**One Health News Bits**

**6-28-12**

[**Study: Bats harbor 66 virus strains that could harm humans, animals**](http://news.nationalpost.com/2012/04/24/bats-may-carry-up-to-66-new-spieces-of-virus-linked-to-measles-and-mumps-scientists-say/)

Scientists in Germany and elsewhere found 66 new paramyxovirus species in bats, part of the group that causes diseases in humans and animals including measles, mumps and rinderpest. It's not clear whether these new viruses are transmissible to people, but experts say the potential for transmission is increased due to decreasing bat habitats. (4/24)

[**Rabid cat scratches five people in Maryland**](http://www.suntimes.com/news/nation/12115675-418/rabid-cat-scratches-five-people-in-maryland.html)

Cecil County health officials say rabies has been found in a sickly stray cat that scratched five people in downtown Port Deposit. The five people were scratched Friday. The cat was captured and euthanized at a veterinarian’s office and tested. The five people have been urged to seek treatment. (4/25)

[**FDA releases final plan for Foods and Veterinary Medicine Program**](http://www.foodsafetynews.com/2012/04/fda-issues-2012-2016-plan-for-the-foods-and-veterinary-medicine-program/)

In a report, the FDA summarizes its food safety goals for 2012-2016, including better scientific oversight, more collaboration among groups and more explicit nutritional information on food products for people and pets. The plan has almost 100 initiatives aimed at improving the quality and safety of the food supply. (4/24)

[**USDA strengthens efforts to curb livestock with illegal drug residues**](http://blogs.desmoinesregister.com/dmr/index.php/2012/04/23/usda-cracks-down-on-illegal-residue-in-livestock/)

To prevent meat with illegal drug residues from reaching store shelves, the USDA plans to do more testing of animals from producers with a history of livestock with illegal residue. The USDA will also provide a compliance manual detailing how slaughter operations can avoid buying animals with illegal residues. (4/23)

[**New foot-and-mouth vaccine could be available soon**](http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/17818367)

American researchers are working to produce a vaccine for foot-and-mouth disease in an effort to eradicate it. The vaccine, which was developed in isolation on New York's Plum Island and may be available within a few months, comes with a test to distinguish infected animals from vaccinated ones. (4/25)

[**Marijuana is poisonous for pets**](http://www.dailycamera.com/lifestyles/ci_20477048/marijuana-toxic-pets)

Dogs are the pets most likely to consume marijuana, usually in the form of laced brownies or other food, and the active chemical ingredient, tetrahydrocannabinol, is toxic to them, veterinarian Jennifer Bolser writes. Symptoms begin within minutes or a few hours after ingestion, and prompt veterinary treatment is needed to keep the pet stable while the drug is slowly metabolized out of the body. (4/25)

[**Exotic animal bill passes Ohio Senate**](http://woub.org/2012/04/25/ohio-senate-approves-exotic-animal-bill)

On Wednesday, the Ohio Senate passed a bill that prevents people from acquiring new exotic pets and imposes regulations on those who already own such animals. Sanctuaries, research groups and organizations accredited by some zoo groups are exempt. The bill now moves to the House. (4/25)

[**Seabird carry ectoparasites vast distances**](http://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2012/04/120426104957.htm)

Seabirds travel vast distances around the globe, and they carry ticks with them, colonizing archipelagos with a diversity of tick species, according to new research. Although the tick species evaluated in the study, Ornithodoros capensis, is not known to carry human pathogens, the findings suggest the birds could play a role in dispersal of insect vectors of human pathogens. (4/26)

[**U.C. Davis study links polychlorinated biphenyls and autism**](http://psychcentral.com/news/2012/04/26/pcb-exposure-may-increase-risk-of-autism/37872.html)

Polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs) could increase the odds that genetically at-risk children will develop autism, according to new research from the School of Veterinary Medicine at the University of California, Davis. Although they were outlawed in the 1970s, PCBs persist in the environment. (4/26)

[**Fungus kills frogs by causing electrolyte imbalance and dehydration**](http://www.livescience.com/19902-frog-fungus-dehydration.html)

Batrachochytrium dendrobatidis, the fungus that leads to chytridiomycosis disease and has reduced Sierra Nevada's mountain yellow-legged frog population by 75% in just four years, causes death by altering fluid and electrolyte balance, resulting in dehydration, according to research conducted during the outbreak. Researchers hope their findings will lead to treatments and believe that giving ill frogs electrolyte supplements may provide some help. (4/25)

