

Project Perch's mission is to protect and nurture the Burrowing Owl in SE Florida.
A real life HOOT, join now!



Project Perch's BuOw Blog 14b

Sunday, March 7, 2014

The Tick

On February 18, 2014, we spotted a tick on one of the owlet's legs. We took a picture and then identified it using the University of Rhode Island's Tick Encounter Web Site's Tick Identification Guide. We identified the tick as a female Brown Dog Tick, *Rhipicephalus sanguineus*. The tick has a world-wide distribution but is more frequent in the southern United States. All stages of the tick can transmit Rocky Mountain Spotted Fever to dogs, but rarely to humans.

Rarely, but the few cases we had the owls were loaded with them. Burning incense (spelling?) helps to make them just fall off. Or manual removal is necessary.

Dr.S

Larvae, nymphs and adults can engorge within a ½ hour and then leave their host to take shelter in the nests and burrows where they are sometimes present in considerable numbers.

In 1939 in the state of Washington, 18 burrowing owl nests were examined for arthropods and ectoparasites.

Sources:

¹ University of Rhode Island Tick Encounter Center, tick identification pages:

http://www.tickencounter.org/tick_identification

² Schneider, Dr. Renata. Veterinary at the South Florida Wildlife Care Center. 2014. Personal Communication.

³ Jellison, William L. February, 1940. The Burrowing Owl as a Host to the Argasid Tick, *Ornithodoros parkeri*. Public Health Reports (1896-1970), Vol 55, No. 5, pp.206-208.