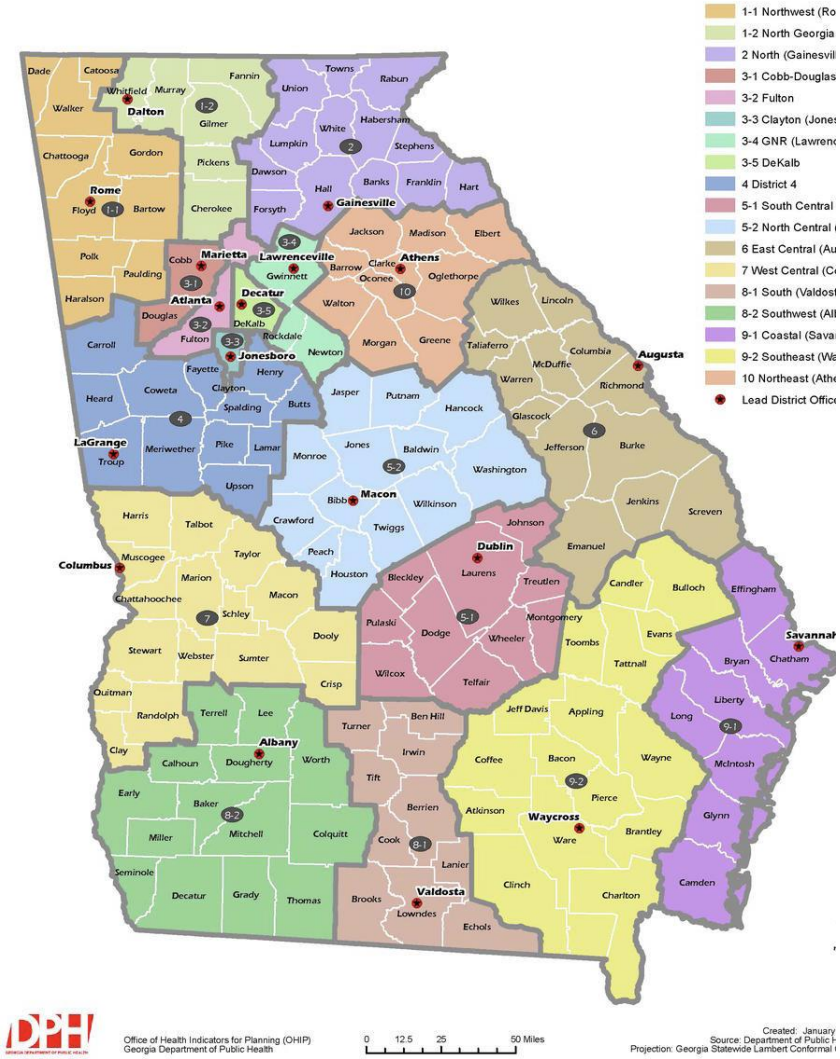
Georgia State Report, 2026 (to date)

GMCA

Rosmarie Kelly

Oct 21-23, 2026

Georgia's Health Departments



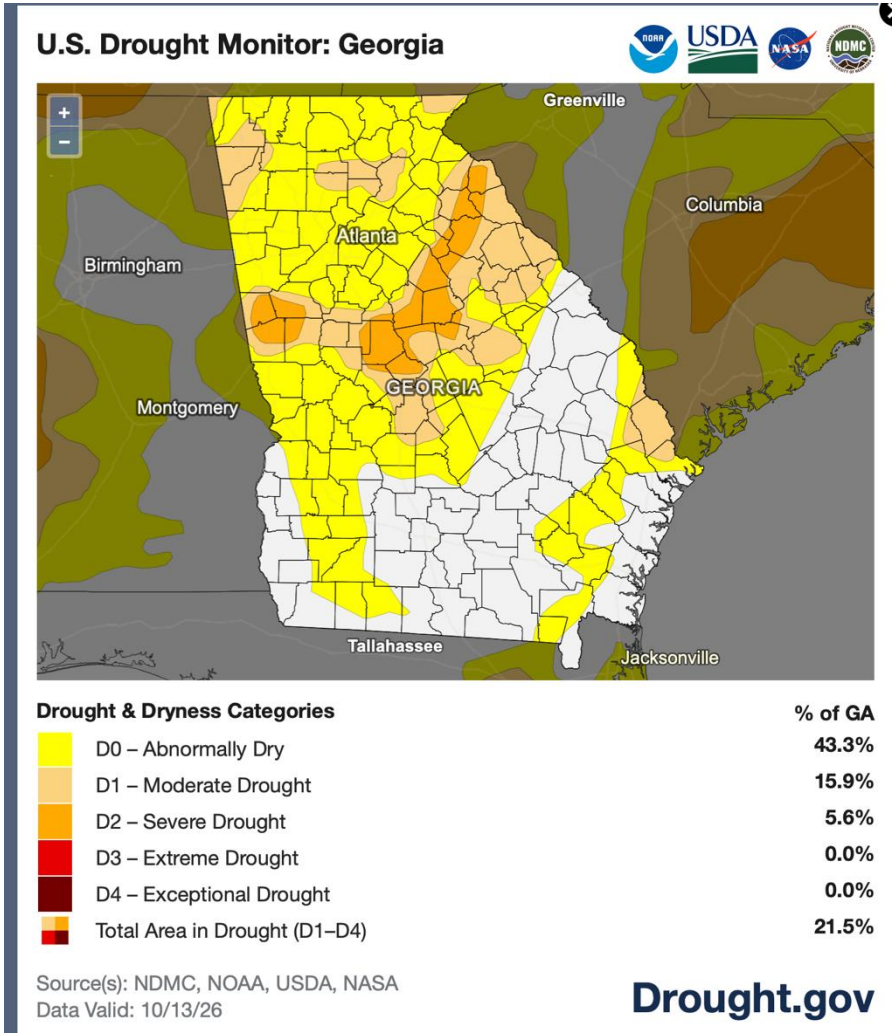
Georgia has:

- 159 counties, each with a health department
- The counties are grouped into 18 health districts, based on population, with a District Health Department
- The State Department of Public Health is located in Atlanta

The weather in 2026 was …Weird

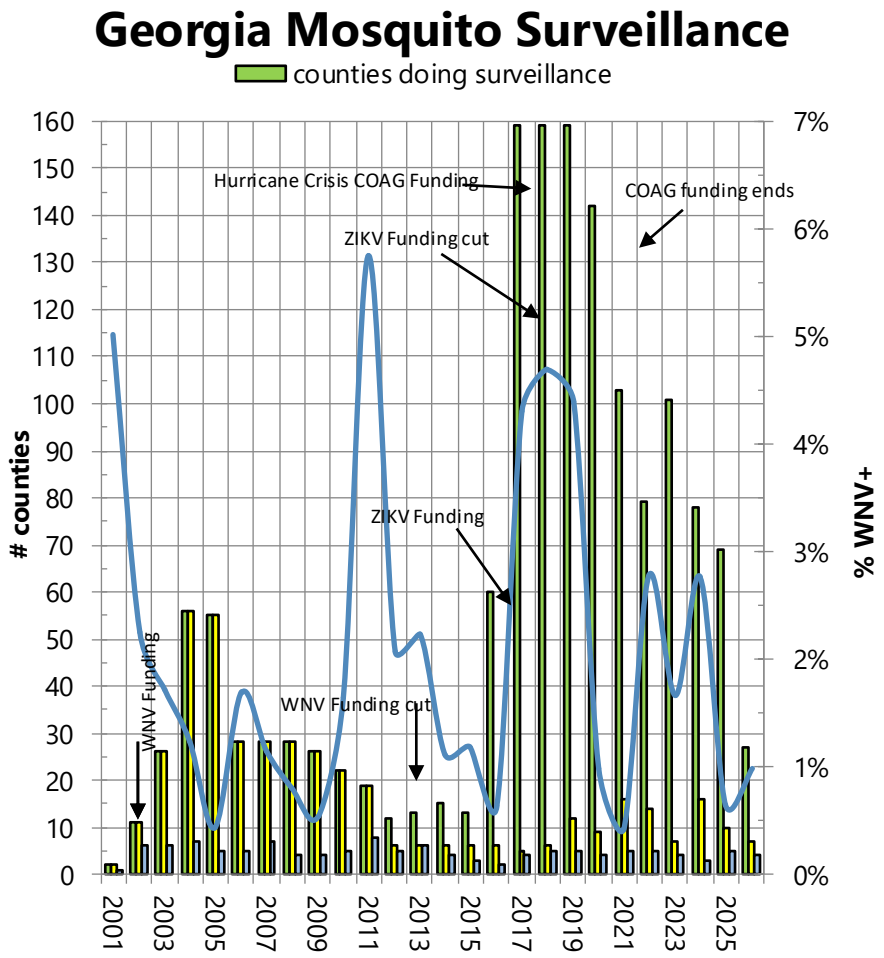
Georgia's weather through mid-October 2026 has been marked by mild winter conditions, persistent spring and summer heat waves, and intense Autumn temperature swings.

