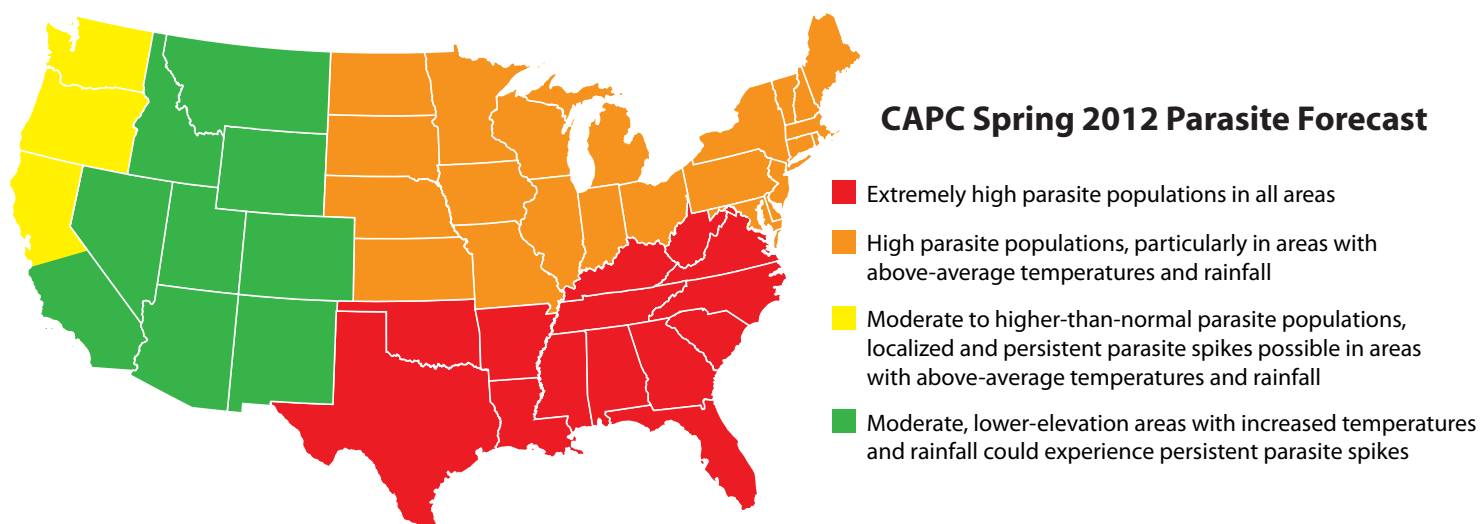


## **CAPC Predicts Higher-than-Average Heartworm Risk Across the Country**

### **The CAPC issues its First-Ever Spring 2012 Parasite Forecast for the Following Five Regions:**

- SOUTH:** Extremely high parasite populations in all areas  
(*West Virginia, Virginia, Kentucky, North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, Florida, Alabama, Tennessee, Mississippi, Arkansas, Oklahoma, Texas and Louisiana*)
- NORTHEAST:** High parasite populations, particularly in areas with above-average temperatures and rainfall  
(*Maine, Vermont, New Hampshire, Massachusetts, New York, Rhode Island, Connecticut, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Delaware, Maryland and the District of Columbia*)
- MIDWEST:** High parasite populations, particularly in areas with above-average rainfall  
(*Kansas, Missouri, Illinois, Indiana, Ohio, Michigan, Wisconsin, Iowa, Minnesota, North Dakota, South Dakota and Nebraska*)
- NORTHWEST:** Moderate to higher-than-normal parasite populations, localized and persistent parasite spikes possible in areas with above-average temperatures and rainfall  
(*Washington, Oregon and Northern California*)
- WEST:** Moderate, lower-elevation areas with increased temperatures and rainfall could experience persistent parasite spikes  
(*Southern California, Arizona, New Mexico, Nevada, Utah, Colorado, Wyoming, Montana and Idaho*)



The CAPC Parasite Forecast is based on weather data and trends, parasite prevalence data from clinics and shelters across the country and the collective expert opinion of leading parasitologists nationwide. Parasitologists from the CAPC are engaged in ongoing research and data interpretation to better understand and monitor parasite prevalence, disease transmission and changing life cycles.



### **Parasite Prevention**

To protect pets and families from parasites and parasitic disease, the CAPC recommends that all pet owners administer parasite control medication to dogs and cats year-round. Many parasite prevention products require a simple monthly application. Regular veterinarian checkups are also important so that pets may be tested and treated for any external or internal parasites that doctors find.

For more information about the CAPC, the number of dogs affected by heartworm and other parasites where you live, as well as prevention tips, please visit [\*\*www.PetsandParasites.org\*\*](http://www.PetsandParasites.org).

### **2012 Spring Forecast Background**

The National Weather Service Forecast Office predicted above-normal temperatures for much of the country from February through April, especially in the Florida peninsula, west through Nevada and northward to the middle Atlantic and Midwestern states. In February, weather forecasts call for warmer temperatures throughout the Northeast and Midwest.

The higher-than-normal spring temperatures will increase the risk of heartworm infection in pets, because mosquitoes thrive in such conditions. Scientific studies consistently show that warm temperatures increase populations of mosquitoes, which transmit heartworm disease. Making matters worse, mosquitoes have both longer lifespans and an increased capacity to accelerate the development of the heartworm parasite during warmer weather. These factors increase the likelihood that there will be more potentially infectious mosquitoes present in a pet's environment.

Weather models also forecast increased spring rainfall for areas in the Midwest, Northeast and Northwest regions, which also will contribute to greater mosquito populations. In the Southeast, predicted drier conditions will be offset by higher-than-average winter precipitation. Wet, warm weather may also increase the risk of other parasitic diseases and parasites, including flea infestations.

### **About CAPC**

Founded in 2002, the nonprofit CAPC ([\*\*www.PetsandParasites.org\*\*](http://www.PetsandParasites.org)) is an independent council of veterinarians, veterinary parasitologists and other animal health care professionals established to foster animal and human health, while preserving the human-animal bond, through recommendations for the diagnosis, treatment, prevention and control of parasitic infections. The CAPC brings together broad expertise in parasitology, internal medicine, public health, veterinary law, private practice and association leadership.