK coordinators, Lee Ann Lyons, who is now a DVM, PhD! She successfully defended her thesis earlier this summer and you can read her paper on contributions of passive and active tick collection methods, including findings from the first year of the I-TICK program, [here](#)!



Dr. Lee Ann Lyons. I-TICK coordinator

It was a busy summer for Lee Ann because she also did a radio interview with John Landecker on WGN Radio 720! She discusses tick removal tips, a new tick species invading Illinois, and answers callers' questions in this humorous and educational interview. Listen [here](#).

Right to left: Female Blacklegged tick, American Dog tick and Lone Star tick. (Photo by Getty Images)





### Check for ticks frequently.

Look especially behind **knees, armpits, groin**, and in **hair/behind ears**. On **dogs**, look around the **head/ears, belly, tail, and paws**. Remove ticks with fine-tipped tweezers and save in a tightly-sealed container.



### Dry, then wash.

Remove clothes upon arriving home from outdoor areas and **dry on HIGH for 10-15 minutes** to kill loose ticks. Ticks can survive the wash.



### Save and report any ticks.

The **TickApp** is a free smartphone app to send a photo of your tick and receive relevant information. For more information check out: <https://thetickapp.org/>. Available from Google Play and the AppStore.

## How to avoid becoming a meal while hunting for yours



Tick bites can transmit germs that cause illnesses like Lyme disease, Rocky Mountain Spotted Fever, or even trigger a red-meat allergy.



### Treat gear before you go.

**Permethrin (0.5%)** is an odorless fabric spray that repels and kills ticks on contact with clothing for **up to 4-6 weeks** per application as directed.



### Use EPA-approved repellent on exposed skin.

Products like **20-30% DEET spray, LipoDEET lotion, picaridin**, or **IR3535** offer excellent repellency of ticks and other biting pests.



### Protect your dog.

Dogs can also get tick-borne illnesses, or bring loose ticks home. Talk to your vet about an effective tick preventative, and **use it whenever outdoors - even in winter**.

And finally, we'd like to give a special thank you to our rock stars in Jackson, Sangamon, Cumberland, and Pope Counties! We really appreciate your continuous support and ticks!

**Still have questions about I-TICK? Please see our website:**  
<https://vetmed.illinois.edu/i-tick/> or email us at [itick@vetmed.illinois.edu](mailto:itick@vetmed.illinois.edu)