- Winter temperatures were above normal with occasional deep freezes, and precipitation was also below normal.
- In the Spring, there was a mix of warmer-than-normal temperatures and periods of drought and heavy storms.
- Summer brought severe and extended heat waves.
- Unseasonably hot summer-like conditions lingered into Autumn, with a dramatic cold front arriving in mid-October.
- Long-range forecasts point to a cooler and wetter-than-average pattern heading into the late-fall and winter months.



The funding in 2026 was …difficult

- ELC disease-specific allocations explicitly fund GDPH's ongoing efforts against mosquito-borne and tick-associated viral illnesses (including West Nile virus, Eastern Equine Encephalitis, and La Crosse encephalitis).
  - These funds support field sampling, mosquito trapping, and laboratory rapid detection assays.
  - Nationally, advocacy groups like the American Mosquito Control Association requested **$114.6 million** for the CDC's Division of Vector-Borne Diseases for FY 2026.
  - Despite this, a massive **$334.2 million cut** in generic CDC grants forced the Georgia DPH to absorb losses across several public health programs, including arboviral surveillance.
  - This funding strain aligns with a spike in mosquito-borne threats.
- We also were dealing with a delay in funding being sent to us and a travel ban.



Arboviral Surveillance 2001-2026

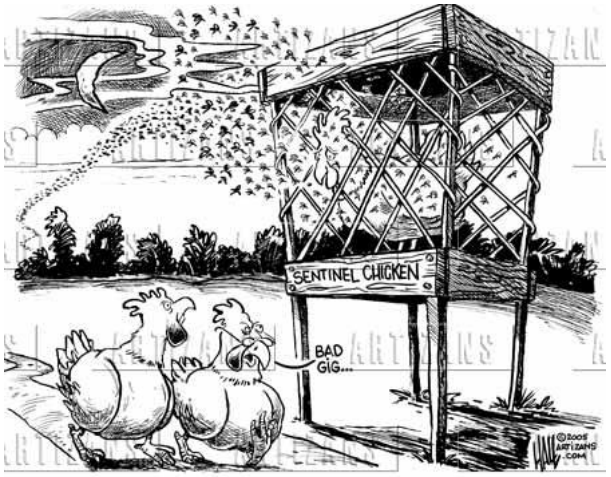
year	WNV+ pools	EEE+ pools	counties doing surveillance	# counties testing	# WNV+ counties	total mosquito pools tested	% WNV+	Human WNV+
2001	30		2	2	1	597	5.03%	6
2002	91		11	11	6	4032	2.26%	36
2003	106	1	26	26	6	6177	1.72%	55
2004	126	2	56	56	7	10161	1.24%	23
2005	67	8	55	55	5	15248	0.44%	24
2006	81		28	28	5	4785	1.69%	11
2007	75		28	28	7	6513	1.15%	55
2008	51	1	28	28	4	6383	0.80%	12
2009	24		26	26	4	4446	0.54%	6
2010	99	3	22	22	5	5990	1.65%	14
2011	438		19	19	8	7622	5.75%	25
2012	125	3	12	6	5	6042	2.07%	117
2013	166	1	13	6	6	7453	2.23%	20
2014	56	2	15	6	4	5038	1.11%	13
2015	40		13	6	3	3366	1.19%	15
2016	36		60	6	2	5620	0.64%	13
2017	276	2	159	5	4	6419	4.30%	63
2018	310	3	159	6	5	6598	4.70%	38
2019	243		159	12	5	5532	4.39%	16
2020	59		142	9	4	6025	0.98%	12
2021	31	1	103	16	5	7357	0.42%	5
2022	100	2	79	14	5	3611	2.77%	23
2023	118	1	101	7	4	7110	1.66%	28
2024	256	4	78	16	3	9281	2.76%	78
2025	65	2	69	10	5	10063	0.65%	21
2026	107		27	7	4	10701	1.00%	36
SUM	3176	36	1490	426	118	172170		765
MEAN	122.2	2.4	57.3	16.7	4.7	6621.9	2.0%	29.4

Mosquito Species - 2026 – Sentinels & Dead Bird Surveillance

ALL SPECIES

Species	Grand Total	Species	Grand Total
Ae. aegypti	4	*Oc. canadensis*	100
Ae. albopictus	1359	*Oc. dupreei*	86
Ae. vexans	1352	*Oc. fulvus pallens*	1
An. crucians	408	*Oc. infirmatus*	1611
An. punctipennis	62	*Oc. japonicus*	26
An. quadrimaculatus	1104	*Oc. mitchellae*	4
Cq. perturbans	2419	*Oc. sollicitans*	706
Cs. inornata	79	*Oc. sticticus*	2
Cs. melanura	449	*Oc. taeniorhynchus*	1152
Cx. coronator	544	*Oc. triseriatus*	58
Cx. erraticus	2931	*Oc. trivittatus*	2
Cx. nigripalpus	4436	*Or. signifera*	2
Cx. pilosus	1	*Ps. ciliata*	85
Cx. quinquefasciatus	146729	*Ps. columbiae*	840
Cx. restuans	3903	*Ps. cyanescens*	2
Cx. salinarius	4552	*Ps. ferox*	348
Cx. territans	5	*Ps. horrida*	2
Ma. titillans	3	*Tx. rutilus*	1
Oc. atlanticus	1548	*Ur. sapphirina*	96

There were no positive dead birds reported; there were 3 WNV+ sentinel chicken reported in 2026.

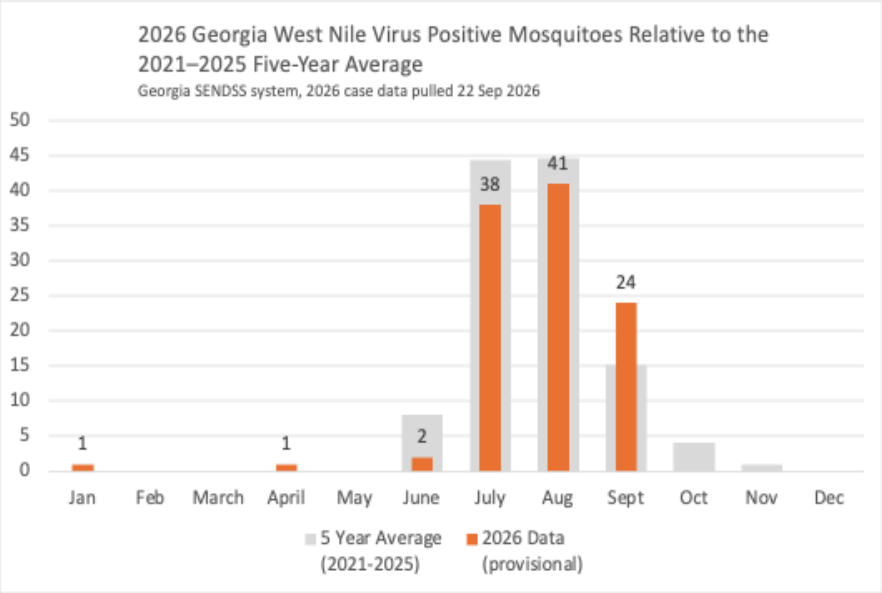




A total of 38 species from 10 genera were collected by the DPH entomologists, and a number of collaborators, interns, and fellows, and EHS.

