UGA Extension Meriwether County ANR E-Newsletter

May 12, 2017

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PEST OF THE WEEK

Ticks on the Move

Recently I was hiking on the Pine Mountain trail. As I stopped to photograph a plant I instantly felt something on my left leg in multiple places. When I looked down I counted four ticks. They seemed to have come out of nowhere. A few days later, I managed to have another tick encounter. I've also had calls in the office about ticks in yards. And this week a farmer friend found one on his hand while we were sitting eating lunch. So I believe I can truthfully say that tick season is here.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) there are five species of ticks present in Georgia, the American dog tick (*Dermacentor variabilis*), the blacklegged tick (*Ioxdes scapularis*), the brown dog tick (*Rhipicephalus sanguineus*), the gulf coast tick (*Amblyomma maculatum*), and the lone star tick (*Amblyomma americanum*). Only three of these are likely to be found on humans in Georgia: the American dog tick, the blacklegged tick and the lone star tick.

The American dog tick's preferred host is, as the name suggest, dogs but it will feed on other large animals including humans. Both the blacklegged tick and the lone star tick will feed on deer, dogs, birds, small rodents, livestock and humans. Besides being problematic as blood feeders all three of these species are able to vector or transmit bacteria that cause diseases in humans.

The American dog tick is the primary vector of Rocky Mountain spotted fever in Georgia. Lyme disease is vectored by the blacklegged tick. Southern tick-associated rash illness (STARI), a disease with symptoms similar to Lyme disease, is transmitted by the lone star tick. There are also other possible pathogens that these ticks can vector so it's smart to do your best to make sure you don't encounter them. The day I went hiking I got about a quarter mile down the trail when I remembered that I had not put on insect repellant. If I had been smart I would have turned around and gone back to get it.

According to Dr. Walton Jones in an article in the journal Molecules and Cells "nearly every medically relevant blood-feeding insect that transmits a disease-causing pathogen to humans detects and follows CO_2 gradients as part of its host-seeking behavior". The carbon dioxide that our bodies give off as a part of our respiration, especially in our breath, is one of the main attractants for ticks. There are others though, such as radiant heat, shadows, vibrations and even sounds. Species of ticks differ in their methods of seeking a host. Some are classified as hunters and these will actually pursue a host. Ambushers wait for the host to come to them. They will wait on vegetation with their front legs waving in the air in the direction of one or more of the above attractants. Get too close and they will be on you in a flash.

So, what are the best ways to keep from experiencing a tick encounter? If you know that you will be walking (or riding in an open vehicle) in areas of long grass or underbrush be sure to wear insect repellant on your skin and clothing. Long pants tucked into socks, long-sleeved shirts tucked into pants and boots can help prevent ticks from reaching your skin. Hats can keep them from getting on your neck, around your ears or in your hair. Light colored clothing will make them easier to see if they do get on you so you can remove them quickly.

To keep yards clear of ticks keep the grass cut short and place a barrier of wood chip mulch or gravel between the lawn and wooded areas. A 3 foot wide swath can be especially helpful to protect areas used for recreation and relaxation. Keep pets treated for ticks and do your best to discourage other host animals, including wildlife, from coming into the yard. Some of these though, such as mice, squirrels and chipmunks, may be very difficult to keep out. If you want a backyard wildlife habitat don't place it near the house or areas of high use.

When you spend time outside, even in your yard, be sure that you check for ticks when you go back inside. Remove clothes and immediately wash and dry them. Check for ticks on all of your body using a full length mirror if necessary. It takes hours for some species of ticks to settle down to feed so take advantage of that time frame to remove them before they can start. If you do get bitten, the CDC recommends that you use tweezers to grasp the tick as close to your skin as possible and pull upwards with a steady, even motion. Clean the area with rubbing alcohol or soap and water. The CDC also recommends that you see your doctor if you develop a rash or fever within several weeks of removing a tick. The doctor will want to know when the bite occurred and if you know what species of tick it was or where you were when it got on you.

I certainly don't plan to let ticks or mosquitoes keep me from spending time outdoors. But I can assure you that I won't forget to use my insect repellent the next time I go hiking! Take the simple recommended practices above to protect yourself and you can enjoy the outdoors this summer too.

For pesticide recommendations for repellants and for treating outdoor areas please visit: http://www.caes.uga.edu/content/dam/caes-website/departments/entomology/documents/ga-pest-management-handbook/2017-homeowner/HUMAN-OUTDOOR.pdf

For more information on the biology of ticks please visit: http://extension.uga.edu/publications/files/pdf/C%20937_2.PDF

For more information on ticks from the CDC please visit: https://www.cdc.gov/ticks/index.html

For images of the three species of ticks discussed above please visit: https://dph.georgia.gov/sites/dph.georgia.gov/files/related_files/document/ADES_allaboutticks.pdf

To read Dr. Jones complete article "Olfactory Carbon Dioxide Detection by Insects and Other Animals" please visit: https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3887906/

Another source for information on tick feeding behavior: Physiology of Ticks: Current Themes in Tropical Science edited by Frederick D. Obenchain and Rachel Galun.

