

Lyme Disease in Humans and Tick Surveillance in British Columbia 2026 Update

Key Messages

The number of confirmed locally acquired cases of Lyme disease increased compared to previous years, although still comparatively much lower than what is reported by other provinces in Canada. The prevalence of *Borrelia burgdorferi* in submitted *Ixodes* spp. ticks remains low in British Columbia.

In 2025:

- 42 confirmed Lyme disease cases were reported, 12 of which appear to have acquired the infection within British Columbia based on available exposure information.
- 0.7% of *Ixodes* spp. ticks tested at the British Columbia Centre for Disease Control Public Health Laboratory were positive for *B. burgdorferi*, the causative agent of Lyme disease.
- Most tick submissions to the eTick platform were identified as *Dermacentor* spp. (58%) or *Ixodes pacificus* (38%).

Background

In the context of climate change, the need for timely surveillance of local tick populations and the diseases they carry has become increasingly important for the purposes of risk assessment and management. The British Columbia Centre for Disease Control (BCCDC) operates an integrated surveillance program that consists of monitoring human cases of Lyme disease and conducting surveillance of local tick populations for the presence of *Borrelia burgdorferi*.

This report provides an update on confirmed human cases of Lyme disease reported to the BCCDC, *B. burgdorferi*-positive *Ixodes* spp. tick submissions to the BCCDC Public Health Laboratory (PHL), and tick submissions from residents of British Columbia (BC) to eTick for the year 2025.

Human Cases of Lyme Disease in British Columbia

The number of confirmed cases of Lyme disease who likely acquired the infection in BC increased in 2025 compared to previous years, although this number remains low compared to other provinces.

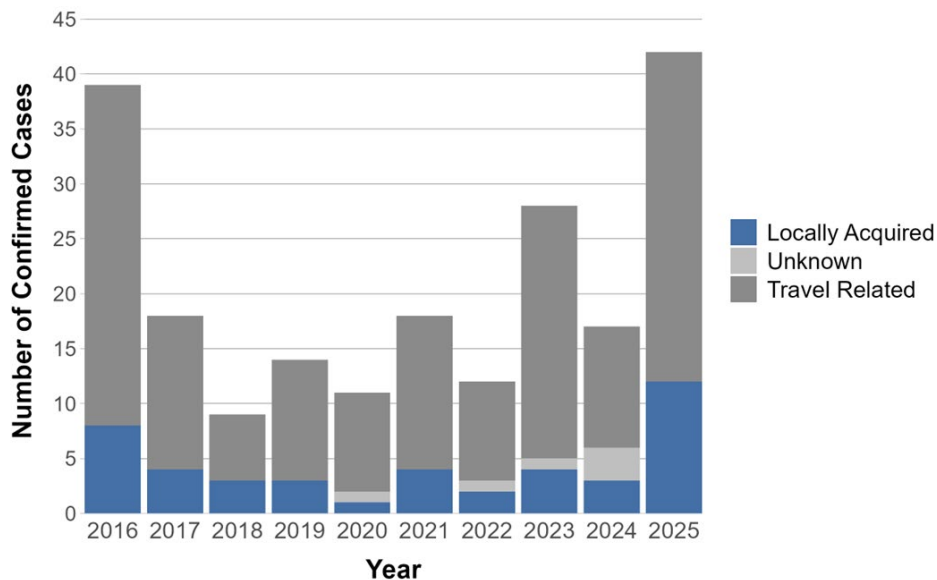


Figure 1. Confirmed Lyme disease cases in BC by likely location of acquisition, 2016-2025.

A total of 42 confirmed human Lyme disease cases were reported in BC in 2025; an increase compared to previous years. Of these, 12 Lyme disease cases are considered to have been acquired within BC based on available exposure information. This is an increase in total number of cases and number of cases acquired within BC compared to the previous nine years.

From 2016 to 2024, the total number of confirmed cases reported per year ranged from 9 to 39 (median: 17 cases) and the number of cases acquired within BC per year ranged from 1 to 8 (median: 3 locally acquired cases).

Tick Surveillance

The proportion of *Ixodes* spp. ticks that were positive for *B. burgdorferi* in 2025 remained low (0.7%).

