



EASTERN OREGON OUTDOORS

by Mark Baggett

Not so long ago, we eastern Oregon outdoor addicts might have guessed Lyme disease, provided we hadn't seen the spelling (and some of us even then), to be a tropical disorder indigenous to citrus fruits, particularly those frequently found stuck to the rim of margarita glass. Today, however, most outdoors people have at least heard of Lyme disease, the crippling infection carried and transmitted by certain tiny ticks.

Although the disease is named for a mysterious outbreak of arthritis in Lyme, Connecticut around 1976, it has since spread over the East Coast, the northern tier of states, portions of the South and along the Pacific Coast. And yes, cases of Lyme disease have been reported even here in eastern Oregon.

According to a published report by Dr. Julius M. (Doc) Kowalski, M.D., official Medical Council for the Outdoor Writers Association of America, the first sign of illness is a red "pimple" at the bite site. An enlarging rash-like area of redness will usually surround the site, and can grow from two to three inches in diameter to the size of a dinner plate. Flu-like symptoms will follow, often including fatigue, headache, chills, fever, sore throat, muscle weakness, stiff neck and swollen lymph nodes.

But the final stage of the disease can be the most debilitating, according to Dr. Kowalski, and can suddenly occur within weeks of the appearance of the pimple and rash or may not strike for up to two years.

"This is the crippling Lyme Disease arthritis," Kowalski wrote. "It affects the major joints, particularly the knees, with pain and swelling. There is recurrent weakness, fever, and arthritis."

The culprit, at least here in the West, is the Western black-legged tick, identified by its dark, if not black, forward section and orange posterior. At less than half the size of an ordinary wood tick, the little beast is difficult to spot yet packs a formidable punch if infected with Lyme disease. It is commonly referred to as a deer tick since it often chooses larger ungulates such as deer and elk to supply it with a necessary meal of blood before dropping to the ground to begin its reproduction cycle. Unfortunately, the little free-loader also finds human blood quite acceptable in satisfying this particular requirement.

With archery season already in progress and the general big-game seasons scant weeks away, hunters should be on the lookout for these ticks, particularly when handling downed big-game animals. The very fact that you are hunting in good game habitat means you could be a prime tick habitat as well. Experts advise tucking your pant-legs into your socks or boots, wearing tight-cuffed shirts and tucking in the shirt tails. Repellents containing high concentrations of the ingredient DEET, such as Muskol or Ben's 100, can discourage tick attachment when applied to clothing or skin.

The fact that you have been bitten by a black-legged tick carrying Lyme disease does not necessarily mean you have been infected with the disorder. According to Dr. Rossignol, an entomologist with Oregon State University, the tick would have to be attached for several hours—up to a full day—in order to transmit the disease.

"If you check yourself every day and pull it off," Rossignol said. "The ticks appear to be unable to transmit the (Lyme) parasite before its been attached for 24 hours."

"If you find a tick on yourself, it is important that you just pull it off," Rossignol instructed. "Nothing fancy—no vaseline or gasoline or whatever."

This is the method that we were once told was wrong, but experts now agree that the best way to remove a tick is to simply grasp the tiny bug as close to the skin as possible and pull with a steady, even pressure, taking care not to twist or squeeze the tick, which can release germs into the bite and cause mouth parts, (the tick's, of course) to break off. After the tick has been removed, wash hands and the bite site with soap and water or an alcohol swab.

Rossignol invites anyone finding a tick which they suspect may be of the Western black-legged variety to send it, with a note stating where the tick was found, to Insect Identification, Dept. of Entomology, OSU, Corvallis, OR 97331. He said contributions such as this greatly aid researchers in establishing the range and distribution of this potential threat.

Nordstrom Trunk show Sept. 22

A luncheon trunk showing of Nordstrom's styles will be held Saturday, Sept. 23 at 1 p.m. upstairs at the Heppner Elk's Lodge. Tickets for the event, which is sponsored by the Soroptimist Club, are available for \$5 at Benjamin Franklin Savings

and Loan. To view specific sizes, styles or brands, call Terrie at 676-9021 or Joyce at 676-9228.

The trunk show will feature styles for the working women and specialty sizes. Limited seating is available.

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Tools to battle Russian wheat aphid vary in effectiveness

The tools we have been using for Russian wheat aphid control have not been very effective. Although they have given control in the 90% to 99% range, this has allowed the field to reach threshold levels of infestation again within a couple of weeks. RWA control has to include tools other than chemical if we are going to be effective in combating this pest.

Planting date is one such tool. The Russian wheat aphid will probably begin to have significant flights again late in September or early October this fall. Such was his behavior last year and we expect no change. Wheat that is up and growing when the flights occur can expect to be infested with the aphid.

The date for a good knock-down frost in this country, the kind where the temperature goes down and stays down for awhile, is about a week before Thanksgiving, depending on elevation. If a producer wants to avoid spraying for the aphid this fall, it would be best to plant the wheat around Mid-October. With normal temperatures this would prevent an infestation this fall, and perhaps avoid one in the spring before the big flights of aphid occur about May.

Spring wheat or barley is particularly susceptible to RWA damage. Most spring grains were sprayed two times this year, and still they suffered from the aphid. If spring crops are necessary, consider alternative crops. Oats, while not adapted to dryland Morrow County, are resistant to RWA. The aphid will not attack broadleaf crops, such as spring rape. Controlling problem weeds by rotating through spring grains may no longer be economic, and fall wheat coupled with atrazine and a tolerable number of weeds might be preferable.

The application of an insecticide with the seed at planting time is not recommended. There is no data to support its benefit.

OSU is working on resistant varieties of wheat to the RWA, but it will be 8 to 10 years before one is released.