Mosquitoes – Tested

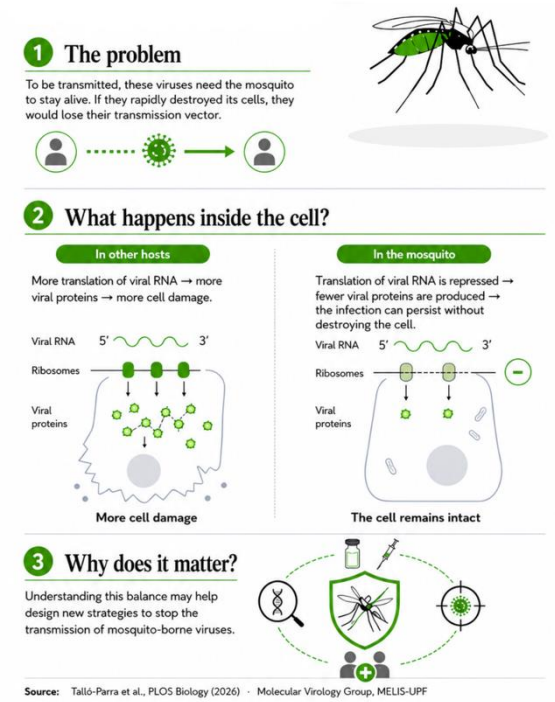
- We continue to work with limited funding
- Mosquitoes have been tested from 7 counties
    - 4 counties have reported WNV+ mosquitoes
    - No counties reported EEE+ mosquitoes



WNV+ Mosquito Pools

County	*Culex spp.*	*Cx. quinquefasciatus*	*Cx. restuans*	*Cx. nigripalpus*	*Cx. salinarius*
Chatham	3	32	2	2	
DeKalb		18	1		
Fulton		46			1
Glynn		2			

(1 WNV+ *Cx nigripalpus* pool from Chatham County is in SC at a dredge site)



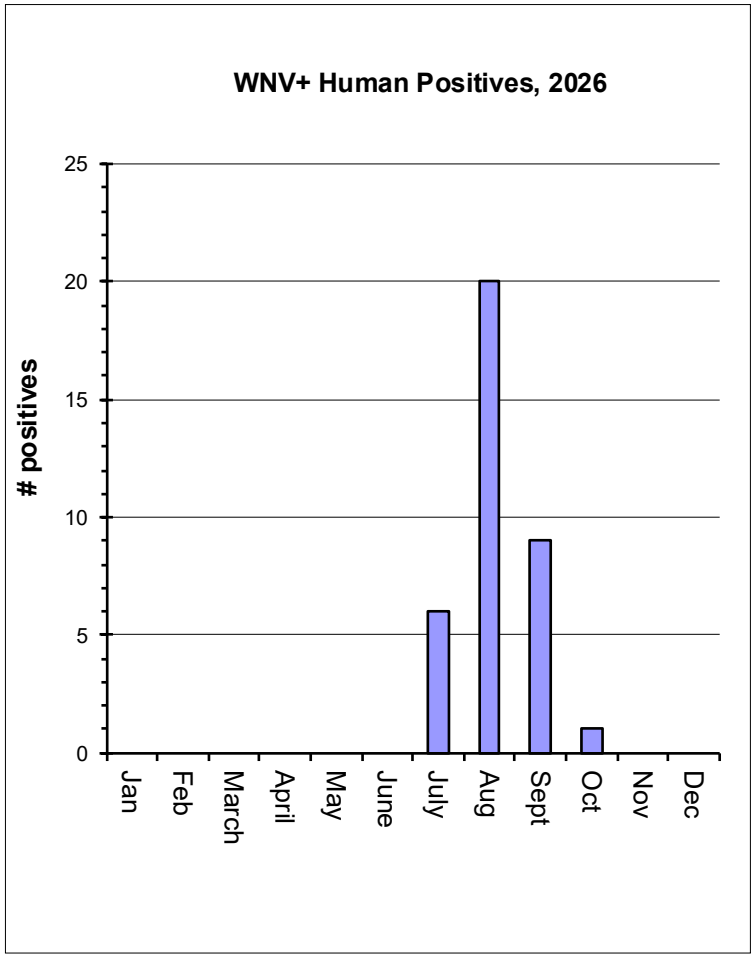
Minimum Infection Rates

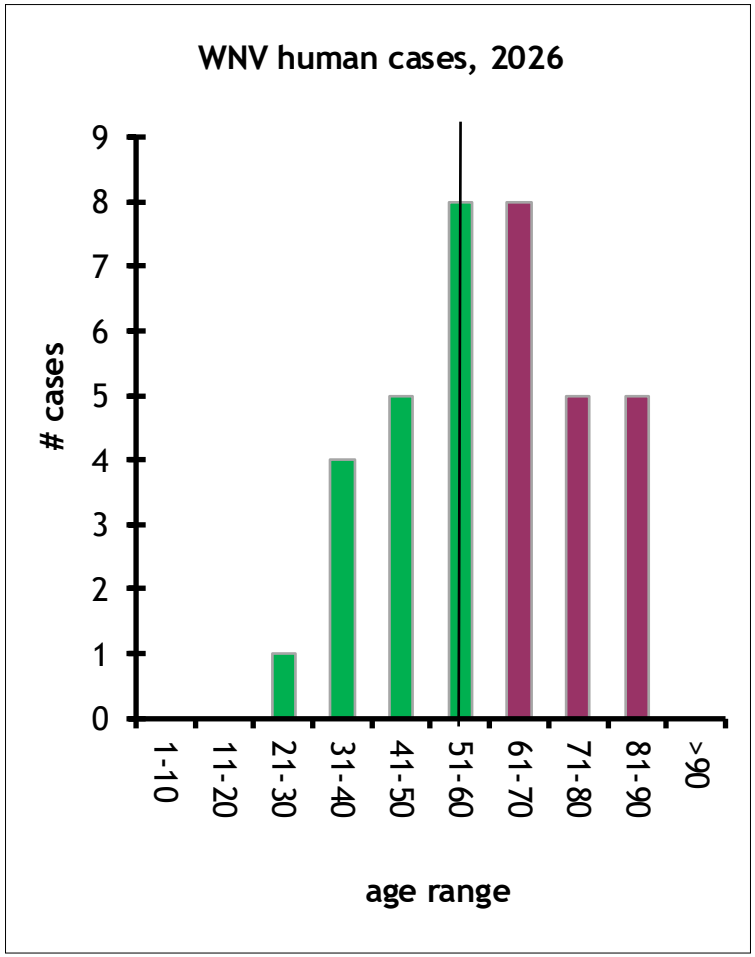
County	# Cx quinquefasciatus submitted	# pools tested	# WNV+ pools	WNV MIR
Bryan		4		
Camden	6380	3245		
Chatham	113033	4311	39	0.35
DeKalb	9720	556	19	1.95
Fulton	6282	368	47	7.48
Glynn	9114	2071	2	0.22
Lowndes	935	92		

The Minimum Infection Rate or MIR = (# WNV+ Pools/Total # Mosquitoes Tested) X 1000.

