Tick Collection Guide for Ornithologists







Ticks in Alaska can be found on small and large mammals, and birds. The seasonal movements of migratory birds provide opportunities for tick and tick-borne pathogen dispersal from other parts of the world. Moreover, birds can be reservoirs of tick-borne pathogens that cause disease in humans and animals. Several non-native tick species have been found in Alaska, including species that commonly parasitize birds.

The Office of the State Veterinarian, Alaska Department of Fish & Game, and researchers at the University of Alaska are working together to understand the role of ticks and tick-borne pathogens in Alaska. The **Alaska Submit-A-Tick Program** collects tick submissions from the public, veterinarians, and wildlife biologists for species identification and pathogen testing. Tick submissions are included in a long-term database of ticks found in the state.

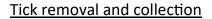
We recognize that tick collection is an additional task during a busy field season and appreciate your contribution to this surveillance effort. This guide was developed to assist with the collection and submission process of ticks found on birds.

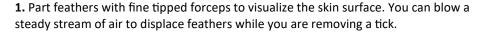


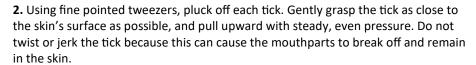
Three life stages of ticks: larvae, nymph, and adult

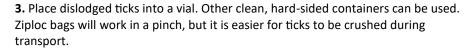
Screening birds for ticks

When searching for ticks on birds, take extra care to check auriculars, nape, perimeter of the eyes and mandibles, and vent of animals. Ticks may be attached (i.e. feeding) or unattached. Attached ticks will likely be engorged and more visible than unattached ticks. Ticks go through three life stages (larva, nymph, and adult), and they look slightly different at each stage. Ticks are very small. Adult ticks are about the size of an apple seed, nymphs are about the size of a poppy seed, and larva are the size of a grain of sand. If you aren't sure if what you found is a tick, feel free to send it in, and we will identify it for you.

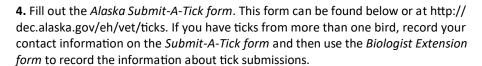








Note that **multiple ticks** can be placed in the same vial (or container) if they are from the **same bird.** Please put ticks from different birds into different containers. If you are submitting multiple vials, be sure to number each vial and include the number on the submission form.



Send ticks and completed forms to the Office of the State Veterinarian:
 Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Avenue, Anchorage, AK 99507









State of Alaska Submit-A-Tick Form

This form should be used to submit ticks that have been found in Alaska on people, wildlife, pets, or in the environment. Ticks that are submitted through this program will be included in a long-term database of ticks found in the state. Tick identification and lab testing is most effective on fresh samples, so we ask that you send in your submissions as quickly as possible. Individuals interested in receiving notification regarding tick identification of submitted specimens should include their contact information below. This service is ONLY for surveillance purposes, NOT for diagnostic purposes.

Drop-off:	$\ \square$ Office of the State Veterinarian	☐ Alaska Department of Fish and Game Office: (Which location?)				
	☐ Veterinarian:	(Clinic name)				
nstruction	ns for tick submission	Please provide the following information about your tick submission				
. Put the tick into a clean, small plastic or metal ontainer (i.e., vial or small pill bottle). . Place the container into a Ziploc bag. Place the ag in an envelope or small box for shipping.		Date the tick was collected: Describe the geographic location where you or your pet likely encountered the tick or the				
		location where you found the wildlife (landmarks, GPS coordinates, address, zip code, etc.):				
office of the S	nis form and mail it with the tick to the tate Veterinarian: 5251 Dr. Martin Avenue, Anchorage, AK 99507	Tick was found on: ☐ Human ☐ Dog ☐ Cat ☐ Other animal:				
)R		☐ Environment (describe where you found tick):				
eliver (both the form and tick) to a local Alaska epartment of Fish and Game office or veterinarian.		If the tick was found on a person or an animal, was the tick attached (feeding)? \Box Yes \Box No				
nd your nearest ADFG office here: tp://www.adfg.alaska.gov/index.cfm?adfg=contacts.main		Has anyone in your household (including pets) traveled outside Alaska in the past 2 weeks?				
FFICE USE ONI	ıy	☐ No ☐ Yes, where? Approximate dates of travel? Leave Return				
take ID:	in sample:	Has anyone in your household (including pets) traveled within Alaska in the past 2 weeks?				
otes:		Approximate dates of travel? Leave Return				
		Additional information (optional - put additional comments on back):				
NIVERSIT		Contact information for the individual or household submitting ticks (optional, but necessary if you would like to receive tick identification) Name				
	ROEAL OF HO	Phone				
		E mail				

Thank you for your submission.

We will contact the submitter for more information if needed. Tick identification results will be sent to the email address provided, or we will call with identification results if no email address is provided on this form. For questions about this form, please contact the project team at alaskaticks@alaska.edu. Additional information about ticks and tick-borne diseases in Alaska can be found at http://dec.alaska.gov/eh/vet/ticks.

Alaska Submit-A-Tick Biologist Extension Form

Biol	ogist	Name:_			

The two-page extension to the Alaska Submit-A-Tick form is for biologists to record ticks from multiple hosts. Please remember to include a completed Alaska Submit-A-Tick form with this extension page so that we have your contact information. You can either record tick data here or alter your data sheets to include these variables and provide a copy of those data along-side tick submissions. Note that we also ask you to document your sampling effort and the total number of each species you handle on Page 2 of this form. This will allow us to calculate the prevalence of ticks by wildlife species.

Animal Species ID *	Number of ticks found on animal	Tick vial number (you assign this number)	Animal species	Location of collection (GPS coordinates, description, etc.)	Date of collection

^{*} Animal Species ID can be the band ID, ear tag, etc. We need an ID number that links back to your wildlife database in the event that we have questions about a particular sample.

For questions about this form, contact: Micah Hahn (mbhahn@alaska.edu) or alaskaticks@alaska.edu

Description of sampling effort (e.g. Number of days of trapping, Number of hours)	Animal Species	Total number of animals captured	Description of sampling effort (e.g. Number of days of trapping, Number of hours)	Animal Species	Total number of animals captured