The Russian wheat aphid is a serious pest of wheat. It may well get worse before it gets better, since it is still adapting to this environment. We need to use every tool at our disposal to fight this pest, and to preserve the tools we have. If we were, for example, to use only one pesticide as the sole control of this aphid, very soon we would have a resistant strain of aphid and no tool to use.

Applying a systemic chemical as a side dressing while seeding wheat in order to control the Russian wheat aphid is a practice that is gaining in popularity in Morrow County. The

aphid can be a severe pest on fall seeded wheat, especially wheat that is seeded early.

County agents from around the Columbia Plateau put their heads together recently and decided that the evidence we had on using systemic insecticides at planting time was not sufficient to warrant recommending the practice.

No sooner had we decided this than the WSU entomologist from Prosser, Dr. Keith Pike, went on record in favor of systemics at planting time under certain conditions, such as with early seeded wheat.

Does this mean that we county agents are wrong? Maybe, but I think it means more that we know all too little about this aphid and how to control it.

Whether or not a particular producer should spend the money to adapt his drills so he can apply an insecticide at planting time depends on where he is farming and when he feels he needs to seed in order to maximize his profits. Early seeding in the north end of Morrow County has resulted in significantly better yields in recent years, especially since we have had Stephens variety wheat. Early seeding has also been necessary in order to put the seed in moist soil at an appropriate depth. Waiting to seed has resulted in increased weed problems, poor stand establishment due to moisture problems, and lower yields.

On the other hand, the Russian wheat aphid may put quite a lot of pressure on early seeded fall wheat and our pesticides are not very effective controls. Experience this last spring has shown that as little as two weeks after spraying there can be economic threshold population of aphids in the wheat again. And systemic sidedressing at seeding time may not be any more effective. Dr. Pike suggests that its effectiveness is limited to about three weeks from planting.

Lastly, the ground in north Morrow County depends on deep moisture to produce the excellent yields they have enjoyed these past few years, and this year the moisture is not down there. It stops about four feet down. A big wheat plant which develops from early seeding may run out of moisture just about the time when it needs it the most.

The question whether or not to use dry insecticide at planting time cannot be answered here. It depends on too many variables. It can be answered only by individual producers who base their decisions on as much information as is available. There are no right or wrong answers. There are only questions which we try to answer.

St. Patrick's Senior Center Bulletin Board



We are all pleased with the workers preparing to pave our back parking lot and with the new sidewalk bordering our center and running through to Chase St. It's putting on the finishing touch for our center.

We are also pleased with the residents here who come to join us in the sitting room and for meals on Wednesday. We understand that all but one of the apartments are now occupied. The group has scheduled a "get acquainted" evening with dinner in the sitting room on September 17.

Our group sent representatives to the community potluck at the fairgrounds last Sunday. Marilyn Bergstrom, our cook, from the nutrition site program and Jane Rawlins from the Senior Center Board both attended. Getting to know everyone was fun and the food was delicious. We hope they'll do that again.

This Week. We still have a large coffee table, two stereos and a pool table which are free for anyone who wants them.

The Veterans of Foreign Wars met in our sitting room on Wednesday evening, Thursday at 9 a.m. "Morning Meditations" with Rev. Grace Drake will be held in our sitting room.

Next week: Wednesday at noon will be our regular luncheon. The menu is: pork and dressing, sweet potatoes, coleslaw, bran muffins and fruity jello. The ladies from the Episcopal Church will assist with serving. We always give a free meal ticket and a door prize. These were won last week by Bernice Nash and Dot Halvorsen. Hostesses this month are Chris Burkenbine and Jane Rawlins.

Through the winter we're planning to have a food and fun night the second Sunday of each month, beginning October 8. A potluck supper will be followed by games. Everyone is welcome.

Edna Bailey has presented us with a complete set of Bingo game set-up. We'll be using that soon.

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Parms earn Lexington yard of month



Ed and Ruth Parm's yard was selected by the Lexington Garden Bugs as the September Yard of the Month. "They have many beautiful flowers, shrubs and trees," said a Garden Bug spokesperson. "Their lawn is always mowed and weed free."

Highlights of their yard are the Marigolds which have grown over two feet in height. The flowers and foliage are beautiful.

Ruth who enjoys working in the yard says, "It is worth all the hard work when you see the results."

The Parms live on Main St. Everyone is invited to drive by and take a peek at their yard.

The Parms were presented with a "whirley gig" to hang up on their front porch. Mel Allyn makes the decorations for the Yard of the Month winners.

July yard of month awarded to Keys

Lexington Garden Club yard of the month for July was awarded to Mr. and Mrs. Tim Key. "When the young couple moved to the community less than a year ago," said a garden club member, "they found a yard full of weeds, overgrown

shrubs and garbage left by a former occupant."

Now their yard is virtually weed free, neat and clean. "Tim, who confesses to be 'the gardener of the family' has many other plans for his home."

Fair and Rodeo Court tryouts set

The Morrow County Fair Board has scheduled the Fair and Rodeo Court tryouts on October 22, beginning at 1 p.m. at the fairgrounds in Heppner.

All interested contestants should contact the Fair Office for an application and rules. Deadline for applications to be turned in at the Fair Office will be 5 p.m. on October 19.

Highlights of the rules and guidelines for selection are:

- * Applicant must be a Morrow County resident;
- * Must be 16 years of age but not more than 21 by August 1;

- * Never married, had a child, or lived/living with a boyfriend;
- * Must ride a horse;
- * Neat in appearance;
- * Must be able to conduct oneself in a mature, courteous and ladylike manner;
- * Must be able to relate to the general public at parades, luncheons and events;
- * Must be able to advertise the Fair and Rodeo to the best of your ability;
- * Must be able to get along with others; share responsibilities.

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