

Zoonosis Control Newsletter

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Public Health Region 7, Zoonosis Control Program
Texas Department of State Health Services
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Announcement of New Program Specialist

We are happy to announce that on September 1st, Jay Leivdal started in his new position of Program Specialist III in the Region 7 Zoonosis Control Program!

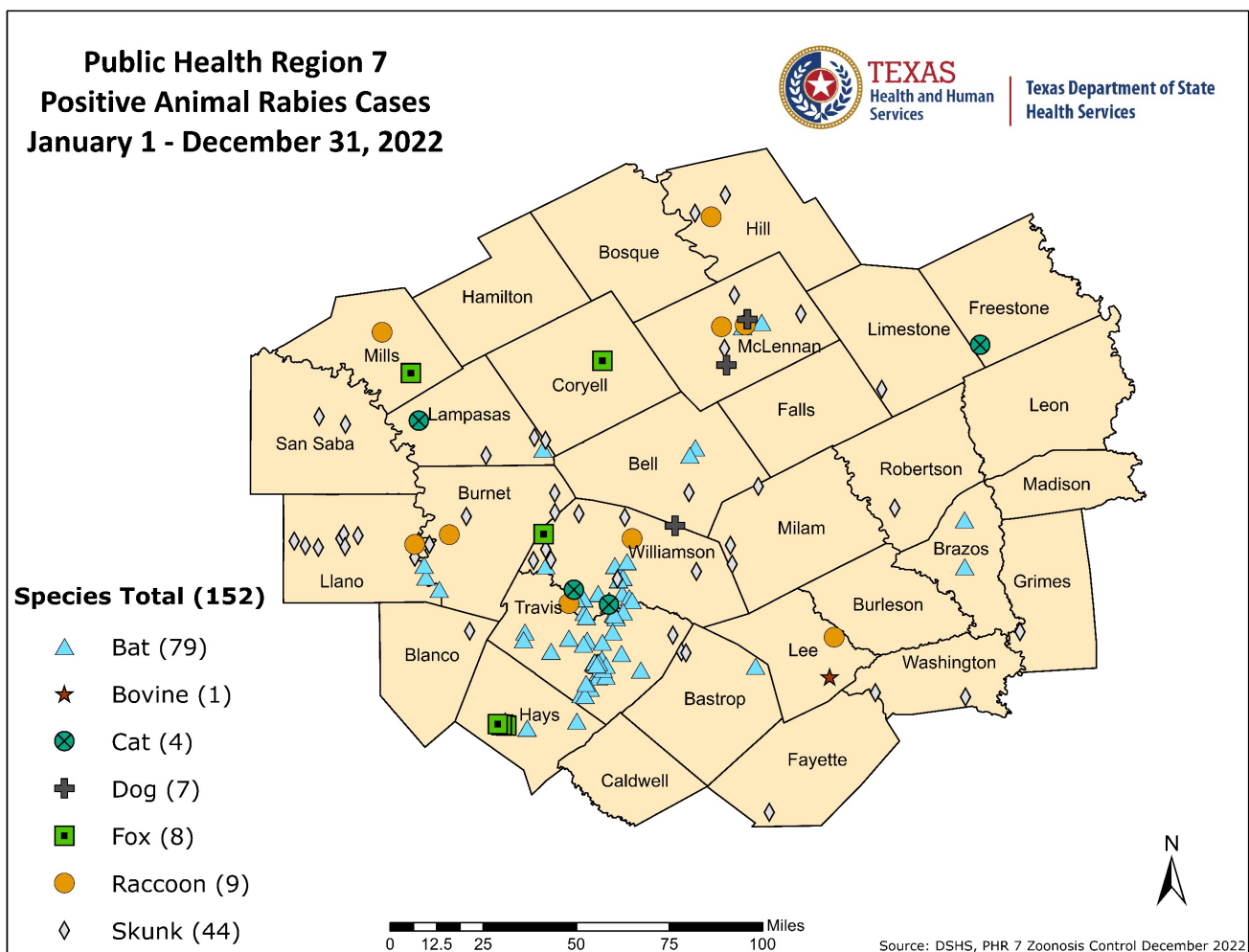
Jay joined the DSHS Region 7 Zoonosis Control Team in 2018 as the Public Health and Prevention Specialist where he proved to be an asset to the team. Jay recently completed his Bachelor of Science degree through American Public University System. Jay brings a wealth of public health and zoonosis control knowledge with him to his new position.