The BCCDC PHL conducts identification and pathogen testing of ticks removed from humans and animals submitted by physicians and veterinarians, respectively. In 2025, a total of 816 *Ixodes* ticks were submitted to the BCCDC PHL and pathogen tested for *B. burgdorferi*, the causative agent of Lyme disease. Six ticks from the *Ixodes* genus tested positive for *B. burgdorferi* (0.7%) in 2025,

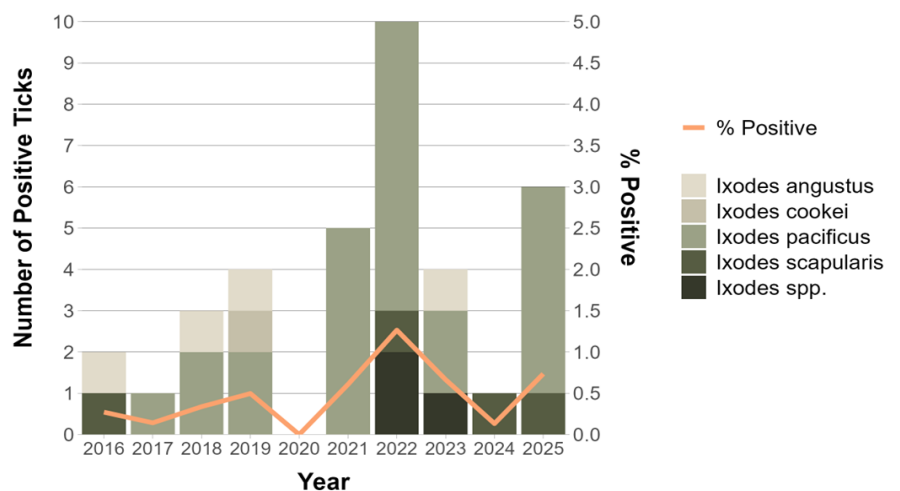


Figure 2. *B. burgdorferi*-positive *Ixodes* spp. tick submissions, 2016-2025.

which is an increase from the previous two years, but lower than 2022 when 10 *Ixodes* spp. ticks tested positive for *B. burgdorferi* (Figure 2).

B. burgdorferi-positive ticks submitted between 2016-2025 were identified as belonging to the following species: *Ixodes pacificus* (24 ticks), *Ixodes angustus* (4 ticks), *Ixodes scapularis* (4 ticks), and *Ixodes cookei* (one tick). Three positive *Ixodes* spp. ticks were unable to be further identified to the species level.

Tick Diversity

Ixodes spp. tick submissions to eTick were mainly from the southern coastal region of the province and *Dermacentor* spp. tick submissions were mainly from the southern interior. However, the distributions of *Ixodes* spp. and *Dermacentor* spp. tick submissions were not limited to these regions.

