

UPDATE ON NCVP GRANT RECIPIENT DR. HEATHER STOCKDALE-WALDEN

Dr. Heather Stockdale Walden of the University of Florida received NCVP funding in 2013 for her research proposal entitled “**Determining the presence of *Angiostrongylus cantonensis* in Florida.**” The study entailed collecting and identifying snail and rat species from zoological parks and animal conservation centers throughout Florida, as well as collecting rats eliminated for pest management; snail and rat feces were processed to assess the presence of *A. cantonensis* larvae, with PCR confirmation of parasite species, and rats were necropsied to observe potential parasite stages within various tissues.



Photo featured on UF News website and taken by Mindy Miller: Dr. Heather Stockdale (left) observes while John Slapcinsky of UF’s Florida Museum of Natural History dissects a snail.



Angiostrongylus cantonensis first stage larva recovered in a rat fecal sedimentation. Photo provided in Dr. Stockdale’s research progress update to the NCVP in October 2014.



Bradybaena similaris, the most common snail species found in Alachua County, Florida. Photo also featured in Dr. Stockdale’s October 2014 research progress report to the NCVP.

Results of the study, which are published in the **Journal of Parasitology** (Jan 7, 2015 – Epub ahead of print) confirmed parasite intermediate stages in *Zachrysia provisoria* and identified terrestrial snails *Bradybaena similaris* and *Alcadia striata* as additional intermediate hosts. Also, larval and adult stages were found in rat tissues. Collectively, these data suggest that *A. cantonensis*, the rat lungworm, is established in the locations surveyed. Dr. Stockdale-Walden was featured in **UF News** (University of Florida) regarding this research. Visit www.news.ufl.edu for the February 25, 2015 press release. Excitingly, the story was also picked up by larger news outlets due to the rat lungworm’s potential threat to human health, including **United Press International, Inc.** Go to www.upi.com for the story “**Parasites colonizing Florida snails could pose health risk.**” So cool!

Events

NCVP Residents and Project Leader Attend Annual 2014 Spring CAPC Meeting



Photo of NCVP residents, Project Leader and Co-Director and several CAPC Board Members taken at the Annual Spring CAPC meeting. Front row, from left to right: Drs. Lindsay Starkey, Alice Lee, Chris Carpenter, Susan Little, Karen Fling, and Jay Stewart. Back row, from left to right: Drs. Rick Marrinson, Kelly Allen, Michael Yabsley, Craig Prior, and Emilio DeBess.

NCVP residents **Dr. Alice Lee** (Novartis, Cornell University) and **Dr. Lindsay Starkey** (Bayer, Oklahoma State University), and NCVP Project Leader **Dr. Kelly Allen** (Oklahoma State University) were invited to attend the **Annual CAPC Spring meeting** in Atlanta, Georgia, held March 6–8, 2015. NCVP Co-Director **Dr. Susan Little**, Emeritus CAPC Board Member and Current President, and **Dr. Chris Carpenter**, Executive Director, presented the tremendous progress that CAPC has made since its inception with regard to reaching veterinarians and pet owners to provide contemporary information and guidelines for diagnosing, treating, and preventing parasitic infections.



During the CAPC meeting, Board Members and attendees were surveyed through interactive questions. Here, NCVP members Drs. Bowman, Lee, Starkey, and Allen select their answers with clickers.

Also discussed were new possible recommendations and prevalence maps to construct, as well as presentation topics at future national research symposia. Other NCVP Board Members in attendance were **Drs. Dwight Bowman** and **Byron Blagburn**, both CAPC Emeritus Members and Past Presidents, and industry sponsor representatives **Dr. Jason Drake** (Elanco) and **Dr. Joyce Login** (Zoetis). It was an energetic and positive meeting, and Alice, Lindsay, and Kelly were excited to be part of it.

NCVP Bayer Resident Dr. Lindsay Starkey Presents Veterinary Voices Seminar

Dr. Lindsay Starkey presented “**Fleas and Ticks: Practical Tips for Protecting your Pets (and you!)**” to pet owners on Tuesday, March 3, 2015 at Oklahoma State University’s **Vet Voices Seminar**. Lindsay spoke to pet owners about flea and tick life cycles, diseases transmitted by fleas and ticks, integrated pest management strategies entailing habitat management and year-round treatment of pets to prevent fleas and ticks, and veterinary insecticides and acaricides currently available. The talk was very well-received and generated a variety of questions from the audience. Lindsay’s talk will soon be available on www.ostatev.edu. Please check it out!



The second slide that Lindsay used in her Vet Voices seminar to pet owners at Oklahoma State University. Needless to say, it got the audience’s attention and a few chuckles.

About the National Center for Veterinary Parasitology

Veterinary parasites impact human health and society in many ways. With the generous support of our sponsors, the National Center for Veterinary Parasitology works to promote greater understanding and control of parasitic diseases in animals through innovative partnerships between academia and industry. Housed in the Center for Veterinary Health Sciences at Oklahoma State University, the Center strives to create future generations of veterinary parasitologists, conduct targeted research, and provide diagnostic and consulting services worldwide. To learn more, please visit www.ncvetp.org.

