Trypanosoma cruzi frequently infects wild mammals in the southern United States but little is known about the effect of the parasite on reservoir hosts such as the raccoon (Procyon lotor). To investigate this issue, 30 raccoons trapped on St. Catherine’s Island (Georgia, USA) during September, 1994 were tested for *T. cruzi* infection by examination of wet mounts of fresh blood and by culturing blood in liver infusion tryptose medium. Thirteen animals (43%) were found to be infected with *T. cruzi*. Heart tissues from 10 of the infected raccoons and 4 uninfected raccoons were fixed, sectioned, stained and examined for the presence of parasites and evidence of tissue damage. One *T. cruzi* pseudocyst was found in cardiac tissue from the left ventricle of a female raccoon. In addition, *Sarcocystis* sp. sarcocysts and schizonts of *Hepatozoon* sp. were observed in heart tissue from seven of the *T. cruzi*-infected raccoons. Mild, multifocal and interstitial inflammation was observed in the heart tissues of all 10 of the infected animals. No evidence of *T. cruzi* pseudocysts or tissue damage was observed in heart tissue from C3H/HeJ mice infected with culture forms of the parasites isolated from raccoons. Our findings suggest that the *T. cruzi* parasites isolated from raccoons in Georgia are not pathogenic to this host or C3H/HeJ mice and may be of low virulence.

**Keywords:** Hepatozoon sp., pathogenicity, Procyon lotor, raccoon, Sarcocystis sp., Trypanosoma cruzi, virulence

This content is only available as a PDF.

© 1998 Wildlife Disease Association

1998
Clonal Spread of Quinolone-Resistant Escherichia coli among Sika Deer (Cervus nippon) Inhabiting an Urban City Park in Japan
Shiori Ikushima, Harumi Torii, Makoto Asano, Masatsugu Suzuki, Tetsuo Asai

DICTYOCAULUS CERVI-LIKE LUNGWORM INFECTION IN A ROCKY MOUNTAIN ELK (CERVUS CANADENSIS NELSON) FROM WYOMING, USA
Berit Bangoura, Bill Brinegar, Terry E. Creekmore

Species Distribution Model of Trichinella Species in Cougars (Puma concolor) for the Southwestern Region of Colorado, USA
Ryan W. Koch, Mason V. Reichard

EFFECT OF PRESCRIBED FIRE ON THE VIABILITY OF BAYLISASCARIS PROCYONIS EGGS
Tiffany Pope, Scott E. Henke, David B. Wester, Sandra Rideout-Hanzak, Clayton D. Hilton

LEPTOSPIRA PREVALENCE AND ITS ASSOCIATION WITH RENAL PATHOLOGY IN MOUNTAIN LIONS (PUMA CONCOLOR) AND BOBCATS (LYNX RUFUS) IN CALIFORNIA, USA
Mary H. Straub, Jaime L. Rudd, Leslie W. Woods, Deana L. Clifford, Janet E. Foley
To investigate this issue, 30 raccoons trapped on St. Catherine's Island (Georgia, USA) during September, 1994 were tested for T. cruzi infection by examination of wet mounts of fresh blood and by culturing blood in liver infusion tryptose medium. Thirteen animals (43%) were found to be infected with T. cruzi. Heart tissues from 10 of the infected raccoons and 4 uninfected raccoons were fixed, sectioned, stained and examined for the presence of parasites and evidence of tissue damage. One T. cruzi pseudocyst was found in cardiac tissue from the left ventricle of a female raccoon. In addition, Trypanosomiasis (trih-pan-o-so-MY-uh-sis) is a disease found in Africa and the American continents that is caused by infection with a parasite. Forms of the disease may persist for many years and have several phases, with symptoms that can vary from one stage to the next. KEYWORDS: trypanosomiasis, T. cruzi, raccoon, Trypanosomiasis, T. cruzi.

What Causes Trypanosomiasis? The bite of an infected tsetse (SET-see) fly usually transmits the organisms that cause the African forms of trypanosomiasis.