



RABIES
is
DEADLY!



Report

on raccoon rabies
surveillance operations
in 2020

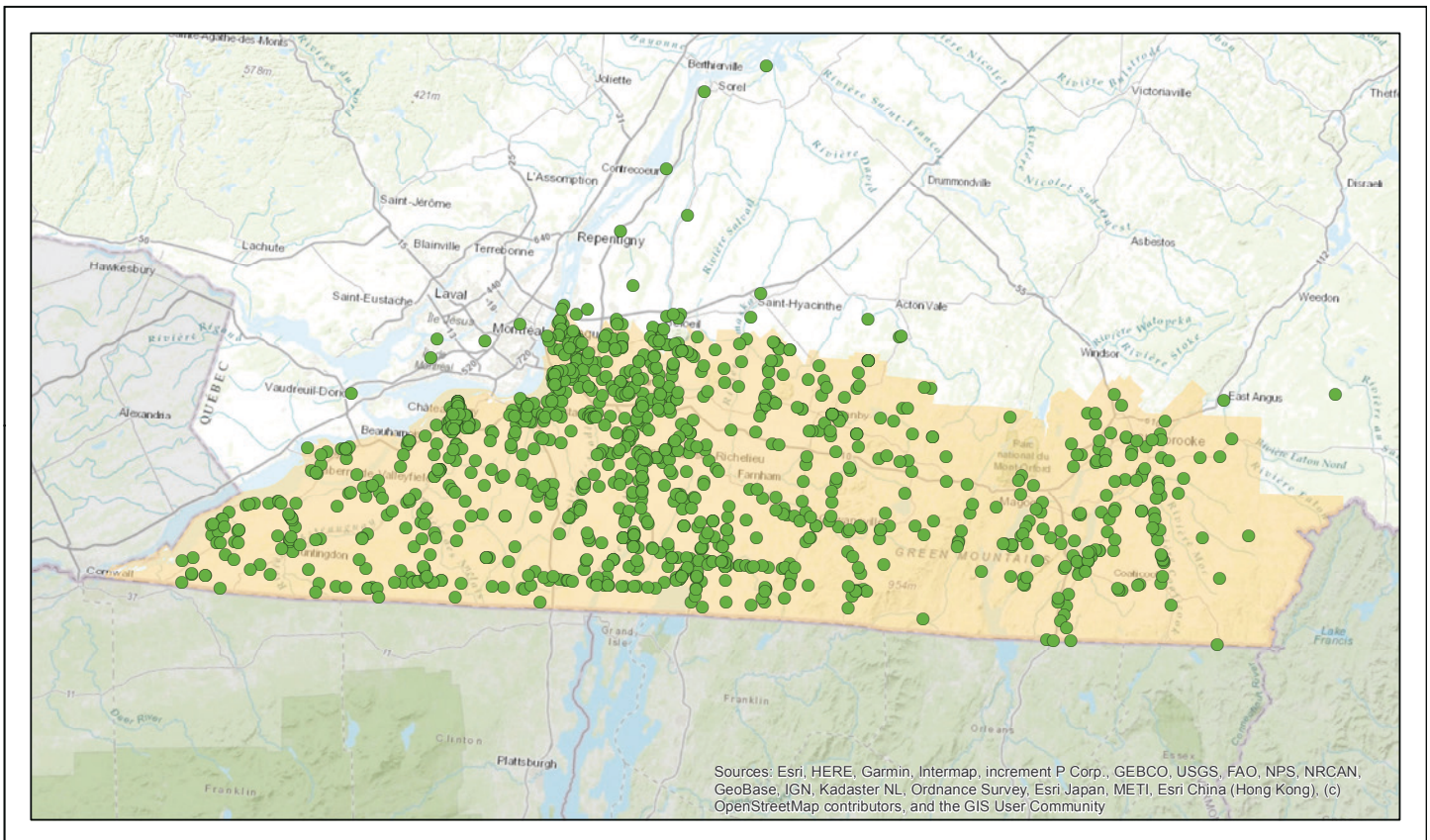
Rabies is a fatal disease that can affect all mammals, including humans.

Therefore, it is a major public health issue that warrants the maintenance of adequate surveillance in wildlife.

The enhanced surveillance of raccoon rabies in Québec is aimed at the early detection of any cases in the regions deemed to be at risk of introduction, namely Montérégie and Estrie.

This surveillance is done by collecting raccoons, skunks and foxes that are already dead or that appear disoriented, injured, abnormally aggressive or paralyzed. Laboratory tests are then performed to determine whether or not these specimens have rabies.

In 2020, the enhanced raccoon rabies surveillance area included 143 municipalities, Indigenous territories and unorganized territories in Estrie and Montérégie, for a total area of 11,541 km².



Sources: Esri, HERE, Garmin, Intermap, increment P Corp., GEBCO, USGS, FAO, NPS, NRCAN, GeoBase, IGN, Kadaster NL, Ordnance Survey, Esri Japan, METI, Esri China (Hong Kong), (c) OpenStreetMap contributors, and the GIS User Community