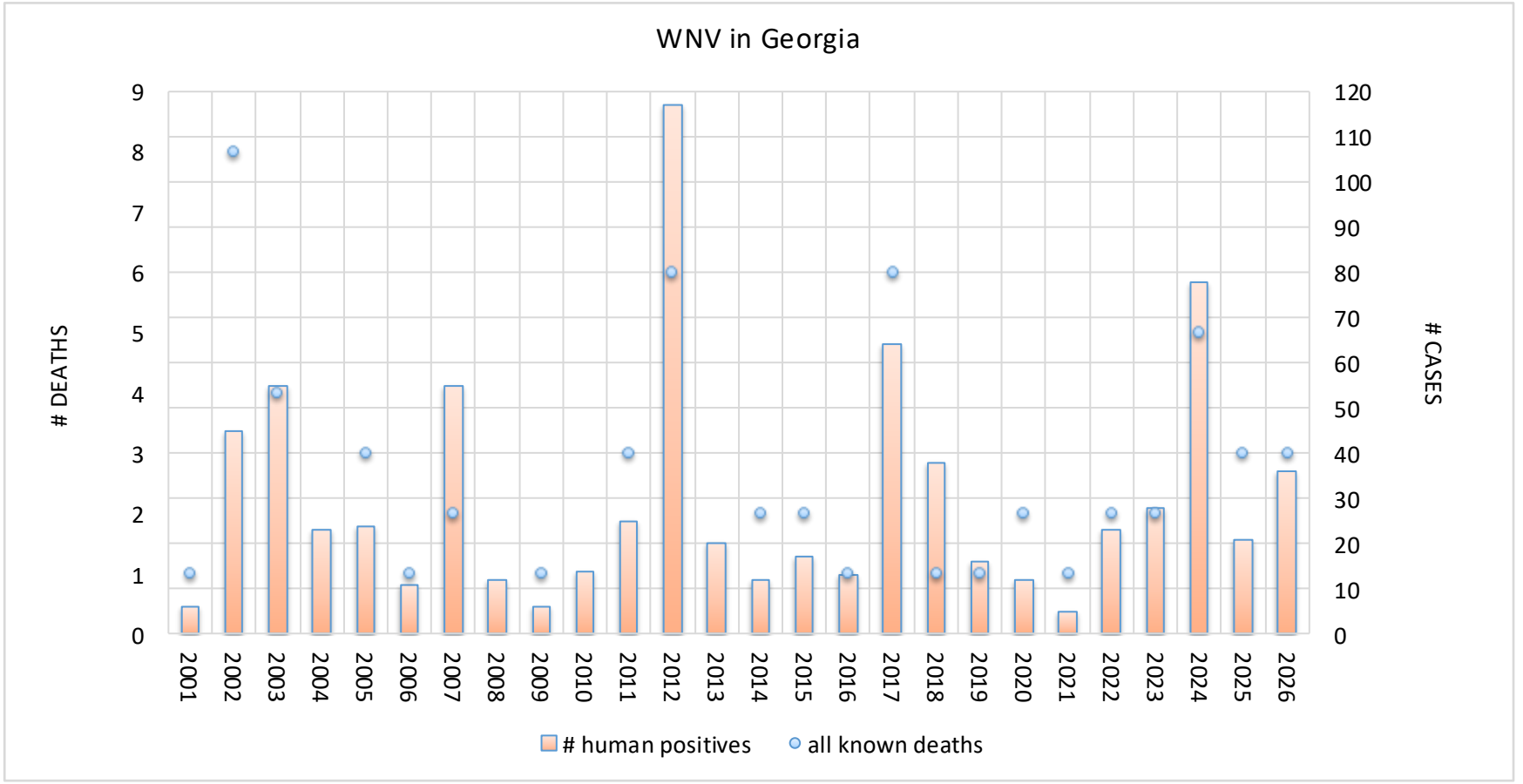
- MIR of 0 - no viral activity detected in the area
- MIR of 0.1 to 3.9 - some viral activity is present, increased vigilance and testing are needed
- MIR of 4.0 or above - high level of viral activity is present, human infections are imminent (if not already present), and prompt action is required

WNV+ Humans


WNV+ Human Positives, 2026
positives
25
20
15
10
5
0
Jan
Feb
March
April
May
June
July
Aug
Sept
Oct
Nov
Dec


WNV human cases, 2026
cases
9
8
7
6
5
4
3
2
1
0
1-10
11-20
21-30
31-40
41-50
51-60
61-70
71-80
81-90
>90
age range

