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All Wildlife Diseases, All Conservation, All One Health, All the Time!

## NEWS RELEASE ON ARTICLES FROM JOURNAL OF WILDLIFE DISEASES 53(3)

Health of wildlife, domestic species and human beings, and the environments that support them (One Health), has been a focus of the Wildlife Disease Association for more than 55 years. The Journal of Wildlife Diseases (JWD) issue 53(3) has several articles with particular conservation and wildlife management significance that we would like to make you aware of.

White nose syndrome (WNS) is the common name for a terribly destructive fungal disease of seasonally hibernating bats in North America. **Dispersal Hazards of *Pseudogymnoascus destructans* by Bats and Human Activity at Hibernacula in Summer** by **Anne Ballmann** and colleagues from **US Geological Survey, National Wildlife Health Center and University of Wisconsin, Madison**, shows that bats using hibernacula in summer can harbor the fungus that causes WNS on their skin and in their guano. It also demonstrates that the fungus is on clothing, traps, and other equipment used at hibernacula highlighting the risk for pathogen dispersal.

Bubonic plague not only still occasionally kills people, but it devastates prairie dog colonies in the Rocky Mountain region, and often kills or starves out black footed ferrets who live off them. But help is on the way. **Elsa Cárdenas-Canales** and her co-authors from **Colorado Division of Parks and Wildlife** and the **USGS National Wildlife Health Center** show how in **Responses of Juvenile Black-Tailed Prairie Dogs (*Cynomys ludovicianus*) to a Commercially Produced Oral Plague Vaccine Delivered at Two Doses**. They confirmed safety and immunogenicity of mass-produced vaccine baits carrying an experimental, commercial-source plague vaccine, and did not observe any adverse effects related to oral vaccination.

Fleas are the primary carrier of the bacteria that causes plague, a major impediment to the recovery of the endangered black-footed ferret (*Mustela nigripes*). **Erica Mize** and colleagues from **University of South Dakota** and the **Lower Brule Sioux Tribe** investigated **Fleas of Black-Footed Ferrets and their Potential Role in the Movement of Plague**. Although the prevalence of plague in fleas was low (0-2.9%), it was higher for male ferrets, and 6 of 67 ferrets vaccinated against plague carried positive fleas. This suggests even vaccinated ferrets could still inadvertently act as transporters of plague infected fleas.

Gulls are not very sensitive to fatal avian influenza (AI) virus infections, particularly with low pathogenic strains. A paper titled **Genetic Characterization of H13 and H16 Influenza A Viruses in Gulls (*Larus* spp.) with Clinically Severe Disease and Concurrent Circovirus** by a group of **Finnish** scientists lead by **Erika Lindh** showed otherwise. The DNA of circovirus, an immunosuppressive pathogen of birds and mammals, was detected in 54% of dead gulls that tested positive for AI, and only 25% of AI negative gulls tested positive.

**Yvonne Black** and co-authors from four **British** institutions were critical of the **Detection and Reporting of Ranavirus in Amphibians: Evaluation of the Roles of the World Organization for Animal Health (OIE) and the Published Literature**. They found reporting of infection was inconsistent, results of negative tests were underreported, and researchers lacked awareness of the role of the OIE. Approaches to diagnostic screening were poorly harmonized and heavily reliant on molecular methods. All this hampers the construction of a comprehensive disease information database.

Abstracts of these and other articles in JWD 53(3) are available at:

<http://www.wildlifedisease.org/wda/PUBLICATIONS/JournalofWildlifeDiseases/OnlineJournal.aspx>

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