

Deer Tick Study Needs Volunteers

COLLEGE PARK, Md. — Volunteers are needed to help with a study of Maryland's deer tick population being conducted today by members of seven state and federal agencies.

Participants will examine freshly killed deer at specific deer check stations throughout the state and collect any ticks found on the head and neck of each animal. Deer ticks can carry Lyme disease, a growing threat to human and animal health.

"The number of human cases of Lyme disease in Maryland increased 70 percent between 1989 and 1990," said Nancy Breisch, an entomology consultant with the Cooperative Extension Service, Maryland Institute for Agriculture and Natural Resources. MIANR is one of three research and public service institutions of the University of Maryland System.

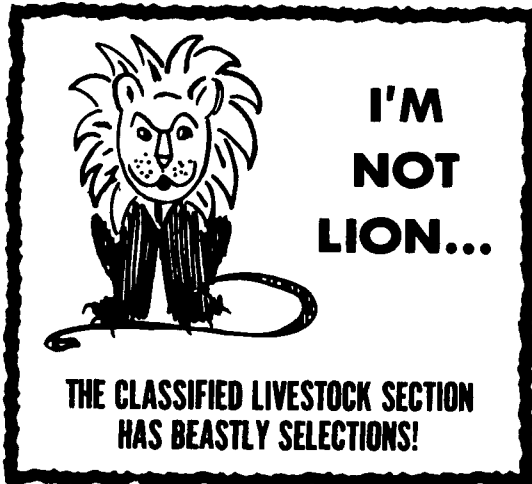
Breisch and other experts hope that by examining deer carcasses throughout the state they will be able to track the spread of deer ticks and document any increase in the number of ticks infected with the Lyme disease-causing bacteria.

The study also will provide an excellent opportunity to educate a high-risk population about Lyme disease.

"With every deer we examine, we'll have a chance to talk to a couple of hunters who are at greater risk of contracting Lyme disease than the general population because they spend more time in deer and tick habitat," said

Breisch. "And we hope they'll share the information with other hunters."

If you are willing to contribute a few hours to this important public health effort, contact Nancy Breisch at the Entomology Department of the University of Maryland at College Park (301) 405-3921 or your county cooperative extension service office for more information.



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