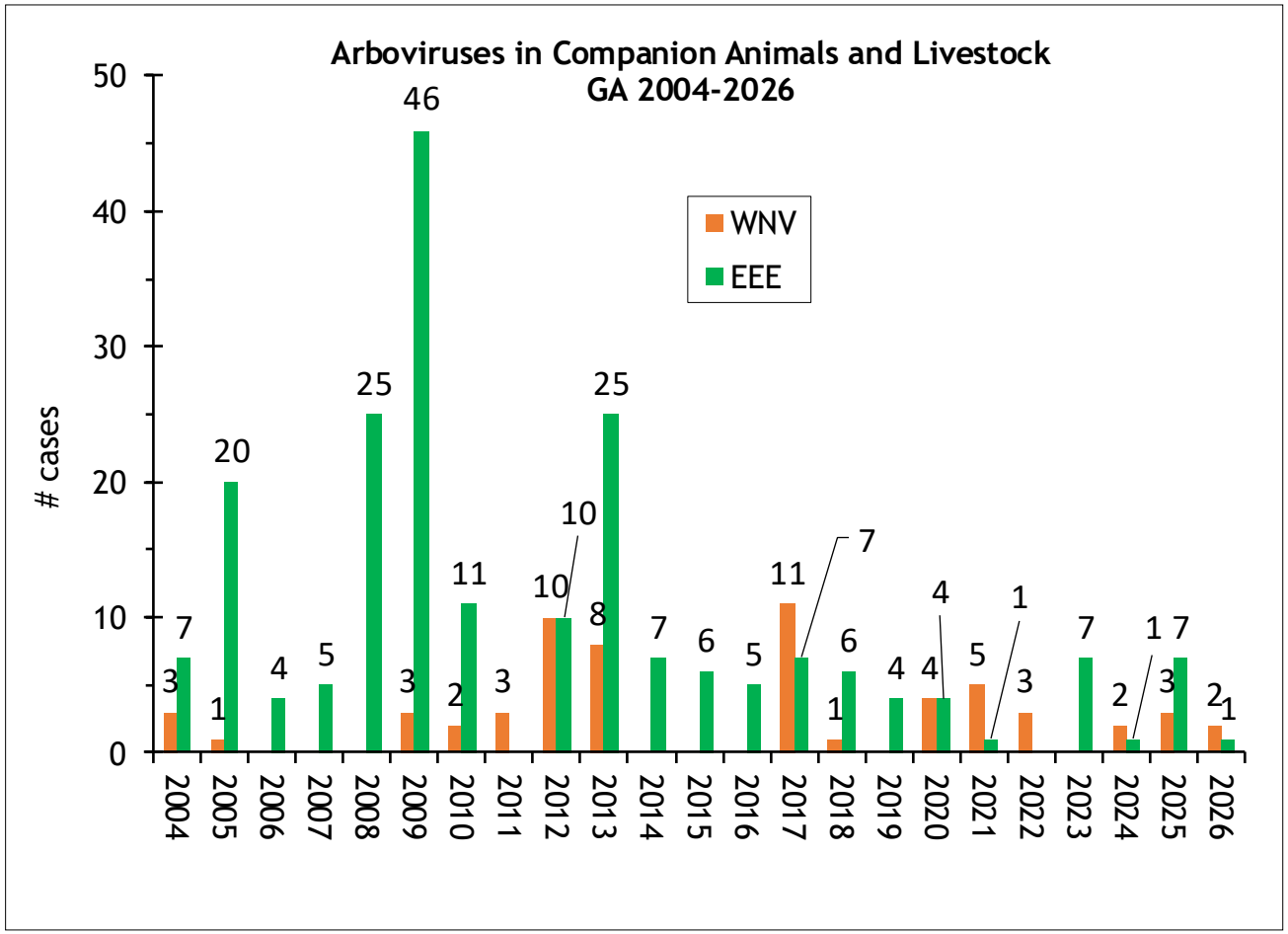
WNV+ Humans 2001-2026



mean # cases = 31.0

mean # deaths = 2.4

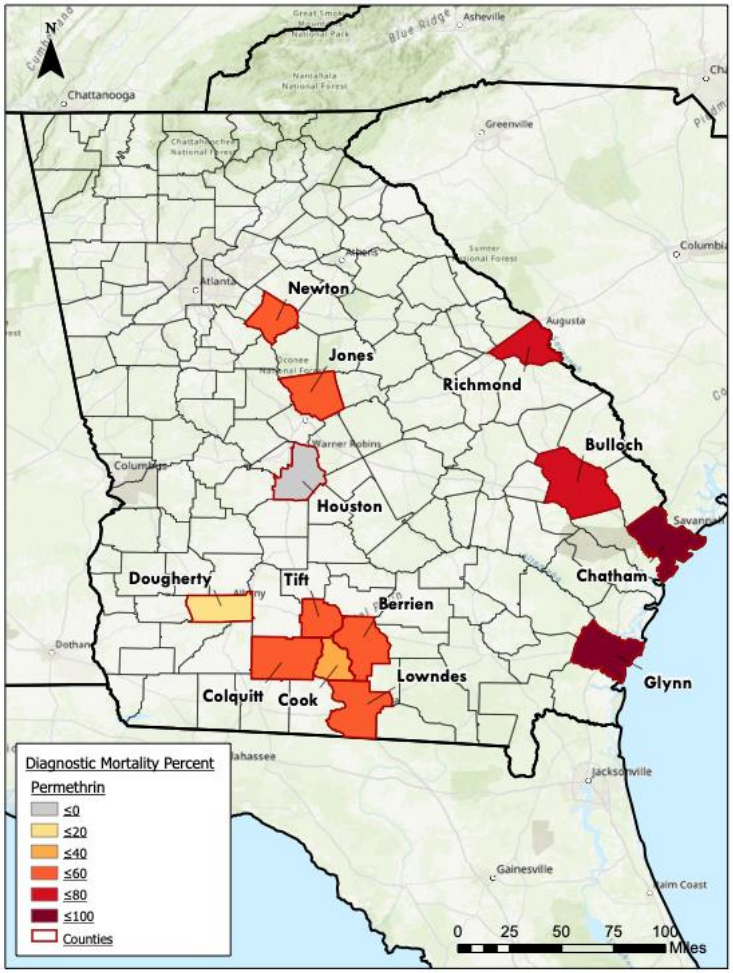
Veterinary Arboviral Positives



WNV Mean = 20.0
EEE Mean = 12.6

year	WNV	EEE
2001	64	
2002	175	1
2003	60	80
2004	3	7
2005	1	20
2006		4
2007		5
2008		25
2009	3	46
2010	2	11
2011	3	
2012	10	10
2013	8	25
2014		7
2015		6
2016		5
2017	11	7
2018	1	6
2019		4
2020	4	4
2021	5	1
2022	3	
2023		7
2024	2	1
2025	3	7
2026	2	1

Pesticide Resistance Testing



With the implementation of the first statewide pesticide resistance testing program in 2018, a clearer picture of mosquito resistance to specific pesticides commonly used in Georgia is being determined.

- This information enables DPH to advise and train current mosquito control operators in using the most effective and cost-efficient pesticide for their target-mosquito.
- If there were an outbreak of an exotic or endemic mosquito-borne disease, we would know which adulticides would be most likely to reduce the risk of disease transmission by reducing vector populations
- The statewide pesticide resistance testing program is a major component in reducing the exposure of mosquito-borne disease risk to the public.

Tick Surveillance on a Limited Budget



Surveillance for ticks has rarely been undertaken in by the Georgia Department of Public Health, even where tick-borne diseases have been reported.

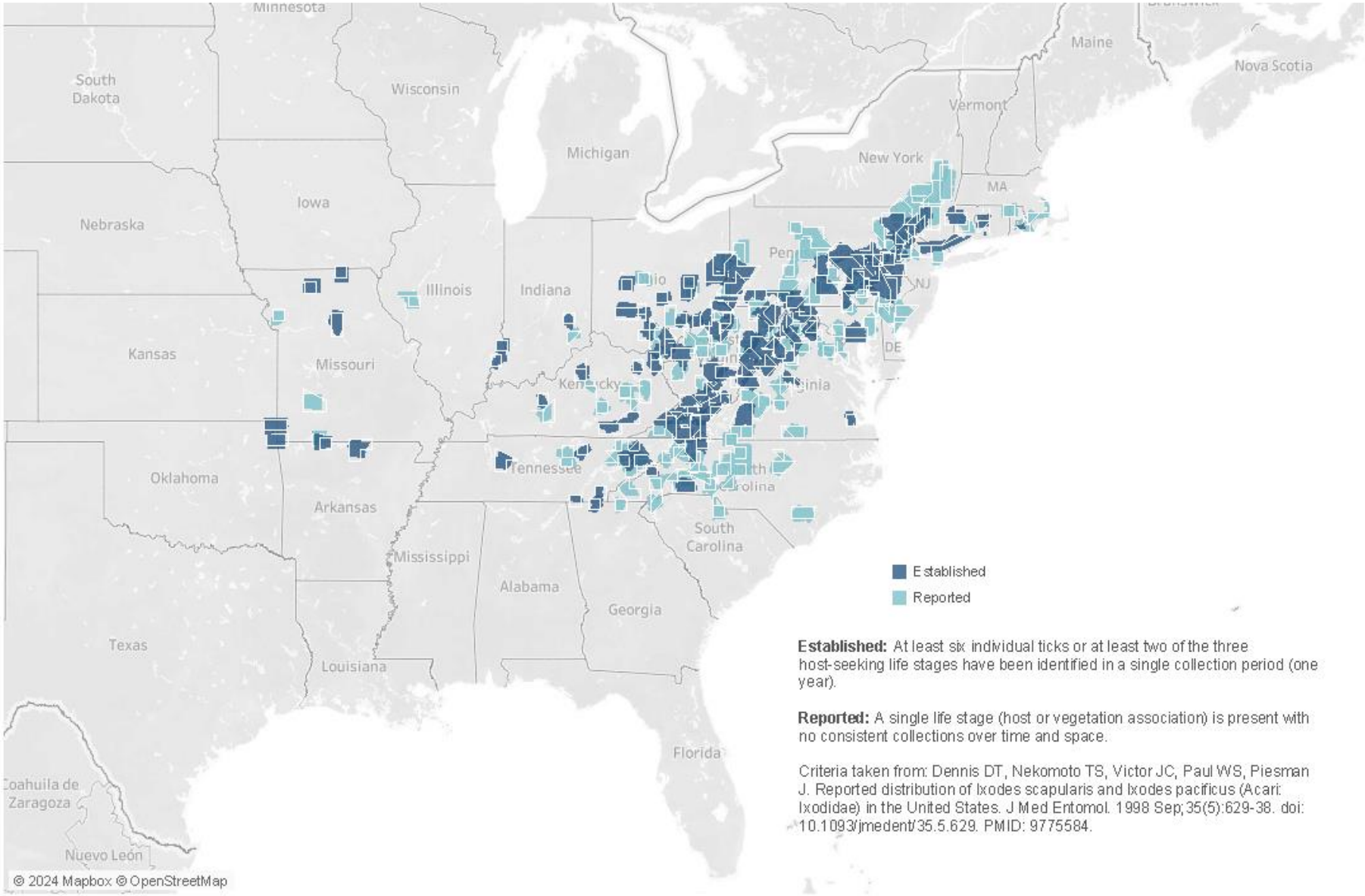
- Tick surveillance is intended to monitor changes in the distribution and abundance of ticks.
- While several short-term attached tick studies have been completed, no surveillance for presence and prevalence have been undertaken due to limited funding.

