

## **HELMINTHS OF BLACK-TAILED JACK RABBITS IN NEW MEXICO 1**

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Source: Bulletin of the Wildlife Disease Association, 4(4) : 130

Published By: Wildlife Disease Association

URL: <https://doi.org/10.7589/0090-3558-4.4.130>

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HELMINTHS OF BLACK-TAILED JACK RABBITS IN NEW MEXICO<sup>1</sup>

To determine if hares were reservoir hosts for helminth parasites of cattle and sheep, 25 black-tailed jack rabbits, *Lepus californicus*, were collected in Lincoln and Chaves counties, New Mexico, and examined for parasites by standard parasitological procedures. The results of these examinations are summarized in the table below.

The only parasite collected that was common to the rabbits and domestic ruminants was *Trichostrongylus colubriformis* which I recovered from the small intestines of 20 of the 25 rabbits. No parasites were recovered from the stomachs, hearts, livers, kidneys, lungs, or spleens.

The small intestines from 10 of these rabbits were cut into small pieces and digested in artificial gastric juice as described by Herlich (1956, Proc. Helm. Soc. Wash. 23:102-103). The residue was examined for nematode larvae; no larvae were found.

Although no regular examination was made for ectoparasites, the ear tick, *Dermacentor parumapertus*, was recovered from the ears of some rabbits.

Dikmans (1937, Proc. Helm. Soc. Wash. 4:65-67) described *Nematodirus neomexicanus*, a nematode parasite, from the small intestine of *Lepus californicus texianus*, collected near Albuquerque, New Mexico. To my knowledge, this is the only report of parasites of rabbits in New Mexico.

TABLE 1. Helminths of Black-Tailed Jack Rabbits.

| Helminths                             | Number infected | Location         | Worms recovered |
|---------------------------------------|-----------------|------------------|-----------------|
| Nematodes:                            |                 |                  |                 |
| <i>Trichostrongylus colubriformis</i> | 20              | Small intestine  | 2 to 125        |
| <i>Nematodirus neomexicanus</i>       | 22              | Small intestine  | 1 to 241        |
| <i>Nematodirus</i> sp. (larvae)       | 6               | Small intestine  | 2 to 44         |
| <i>Dermatoxys veligera</i>            | 15              | Large intestine  | 1 to 13         |
| <i>Passalurus nonanulatus</i>         | 12              | Large intestine  | 1 to 9360       |
| <i>Micipsella brevicauda</i>          | 1               | Abdominal cavity | 1               |
| Cestodes:                             |                 |                  |                 |
| <i>Raillietina retractilis</i>        | 14              | Small intestine  | 1 to 290        |
| <i>Mosgovoyia pectinata</i>           | 4               | Small intestine  | 1 to 3          |

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April 26, 1968

<sup>1</sup> This work was carried out in cooperation with the New Mexico Agricultural Experiment Station.