*Jay Leivdal, BS
Program Specialist III*

Summary of Animal Rabies Cases

Between January and December 2022, there were **152** laboratory-confirmed rabies positive animals investigated by Public Health Region 7 Zoonosis Control Program. Public Health Region 7 also conducted case investigations into **78** non-negative animals whose rabies tests were reported as either “decomposed” or “destroyed”.



*[*Please note the map displays cases based on longitude and latitude coordinates. Because some counties' cases occurred near each other, some individual map symbols may not be distinguishable.]*

Human Notifiable Zoonoses

Public Health Region 7 Reportable Zoonotic Disease Cases in Humans* January 1 – December 31, 2022				
Condition	Confirmed	Probable	Suspect	Total
Anaplasmosis			1	1
Babesiosis	1		1	2
Brucellosis	3			3
Chagas, chronic, indeterminate	2	2	1	5
Chagas, chronic, symptomatic	1			1
Cysticercosis	1			1
Dengue ⁺	7	6		13
Leishmaniasis	1			1
Lyme ⁺	3	1	4	8
Malaria ⁺	19			19
Spotted Fever Rickettsiosis Group		1		1
<i>Taenia solium</i> and undifferentiated <i>Taenia</i> infection		1		1
Typhus, flea-borne (endemic, murine)	4	37		41
West Nile Neuroinvasive Disease	1	1		2

*DSHS case counts may differ from those reported by local jurisdictions as DSHS does not report cases until epidemiological investigations are complete.

⁺ Case counts from these conditions include travel-related associated infections acquired outside of Texas or outside of the United States by residents of PHR7.

Rabies Awareness and Prevention Poster Contest for K-12th Grades

Rabies is a viral disease that kills over 50,000 people every year around the world. Human deaths from rabies in the United States are very rare (*approximately one death per year, almost exclusively due to rabies associated with bats*). This is due to strict animal control laws, widespread pet vaccinations, and public health intervention in identified rabies-exposure cases. Rabies post-exposure prophylaxis is 100% effective when administered properly. However, the treatment is very expensive and requires multiple shots over a period of time.

Skunks and bats are the most affected species in Texas. Private residences and school grounds are the most common locations in Texas for exposure to rabid bats. Bat bites are not always noticeable, and many people are unaware that exposure to bats poses a risk. Most of these rabies exposures are preventable through education. Therefore, we are encouraging school kids throughout Texas to become more aware about rabies and respecting bats and other wildlife from a distance. Students at your school can participate by entering a contest to design a poster promoting rabies awareness & prevention. There are prizes for students in kindergarten through 12th grade, and artwork from top-ranking posters may be used for future state sponsored public health educational projects. Prizes are provided by the Zach Jones Memorial Fund www.zachjonesmemorial.com/.

Please forward this information to the teachers in your school and encourage them to involve their students. Provided online is an information sheet for students and a teacher instruction sheet with details and an entry form: www.dshs.texas.gov/idcu/disease/rabies/information/contest/. **The deadline for poster submission is April 7, 2023.** If you are interested and need additional information, please email The.Vet@dshs.texas.gov or call 512.776.7255.



2022 Public Health Region 7
Winners



PHR7 Zoonosis Control Contact Information

PHR7 Zoonosis Control personnel could have not met the time-sensitive investigation requirements of these cases without the help of animal control officers, local health department partners, veterinarians, peace officers, health care providers, and others.

If you know of others in your agency or community who want to know about zoonosis control events in Central Texas, encourage them to share their contact information. If there are any changes to current email addresses, please let us know as well.

Contact information can be sent to DSHS.HSR7.ZOO@dshs.texas.gov or you may call 254.771.6784.

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{Note: the rabies data presented in this document were obtained through a passive reporting system and may be subject to change. The data was based solely on the results of animals submitted for rabies testing. There were many more animals (particularly wildlife) that died of rabies that were not submitted for rabies testing.}