We currently collaborate with the Georgia Department of Agriculture who have been collecting tick data from veterinary clinics in Georgia since 2005.

Tick Species Collected in Georgia, 2005-2025

2005-2025							
Identification	**adults**	**females**	**males**	**nymphs**	**larvae**	**unknown**	**Grand Total**
Amblyomma americanum	1	788	652	773	4226	32	6472
Ixodes scapularis		2303	1155	67	2056	23	5604
Dermacentor variabilis	1	734	907	7	198	49	1896
Amblyomma maculatum	8	591	699	11		5	1314
Dermacentor albipictus		52	62	33	1		148
Rhipicephalus sanguineus		34	30	2		4	70
Ixodes affinis		28	20	1	4		53
Ixodes texanus		25		8			33
Amblyomma spp.				22	7	3	32
Ixodes spp.		28	2			1	31
Unknown		1			2	23	26
Ixodes brunneus		5		4			9
Amblyomma hebraeum		1	4				5
Lipoptena mazamae		5					5
Rhipicephalus evertsi evertsi		1	3				4
Argas lahorensis				3			3
Rhipicephalus spp.	2			1			3
Amblyomma tuberculatum				2			2
Rhipicephalus rutilus		2					2
Amblyomma variegatum				1			1
Dermacentor spp.			1				1
Haemaphysalis leporispalustris				1			1
Haemaphysalis parva				1			1
Ixodes cookei		1					1
Ixodes minor		1					1
Rhipicephalus simus			1				1
Grand Total	**12**	**4600**	**3536**	**937**	**6494**	**140**	**15719**

Counties with established Asian longhorned tick populations



Established: At least six individual ticks or at least two of the three host-seeking life stages have been identified in a single collection period (one year).

Reported: A single life stage (host or vegetation association) is present with no consistent collections over time and space.

Criteria taken from: Dennis DT, Nekomoto TS, Victor JC, Paul WS, Piesman J. Reported distribution of Ixodes scapularis and Ixodes pacificus (Acari: Ixodidae) in the United States. J Med Entomol. 1998 Sep;35(5):629-38. doi: 10.1093/jmedent/35.5.629. PMID: 9775584.

USDA United States Department of Agriculture

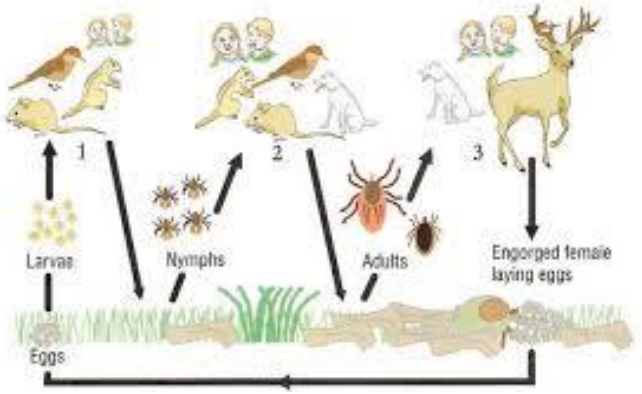
These data, and all the information contained therein, have been collected by the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS), or by its cooperators on APHIS' behalf, for restricted government purposes only. This information is the sole property of APHIS. See full disclaimer here: aphis.usda.gov/help/map-disclaimer.

Tick Surveillance at Wildlife Management Areas

We have a collaborative effort with the Georgia Department of Natural Resources (GA DNR) to collect ticks during quota hunts at the Wildlife Management Areas (WMAs).

- In 2020, we attended 9 quota hunts at 2 different WMAs to check deer brought in for tagging for ticks.
- In 2021, we attended 11 quota hunts at 5 different WMAs to check deer and bear brought in for tagging for ticks.
- In 2022 & 2023, we attended 22 quota hunts at 15 different WMAs to check deer and bear brought in for tagging for ticks.
- In 2024, with the help of multiple interns and DNR techs, surveillance was done at 22 WMAs in all 5 geophysical regions in Georgia.
- In 2025, with the help of multiple interns and DNR techs, surveillance was done at 24 WMAs in all 5 geophysical regions in Georgia.
- 2026 tick surveillance will begin later this month





