

DACTARI

Following the changes in the laws regarding the movement of domestic animals across the E.U. (and certain other countries) and the introduction of the Pet Travel Scheme (PETS) by the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) in 2000, there has been a rapid and substantial increase in the number of dogs and cats entering Britain from mainland Europe. A total of 394,204 dogs, cats and ferrets have entered Britain through PETS since 2000 (Source: <http://www.defra.gov.uk>). Given the risk of exposure to exotic vector-borne parasites endemic in many parts of Europe, it was inevitable that there would be an increase in the number of dogs and cats contracting exotic vector-borne parasitic disease and being presented to Veterinary Surgeons when back in Britain.

In March 2003 DEFRA launched "Dog And Cat Travel Risk Information" (DACTARI) as a national reporting scheme to investigate the occurrence of exotic disease (confirmed and suspected) in dogs and cats in England, Scotland and Wales. The scheme was set up in consultation with the BVA and BSAVA, and covers all exotic diseases in dogs and cats in Britain but focuses on *Leishmania*, *Dirofilaria*, *Babesia*, and *Ehrlichia* infections. The resulting databank could help monitor the emergence of exotic parasitic disease in dogs and cats in Britain. To achieve a robust, epidemiological databank that is truly representative of the incidence of disease in dogs and cats in Britain, the scheme depends on consistent and widespread participation from Veterinary practitioners. However, it would seem that the contemporary

Right: *Dermacentor reticulatus*, a vector of *B. canis canis*

and voluntary nature of the scheme has resulted in low/variable awareness of and/or participation in the scheme. Thus the true extent of exotic parasitic diseases occurring in foreign travelled dogs and cats is difficult to assess.

At Test-A-Pet we strongly encourage Veterinary practitioners to become aware of and participate in the DACTARI scheme. For more information on the scheme and to access the DACTARI report form, please follow the links below and on our website.

DACTARI:

<http://www.defra.gov.uk/animalh/diseases/veterinary/dactari/index.htm>

Dog and cat exotic disease report form:

<http://www.defra.gov.uk/corporate/regulat/forms/health/dactari/dc-ed1i.htm>

Test-A-Pet offers diagnostic testing for the four main exotic diseases covered by the DACTARI scheme. Please see page four of this newsletter and our website for details.



“**82,691 dogs, cats and ferrets entered Britain through PETS in 2006, compared to 14,695 in 2000 - that's more than four times as many!**”

(Source: <http://www.defra.gov.uk>)