Legend

- Specimens collected and tested for rabies in 2020
- Surveillance area - 2020

Metadata

Map projection
Lambert conical projection

Datum
NAD 83

1:1 136 668



Sources of geographic information
BDTA 1:250 000 MERN
BDGA 1:1 000 000 MERN

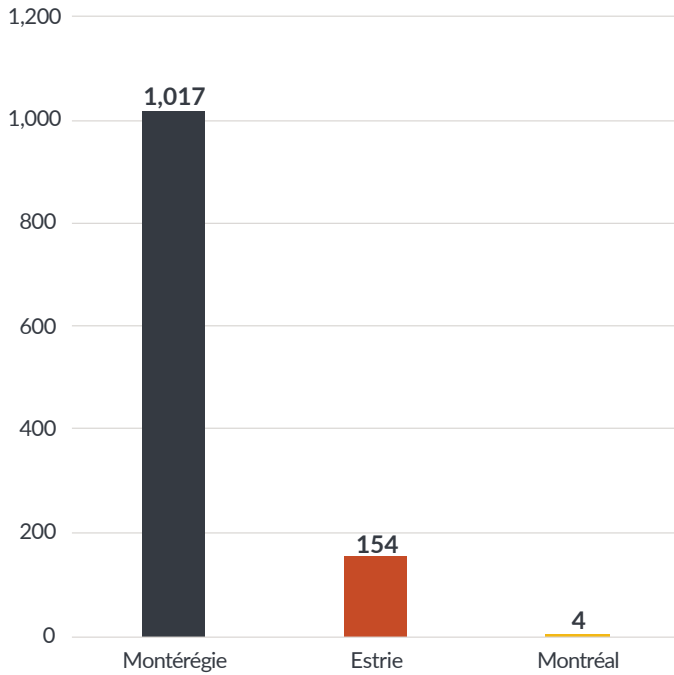
Production
Ministère des Forêts, de la Faune et des Parcs
Service de la conservation de la biodiversité
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Québec

Map: Distribution of specimens collected for raccoon rabies surveillance in Québec between January 1 and December 31, 2020.

Surveillance operations, conducted throughout the year, resulted in the collection and analysis of a total of 1,175 wild animals (sick or dead). This was the highest number since 2017, when 1,191 specimens were recovered. The number of specimens collected per year normally fluctuate between 700 and 1,200.



Number of specimens collected by region, as part of raccoon rabies surveillance in 2020.

N.B. Occasionally, specimens reported outside the surveillance area are collected, when they are of interest for rabies surveillance.



Audrey Crevier for the MFFP

A REPORT DOES NOT ALWAYS LEAD TO THE COLLECTION OF AN ANIMAL.

Here are some examples:

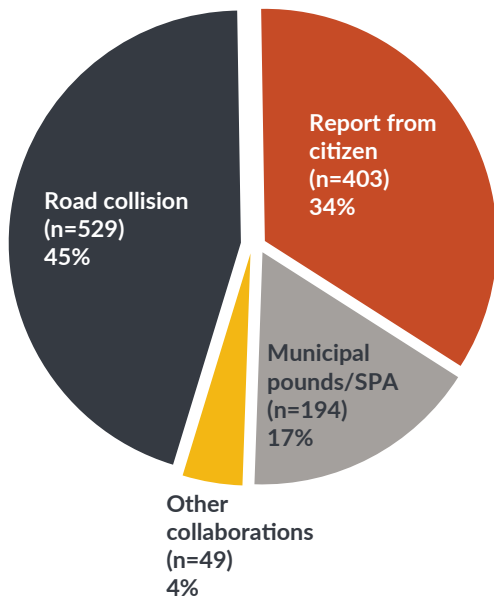
- An animal that is no longer available for collection;
- An animal not found in one of the targeted municipalities;
- An animal that does not have symptoms consistent with rabies;
- An animal that is not a target species;
- A dead animal that is too decomposed to perform rabies testing;
- A nuisance animal.



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COLLECTED ANIMALS AND TEST RESULTS

The animals collected as part of enhanced surveillance measures come from two main sources: reports from citizens and road collisions. Reports from citizens are the best way to find wildlife infected with rabies. When this disease is present in an area, wild animals are observed with strange behaviour, without fearing humans and even during the day, which is contrary to the habits of many species.



Source of the 1,175 specimens collected in 2020.

REPORTS FROM CITIZENS

We received a total of 1,117 reports in 2020, the highest number since 2012, when 1,226 were reported. Typically, this number varies between 500 and 1,200 received and processed reports each year.

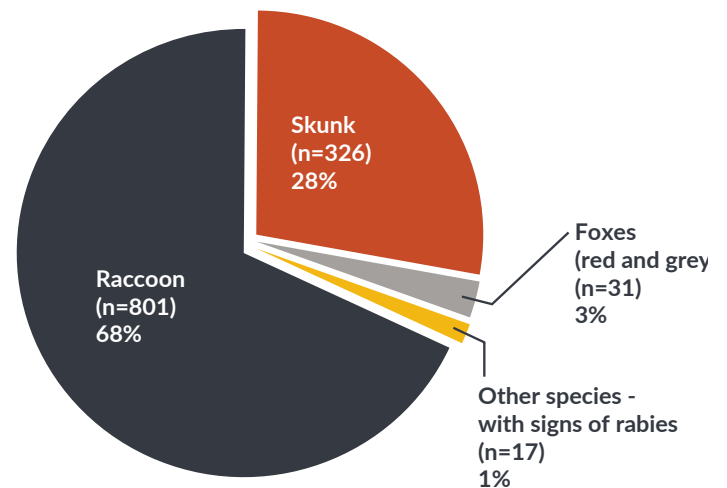
Among the reports received in 2020, 403 led to the collection of a suspect animal, which represents 36% of the reports.

TEST RESULTS

No cases of raccoon rabies were detected in Québec in 2020. The rabies test results are as follows:

- 1,149 negative specimens;
- 26 inconclusive or non-sampled specimens (over-decomposed carcass, crushed carcass, or inappropriate sample).

Enhanced surveillance focuses on raccoons, skunks and foxes that are considered to be the most at risk species. Occasionally, other species may be collected if they show signs consistent with rabies.



Distribution, by species, of the specimens collected in 2020.