



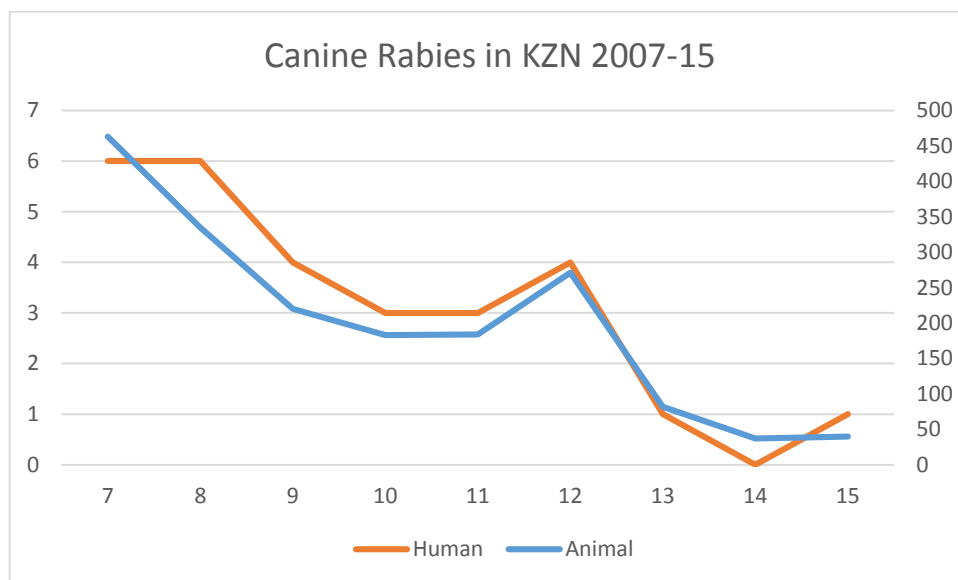
## agriculture & rural development

Department:  
Agriculture and Rural Development  
PROVINCE OF KWAZULU-NATAL

### JACKAL RABIES IN THE KWAZULU-NATAL MIDLANDS

Historically, the main host of rabies in KZN has been the domestic dog. However this changed in 2012 with a spill over into the Black Backed Jackal (*Canis Mesomelas*) population in the uThukela area and this has now moved south and is a well-established cycle **SEPARATE** from the dog cycle (Estcourt, Nottingham Road, Impendle, Karkloof, Howick, Hilton).

Jackal rabies now constitutes 62% of the rabies in KZN, while overall dog rabies has been reduced by 93%



#### Unique features of the Jackal cycle

1. It is mainly isolated to commercial farming areas where the jackal population is the highest.
2. It spills over into a number of species that the jackal will encounter, especially cattle, mongoose and dogs, with other victims such as wild felines occurring periodically. Recently, a positive otter has reinforced the fact that any warm blooded animal can become a victim.
3. Wild animals appear tame and lose their fear of humans and human environments and will appear on farms amongst buildings and even enter a house, coming into contact will all domesticated animals.
4. Of the almost 70 jackal related cases, only one human contact with a jackal has been recorded. Contacts with dogs and bovines constitute the greatest threat. Despite this, contacts have been rare, but the virus remains as deadly as the dog hosted virus.

## Points to Note

1. We can expect rabies in other wildlife species (any warm blooded animal that the jackal may encounter and bite) although for the most part, other species will be dead end hosts in any animal showing clinical signs of rabies; there exists the possibility of spread.
2. Wild animals will often become tame as most encounters with jackal are recorded as “Jackal entered the yard and fought with our dogs and was killed or shot” Hyenas have walked into bush lodges and started biting chairs, and an aardwolf was found playing in the sea. It is difficult to describe symptoms as there is such a variation. However, the first point is a **CHANGE IN BEHAVIOUR**. ANY drastic change in behaviour in domestic or wildlife is often the best indicator of an animal infected with the Rabies virus. Aggression is common especially when the animal is stimulated by noise or movement etc.
3. We can expect spill over's into cattle, other livestock and unvaccinated dogs. It is unlikely that a jackal will successfully bite a large number of livestock at once and most losses that have occurred, are individual bovines or goats that have come in contact with a jackal. All rabid animals can become dangerous. Again, a change in behaviour is the first sign with aggression, strange vocalizations and salivation being common in livestock.

## What to Do!

1. **Ensure all dogs and cats are vaccinated** – Currently, the national protocol of a three yearly vaccination, with initial vaccinations happening at 3 months and a booster before the end of the first year apply. **(THIS IS A LEGAL REQUIREMENT IN SA – FAILURE TO COMPLY BY DOG OWNERS CAN LEAD TO PROSECUTION)**
2. Persecution of jackal through culling results in an immediate change in territorial behaviours and animals have been tracked over vast distances. **Therefore, persecution could result in greater dispersion of the problem** with three recent movements being testament to this. (Greytown; Underberg; Baynesfield). With individual movements of over 200km the disease could appear anywhere in KwaZulu-Natal.
3. Discourage farming and other urban practices that make food sources available to jackal e.g. leaving carcasses for wildlife or dumping food waste. This can congregate animals where spread becomes easier.
4. **DO NOT APPROACH OR ATTEMPT TO HANDLE ANY UNKNOWN OR SICKLY ANIMAL!**
5. Any bite of a human must be immediately reported and seen to by a doctor or nurse. Post Exposure treatment for rabies is FREE in KZN and virtually 100% effective if done immediately. Exposures where skin is not broken will mostly not be treated according to recommendations by the doctor. However, scratches and bites must be treated immediately! One can expect a series of 4 vaccinations over 14 days (**Not 5!**) in addition with bad wounds patients would require Immunoglobulin's to be injected into the wound immediately.

## First Aid

- **Rinse the wound with running water for 10 minutes**
- **Treat wound with a disinfectant**
- **Report to a clinic or hospital or doctor **immediately!****
- **COMPLETE TREATMENT!!!**
- **Also report the incident to the State Vet**

## Contact details of the relevant people within State structures

### State Vet Services:

State Vet uMgungundlovu	033 3476245
State Vet uThukela (Estcourt)	036 3523119
State Vet uThukela (Ladysmith)	036 6346300
Rabies Project Allerton (Kevin le Roux)	033 3476279 (0795062059)
Allerton Veterinary Laboratory	033 3476200

### Human Treatment:

Northdale Hospital – (Main Treatment centre)	
Mr Thando Gwele (CDC coordinator for uMgungundlovu)	033 8971000
Thandekile Ngwenya (CDC Coordinator uThukela)	036 6312202/129