[**Thousands of fish found dead along Ohio river**](http://news-herald.com/articles/2012/04/25/news/doc4f96b6442a397130882427.txt)

The Ohio Division of Wildlife announced that 28,613 fish and other aquatic animals were found dead along a three-mile section of the Rocky River. Officials are searching for a cause of the massive die-off and tallying fines and restitution in case the culprit is found. (4/25)

[**Pigeon brain cells detect Earth’s electromagnetic field**](http://news.discovery.com/animals/pigeons-gps-120426.html)

Certain neurons in pigeon brains encode the direction and intensity of Earth’s magnetic field, providing the common birds with an internal global positioning system, according to a new study. The findings in the study, published in the latest Science Express, likely apply to other birds as well. (4/26)

[**Experts offer primer on tick removal, prevention**](http://www2.wsls.com/lifestyles/2012/apr/26/4/right-way-remove-ticks-pets-ar-1871129/)

This year's mild winter means a "big problem" with ticks, which harbor pathogens that can cause Lyme disease and other issues in people and pets, according to veterinarian Rick Alleman, an expert on vector-borne disease and a professor at the University of Florida's veterinary school. In this article, veterinary medicine professionals debunk common tick removal myths and discuss the best tick prevention strategies.  (4/26)

[**AVMA decries omission of lab authorization from farm bill**](http://www.nationaljournal.com/healthcare/farm-bill-lacks-authority-for-first-line-disease-testing-system-20120426)

A farm bill that cleared the Senate Agriculture Committee this week failed to authorize the National Animal Health Laboratory Network, which is in the news this week for catching a case of bovine spongiform encephalopathy in a California dairy cow. Gina Luke of the American Veterinary Medical Association, who calls the lab a first line of defense against emerging livestock diseases, says the organization has been working to get authorization included in the bill to secure funding. "We think this is an incredibly important laboratory network," Luke said. "It seems like a penny-wise, pound-foolish decision. Our nation could suffer a devastating loss in agriculture were a disease to go undetected." (4/26)

[**Veterinary staff poisoned after dogs vomit phosphine gas**](http://health.usnews.com/health-news/news/articles/2012/04/26/toxic-gas-in-dogs-vomit-a-threat-to-vets-cdc)

From 2006 to 2011, four veterinary clinics reported that human workers suffered ill effects, ranging from pain and respiratory difficulty to headaches and nausea, after inhaling highly toxic phosphine fumes from the vomitus of dogs who ingested zinc phosphide rodenticide pellets, according the CDC. Veterinarians and owners can also be exposed to the toxic gas when treating horses for phosphine poisoning, according to the AVMA. (4/26)

[**Antibiotic to treat plague is approved by FDA**](http://www.usatoday.com/news/health/story/2012-04-28/plague-antibiotic-drug-fda/54609412/1)

The FDA recently approved the use of Levaquin, or levofloxacin, for the treatment and prevention of plague, a deadly disease caused by yersinia pestis, which is transmitted by fleas and animals. Some 94% of monkeys infected with plague survived after treatment with the drug. (4/29)

[**Coping with the death of a pet**](http://www.foxnews.com/opinion/2012/04/28/7-tips-to-deal-with-loss-pet/)

People can have some closure when a human relative dies through conversations with the loved one before they die, but that's often not the case with pets. Strategies to help owners cope with their pet's death, including maintaining a normal routine and considering the death's effect on other pets in the home, are discussed in this article. (4/28)

[**Use common sense when exercising with pets**](http://www.delawareonline.com/article/20120427/ENTERTAINMENT/204270315/Exercising-your-dog-great-cautious?odyssey=mod%7Cnewswell%7Ctext%7CHome%7Cs&gcheck=1&nclick_check=1)

Just like humans, dogs that have been inside and less active most of the winter need time to get back into shape before hitting the pavement or the park for a good workout this spring, says veterinarian Tim Wright. Additionally, owners should take into account their pet's age, medical history, temperament and weather conditions before starting exercise. (4/27)

[**Population growth increases rabies exposure**](http://www.gainesvilletimes.com/section/6/article/66839/)

In areas with more concentrated human populations, people and animals are more likely to be exposed to rabies, and Georgia has seen an uptick in cases this year. "[Animals'] populations increase as the human population increases. They are very adaptable to humans," said veterinarian Valeri Love. (4/28)