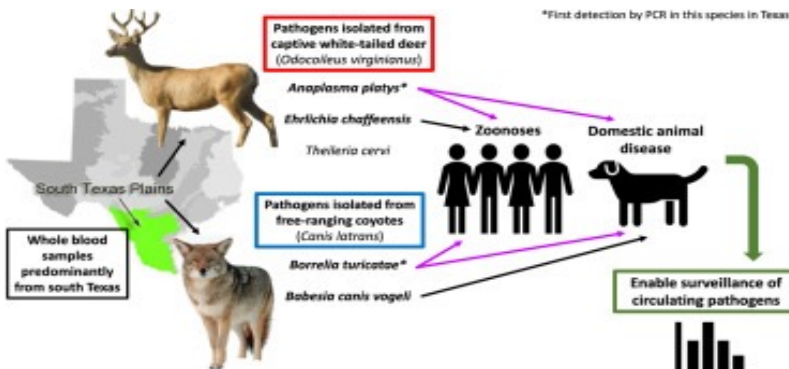


Introduction

- Anaplasmosis is a disease caused by bacteria that are transmitted to animals and people through the bite of infected ticks.
- In the U.S., Anaplasmosis infection is pervasive in the Midwest and Northeast, with ticks thought to contribute to the highest mode of disease migration as seen in Chart # 1.
- Handlers of White-Tail Deer Carcasses are populations in need of public health education on the prevalence of the disease.

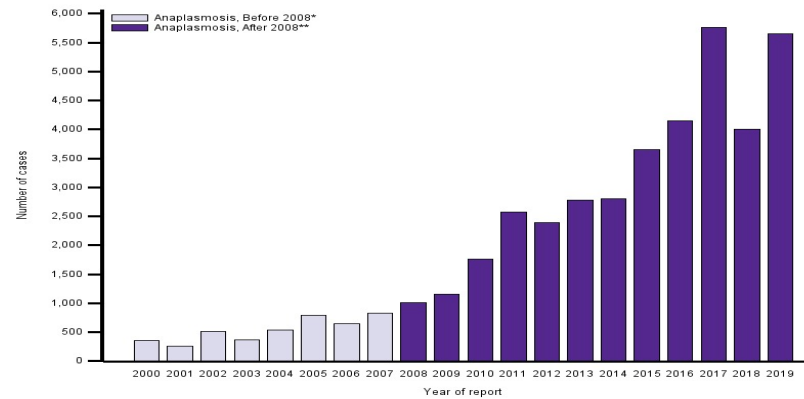
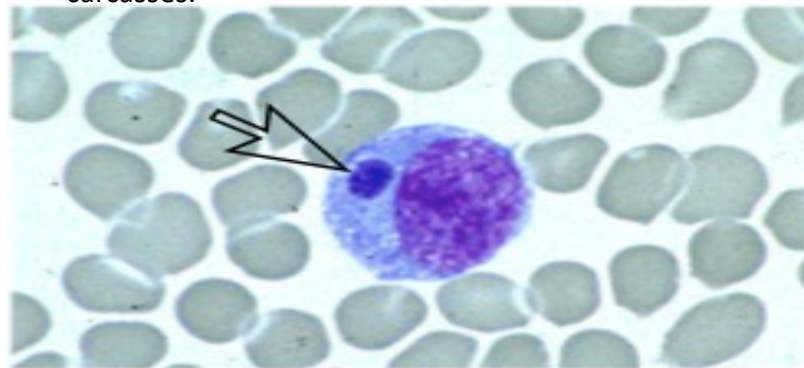
Methods

- DNR quota hunts of WTD carried out during 2020-2021 deer season in the State of Georgia within eleven identified counties.
- Blood Samples were collected, and peripheral smears screened for presence of anaplasmosis.
- Data of previous and current knowledge of handlers regarding disease anaplasmosis assessed.



Results

- 84 blood samples were investigated, of these, 25 erythrocytes infected by Anaplasmosis in 9 animals (29.76%) in 2020-2021 Deer Season.
- In conversation, 100% of hunters talked with during 2020-2021 season, showed limited to no knowledge about anaplasmosis in WTD or the dangers in handling carcasses.



Discussion

- Presence of anaplasmosis found in erythrocytes of WTD suggest tick infestation of animals in Georgia.
- Handlers of WTD carcasses are prone to infections by anaplasmosis via tick encounters during carcass handling.
- Very few handlers of carcasses are aware of symptoms or illness from handling infected carcasses.

Conclusion

- Hunters and handlers need public health education on anaplasmosis and clinical manifestation of symptoms.
- Handlers need education on how to take precautions when handling carcasses.
- Handlers should recognize the tick species *Ixodes scapularis* and understand its importance as a vector.