Ticks found at Wildlife Management Areas



Amblyomma maculatum, male and female



Amblyomma americanum – male and female

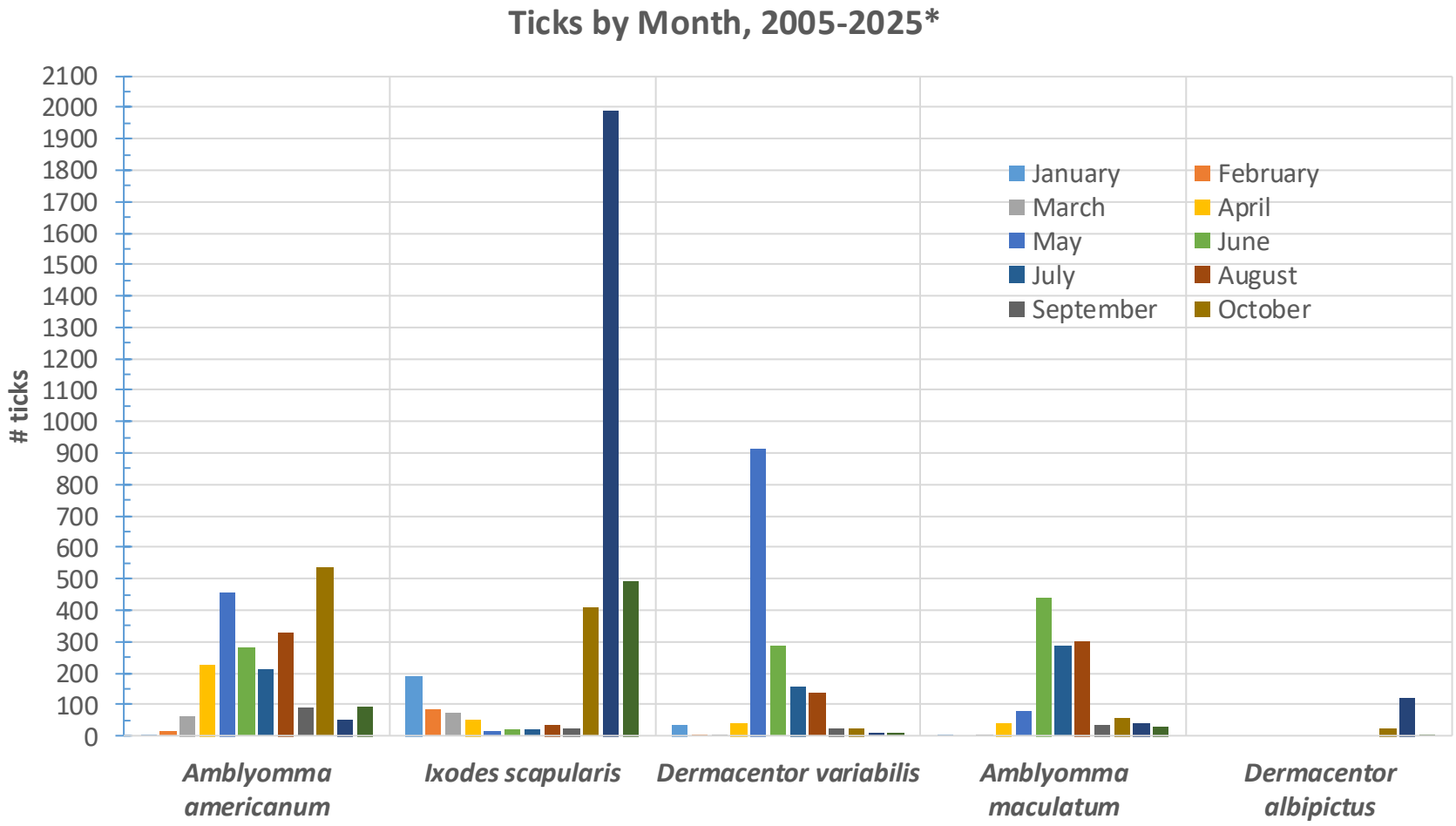


Ixodes scapularis, female, male, nymph, larva



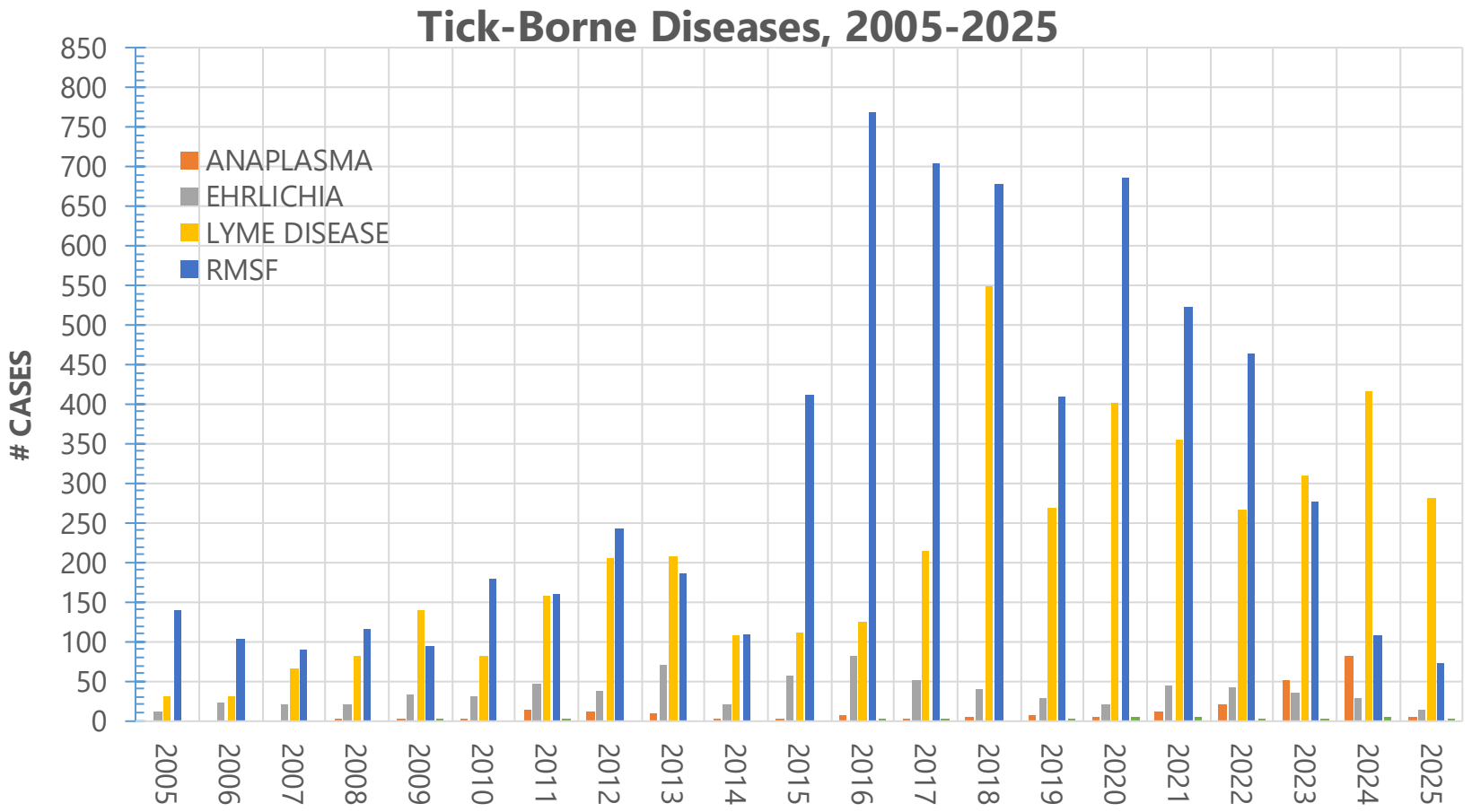
Dermacentor albipictus – male and female

Common Ticks by Month and Species



* *Ixodes scapularis*	2012	2000 larval ticks found on one animal
# *Amblyomma americanum*	2024	3542 specimens captured by dragging

Tick-Borne Diseases



Tick-Borne Disease Outreach

AMERICAN DOG TICK *(Dermacentor variabilis)*



The American dog tick (also called the wood tick) is often found along sidewalks or trails, in grassy fields, and on low shrubs in the woods. Photo: Female American dog tick

HOW TO REMOVE A TICK



RECORD SYMPTOMS

Symptoms generally begin within 30 days of removing an attached tick. Use the table below to record important dates, including the onset of any symptoms you develop. Share this information with your healthcare provider if you become ill.

Tick removal date: _____ 30 days from removal: _____

SYMPTOM	DATE	SYMPTOM	DATE
Fever (>100°F or 37.8°C)		Muscle aches or joint pain	
Swelling in the armpit or groin		Nausea/vomiting	
		Lack of appetite	
Ulcers or open sores		Other	
Headache			
Rash			

WHAT CAN THE AMERICAN DOG TICK TRANSMIT?

While not all ticks carry diseases, the American dog tick can transmit:

- Rocky mountain spotted fever (RSMF)
- Tularemia

Both of these are rare, but watching for symptoms after a tick bite is a good idea.

HOW TO PREVENT TICK BITES



We teamed up with Epidemiology to provide tick ID and information on TBDs.

On-Line ID Tool:

https://arcg.is/1XSuSD

Once the tick is identified, the appropriate info sheet is sent to the person who requested the ID.

Interns are a blessing!

We have been able to get free (to us) interns from a number of sources recently.

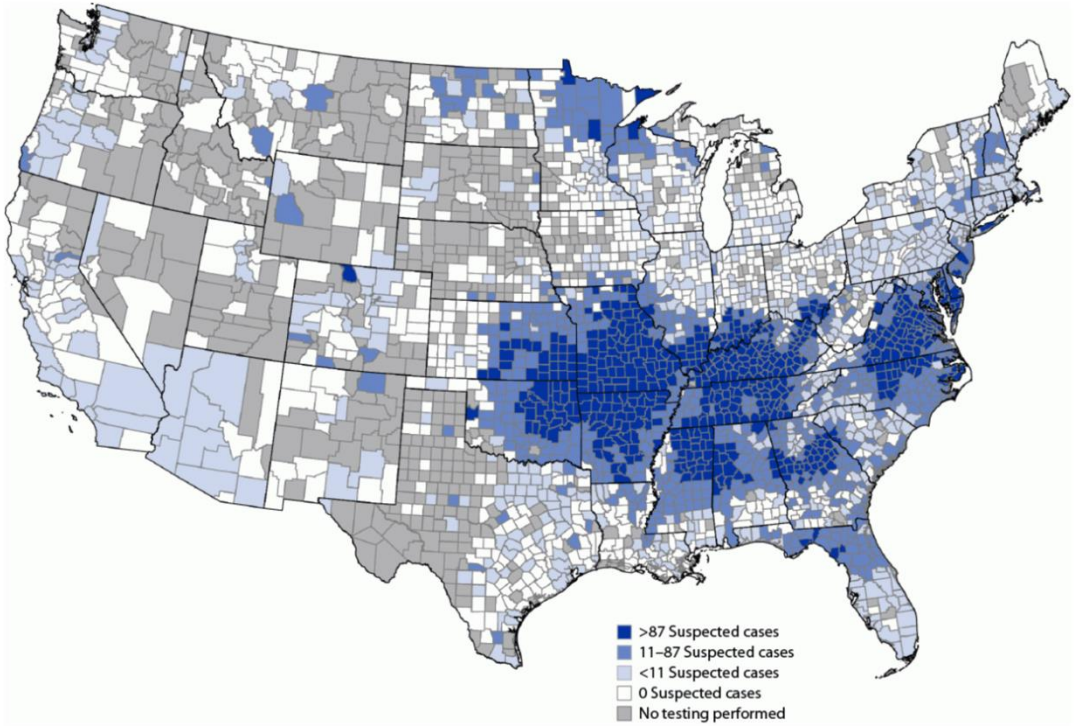
- NEHA (thanks to the EH Districts for collaborating on this)
- SECVBD
- UGA – MPH capstone students
- UWF – MPH practicum students
- PHEFA (through the Entomological Society of America)
- APHL Fellows
- Students looking for field experience from other universities

We have the interns work on a variety of projects, including some actual tick dragging.