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GRAPES AND VINEYARDS

Muscadines

There will be a muscadine grower roundtable meeting on Wednesday, May 31 from 9 AM-3 PM at Still Pond Vineyards and Winery (575 Still Pond Rd, Arlington, GA 39813) with the new UGA Extension Viticulturist, Dr. Cain Hickey. If you are interested in attending please contact Jay Hathorn, ANR Agent for Calhoun County at jhathorn@uga.edu.

Bunch Grapes (and some Muscadine)

The 2017 Southern Winegrape Symposium will take place on June 10 from 8:30 AM-3:00 PM at the Carroll County Ag Center located at 900 Newnan Road in Carrollton. The program is sponsored by the Vineyard and Winery Association of West Georgia. A pre-registration cost of $50.00 is due by May 30.
For the symposium agenda and to register please visit:
http://www.vinewinewga.com/symposium-2017.html

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SMALL RUMINANTS

Fecal Egg Count Workshop

Dr. Niki Whitley is giving a fecal egg count workshop on June 27, 2017 at 6:00 PM. It will take place in the Upson County UGA Extension office located at 305 S. Hightower Street Suite 170, Thomaston, GA 30286. The seating is limited due to the number of available microscopes.
Please let me know if you want to attend by emailing scj24262@uga.edu or calling 706-977-0882.

The training will focus on identifying parasites, tracking heavy worm-carriers in the herd, understanding refugia, and using these tools in genetic selection. Participants are encouraged to bring samples from their herd. Directions on how to collect a fecal sample using a latex glove are below.

- Put on a clean glove. Apply a nickel size amount of water or water-based lubricant to index and middle fingers.
- Insert index and middle fingers into the rectum of the animal, one finger at a time. No need to go very deep. Spread fingers to allow air into the rectum. The air duplicates fullness in the rectum and a wave of muscular movement will often move feces out into your hand.
- Remove ~4 grams of fecal matter. A good sized adult pellet is about 1 gram.
- Peel the glove off your hand keeping the fecal sample encased within it.
- Squeeze as much air as possible out of the glove. Twist the wrist portion of the glove and fasten with a label (farm and animal ID) making sure the label sticks to itself, as it won't stick to the glove. You can also twist and tie off the glove and label the glove itself with an indelible marker.
- Store the sample in the refrigerator until it can be analyzed (the sooner the better, but samples can be stored in the refrigerator for a week). If you are collecting many samples at one time, have a cooler with ice on hand to keep the samples cool until you can get them into a refrigerator.

NEXT UP FOR SMALL RUMNINANT PRODUCERS

Mr. Terrell Hollis of the Fort Valley State University Meat Technology Center will be speaking on the evening of July 20 at a small ruminant meeting. We will meet again at The Magic City Grill at 6:00 PM. You will be able to order dinner before the meeting. After his visit here we will plan a trip to visit their facility in Fort Valley. You can go ahead and start letting me know if you plan to attend by emailing me at scj24262@uga.edu.

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CATTLE

Lemmon Cattle Enterprises will be auctioning all of its registered Angus during a sale on May 27, 2017 at the farm at 16810 Woodbury Hwy, Woodbury, GA 30293. The sale begins at 10:00 AM.
For videos of cattle being offered please visit:
http://www.lemmoncattleenterprises.com/sale.html

UGA Calhoun HERD Sale is on Wednesday, May 31 at 12:30 PM at the NW GA Livestock Pavilion at 1282 Hwy 53 Spur, Calhoun. Offered will be approximately 100 heifers-Angus, Hereford, Simmental, SimAngus and Commercial. Videos will be available May 18 at www.ugabeef.com/programs

2017 Beef Improvement Federation Annual Meeting and Research Symposium

The annual convention will be held in Athens, GA this year on May 31-June 3 at the Athens Classic Center at 300 N Thomas Street.

For a copy of the program please visit:
http://beefimprovement.org/content/uploads/2017/04/BIF2017Program-1.pdf

To register please visit:
http://beefimprovement.org/content/uploads/2017/04/BIF2017Program-1.pdf

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FORAGES

GrassMasters

We have not set up registration yet but the dates for the classes for the GrassMasters program are finalized so you can get them on your calendar. Classes will be held from 6:30 to 8:30 on the following Thursday evenings: **August 31, September 7, 21, 28 and October 5, 19, 26**. We will skip a Thursday in September and in October because the Troup County Agricultural Center was already reserved for those dates. That is where the classes will be held and it is located at 21 Vulcan Materials Rd in LaGrange.

The course focuses on the forages proven best for northeast Georgia and strategies for grazing, maintaining soil fertility and health, and managing pests. Members of the UGA

Forage Team and U.S. Department of Agriculture Natural Resources Conservation Service staff members teach the classes. The cost for all seven weeks is $25, and the course is open to anyone interested in improving his or her knowledge of pastureland health or forage and hay production.

If you would be interested in attending the program please let me know by emailing me at scj24262@uga.edu.

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Happy Mother's Day to all the moms out there!

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I hope everyone enjoys the weekend,
Susan