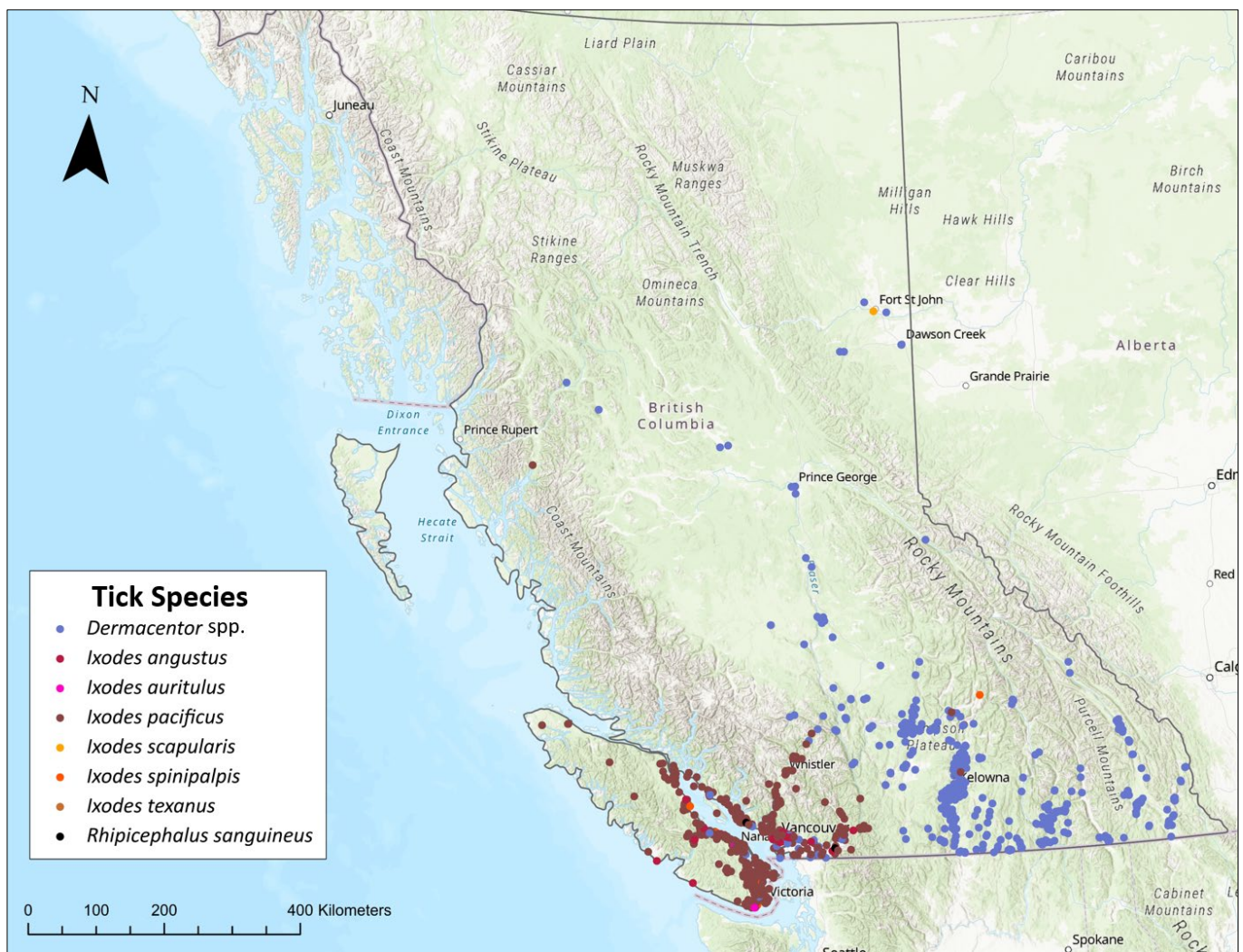


Figure 3. Map of valid tick submissions to eTick without reported out-of-province travel, 2025.

[eTick](#) is a public platform for image-based tick identification. In 2025 there were 1,556 valid tick submissions to eTick from BC without reported out-of-province travel. Most submissions were identified as *Dermacentor* spp. ticks (58%) followed by *I. pacificus* (38%), *I. angustus* (1%), *Ixodes auritulus* (1%), *Ixodes spinipalpis* (0.8%), and *Rhipicephalus sanguineus* (0.3%). Single submissions identified as *I. scapularis* and *Ixodes texanus* were also received (Table 1).

Ixodes spp. tick submissions came mostly from the southern coastal region of the province whereas *Dermacentor* spp. tick submissions tended to originate from the southern interior region (Figure 3).

Table 1. BC eTick Submissions without reported out-of-province travel, 2025.

Species	Submissions
<i>Dermacentor</i> spp.	906
<i>Ixodes pacificus</i>	596
<i>Ixodes angustus</i>	18
<i>Ixodes auritulus</i>	16
<i>Ixodes spinipalpis</i>	13
<i>Ixodes scapularis</i>	1
<i>Ixodes texanus</i>	1
<i>Rhipicephalus sanguineus</i>	5

A tick species is considered to be established in an area if all three feeding stages (larva, nymph, and adult) are found on residents, animals or free in the environment for two or more consecutive years.

Summary

The number of locally acquired Lyme disease cases and the prevalence of *B. burgdorferi* in submitted ticks remain low in BC. *Ixodes* spp. ticks were most commonly encountered in the south coastal region of the province while *Dermacentor* spp. ticks were most commonly encountered in the southern interior.

While the risk of acquiring Lyme disease in BC is low, it is important to take measures to prevent tick bites when spending time outdoors and to promptly remove attached ticks if encountered. Continued monitoring of local tick populations in addition to human cases of Lyme disease are crucial for detecting the spread of Lyme disease and the emergence of other tick-borne diseases throughout the province.

Additional Resources

- The [BCCDC website](#) provides additional information on tick-borne diseases in BC and historical reports, in addition to information on preventing tick bites and what to do if you find a tick.
- The [TickTOOL](#) platform provides additional tips for how to incorporate preventive behaviours while still enjoying the outdoors.
- The [eTick website](#) provides more information on the eTick program and how to submit photos of ticks for identification.

Acknowledgements

We acknowledge the Title and Rights of BC First Nations who have cared for and nurtured the lands, air and waters for all time, including the xʷməθkʷəy̓əm (Musqueam), Sk̓w̓x̓wú7mesh Úxwumixw (Squamish Nation), and sə́ílwətaʔ (Tseil-Waututh Nation) on whose unceded, occupied, and ancestral territory BCCDC is located. As a provincial organization, we also recognize and acknowledge the inherent Title and Rights of BC First Nations whose territories stretch to every inch of the lands colonially known as "British Columbia". Information on the work BCCDC is doing to eradicate Indigenous-specific racism and discrimination is available on the [BCCDC website](#).