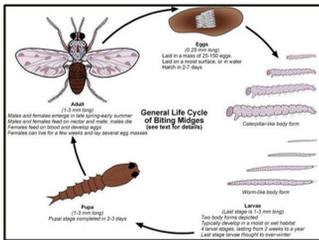


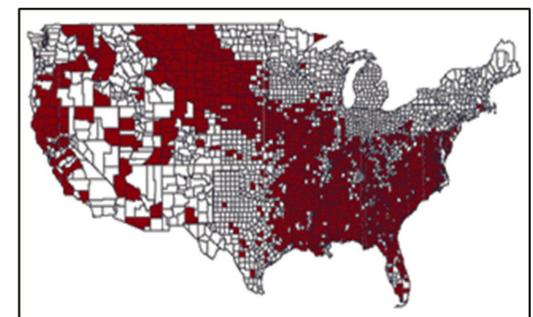
# Hemorrhagic Disease in Deer

## (EHD and Bluetongue)

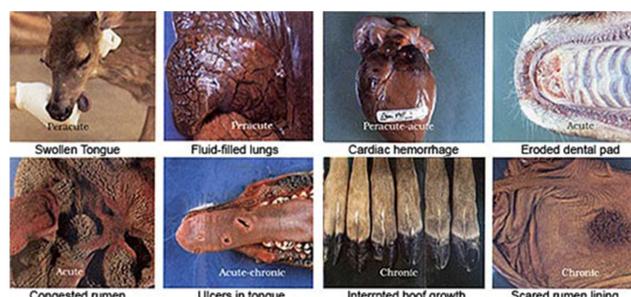


Epizootic Hemorrhagic Disease (EHD) and Bluetongue (BT) are two distinct viral diseases, but they are so similar that they are often referred to collectively as Hemorrhagic Disease (HD). Disease outbreaks in Illinois normally consist primarily of EHD, as confirmed by laboratory isolation of the virus. The viruses are spread by tiny black biting gnats that require wet areas such as ponds/river margins for their life cycle. HD normally appears during summertime, and persists until the first hard frost kills the insects. Disease distribution tends to be very “patchy” on the landscape, because an outbreak can occur only if all the essential components are present in a locality: (1) the proper species of gnat; (2) the virus; and (3) a suitable concentration of deer. HD is not a threat to humans, pets, or (usually) livestock.

Hemorrhagic Disease has been common in the southeastern United States for many years, but outbreaks in the Midwest tend to be sporadic, often with five or more years between significant events. As a result, midwestern deer populations tend to have low levels of resistance to HD.

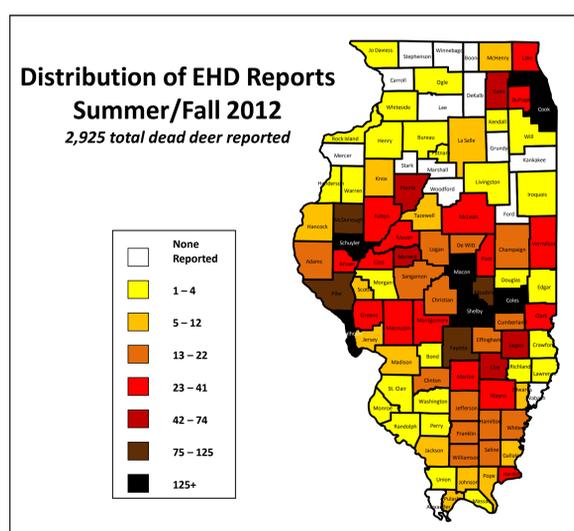


**Known distribution of Hemorrhagic Disease in the United States**



HD may strike a deer quickly, resulting in death within a few days, or it may result in a prolonged (chronic) illness over a period of months. It is not always fatal;

deer can and do recover from HD. In more acute cases, deer often develop swollen (or bluish) tongues, with hemorrhaging in various internal organs. In more slowly progressing cases, deer may have ulcers of the mouth/tongue, become emaciated, and display abnormal hoof growth (even loss of the hoof covering). Sick or dead deer are often found in or near water, as high fever drives them to quench their thirst or cool off.



During 2012, IDNR solicited reports of suspected HD mortality from Illinois citizens, and received 976 calls reporting 2,925 dead deer from 87 Illinois counties. HD activity was low during the previous four years (2008-2011), producing an average of only 52 individual dead deer reported each year. Our last significant outbreak occurred during 2007, when we received 458 reports of 1,987 deer in 57 counties. While these numbers only serve as an index to Hemorrhagic Disease activity, they are useful for identifying hot spots so that biologists can closely scrutinize other data to determine whether significant impacts occurred.