



Veterinary Council Update – April 2015

Advice from MPI – Brown dog ticks

Do you know your *Rhipicephalus* from your *Haemaphysalis*?

In January, seven adult brown dog ticks (*Rhipicephalus sanguineus*) were identified on two housedogs in Selwyn district, Canterbury. MPI wants to know if there are any other brown dog ticks out there and, if so, eradicate them.

Brown dog ticks are exotic to New Zealand and MPI would like to keep it that way so need your help. Here are some key tick facts:

- Brown dog ticks are an unwanted and notifiable organism in New Zealand, so vets are legally obliged to report suspect brown dog ticks to MPI.
- Adult ticks and nymphs tend to attach to the dog's ears, neck and shoulders, whilst larvae are often found along the belly and flank.
- Adults are red-brown in colour and can reach over 1 cm in length. Larvae and nymphs are just 1–2mm in length.
- The BDT likes indoor living as much as we do and so this tick could overwinter in houses and become an established pest in NZ.
- Explosions of ticks can be seen inside houses, particularly in summer months, as an adult female is capable of producing up to 5000 eggs
- The BDT acts as a vector for a range of blood borne diseases that luckily are not present in New Zealand at this current time

More information can be found on the MPI website

(<http://www.biosecurity.govt.nz/pests/brown-dog-tick>)

So if you see any ticks on dogs in your practice during examinations please contact MPI on 0800 80 99 66.