STORYMAP – Surveillance Through Collaboration
https://arcg.is/1arvHP2

Alpha-GAL Education Outreach

FIGURE. Geographic distribution of suspected alpha-gal syndrome cases* per 1 million population per year — United States, 2017–2022



An intern working with my team recently finished a survey on hunters, TBDs, and alpha-GAL. The survey can be found at https://arcg.is/0iueDy

A survey looking at the general population's knowledge of ticks and tick-borne diseases can be found at https://arcg.is/1LjSLa0.

A recently discovered reaction to the bite from the Lone Star tick is that it can cause people to develop an allergy to red meat, including beef and pork.

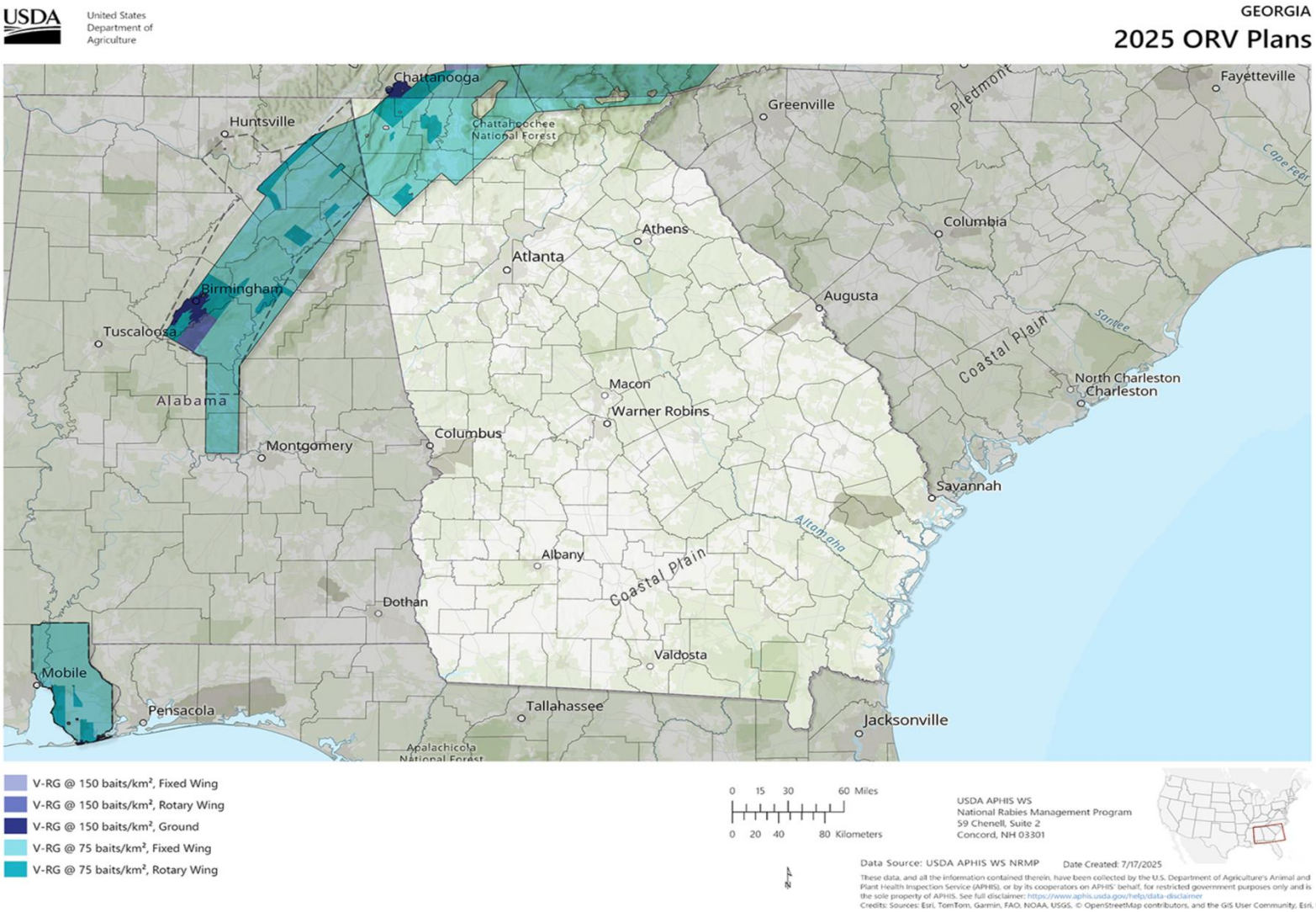
This specific allergy is related to a carbohydrate called alpha-gal and is best diagnosed with a blood test.

Although reactions to foods typically occur immediately, in the instance of allergic reactions to alpha-gal, symptoms often take several hours to develop.

Owing to the significant delay between eating red meat and the appearance of an allergic reaction, it can be a challenge to connect the culprit foods to symptoms.

The Lone Star tick has been implicated in initiating the red meat allergy in the US, and this tick is found predominantly in the Southeast, from Texas to Iowa and into New England. Several other tick species have also recently been implicated.

Raccoon Rabies Vaccine Bait Project



Raccoon Rabies Project

year	Identification	females	males	nymphs	Grand Total
2025	*Amblyomma americanum*	1	1	1	3
	Amblyomma maculatum			4	4
	Dermacentor variabilis	277	512	4	793
	Ixodes scapularis	1			1
	Ixodes texanus	25		3	28
2026	*Amblyomma americanum*			1	1
	Dermacentor variabilis	188	355	12	555
	Ixodes scapularis	6			6
	Ixodes texanus	140			140
Grand Total		638	868	25	1531



Dermacentor variabilis



Ixodes texanus

Some of Our Other Duties

Education/Outreach/Inservice Training

- bed bug education
- lice education
- scabies education
- education on any other arthropod (and other things) the public deems a pest

Web Sites

- Insects and Diseases: https://dph.georgia.gov/environmental-health/insects-and-diseases
- Georgia Mosquito Control Association: http://www.gamosquito.org

Upload data to the CDC ArboNET database

Mosquito and Tick ID training (currently by request only)

- Online training modules can be found at https://www.gamosquito.org/Mosquito%20ID%20Training.htm

Board members for GMCA and MAMCA

Resources

- Arbovirus summaries are available monthly during mosquito season – if you want a copy sent to you, please send me an email at Rosmarie.Kelly@dph.ga.gov
- A final arboviral summary has been put together for every year since 2002; these will soon be available on the GMCA website at https://www.gamosquito.org/mosquito.htm
- A mosquito surveillance summary has been put together every year since 2017; they are available at http://www.gamosquito.org/mosquito.htm
- There are 7 tick surveillance summaries currently available, starting with a 2005-2019 combined summary; all tick surveillance summaries are available at https://www.gamosquito.org/tick.htm



ANY QUESTIONS???

https://dph.georgia.gov/environmental-health/insects-and-diseases

https://www.gamosquito.org