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***Cryptosporidium* in a Wild Cottontail Rabbit (*Sylvilagus floridanus*)**

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A juvenile female eastern cottontail rabbit was found dead in a live-trap in Allerton Park, Monticello, Illinois, in November 1982 and was submitted to the Veterinary Diagnostic Laboratory, University of Illinois. Gross examination revealed emaciation and numerous larval tapeworm cysts in the peritoneal cavity. Representative pieces of major organs were processed for light microscopy, and paraffin-embedded colonic tissue was deparaffinized, rehydrated, and processed for transmission electron microscopy.

Significant microscopic findings were present in the liver, small intestine, and colon. The liver had a small number of microscopic foci of necrosis and subacute inflammation, which was ascribed to recent migration of cestode larvae. The cysticerci seen grossly were identified as those of *Taenia pisiformis* that had emerged recently from the liver. The jejunum and ileum had a mild infection with a coccidium consistent in appearance with *Eimeria* spp. Oocysts identified as those of *Eimeria neoleporis* and *Eimeria media* were found in feces. In the cecum and colon, small numbers of weakly basophilic (hematoxylin and eosin), round organisms, 1–

2 μm in diameter, typical of *Cryptosporidium* spp. were present on the luminal surface of enterocytes. The numbers of parasites seen were small, and both tissue damage and inflammatory reactions were either mild (liver) or non-existent (small and large intestine), so it was considered doubtful that the parasitic infections were the cause of death. However, *Eimeria* spp. and *Cryptosporidium* spp. decrease either the numbers of enterocytes (*Eimeria*) or the amount of absorptive surface of enterocytes (*Cryptosporidium*) of infected animals and, thus, probably contributed to the emaciation (Anderson, 1982, J. Am. Vet. Med. Assoc. 180: 1455–1457; Ruff and Reid, 1977, *In Parasitic Protozoa*, Kreier (ed.), Academic Press, New York, pp. 33–69). Ultrastructural examination of colonic tissue confirmed the identification of *Cryptosporidium* sp.

Cryptosporidium spp. infections are found in many host species. Cross-species transmission has been produced experimentally (Anderson, 1982, op. cit.; Levine, 1984, J. Protozool. 31: 94–98; Tzipori et al., 1980, Infect. Immun. 30: 884–886). *Cryptosporidium* sp. has been identified in laboratory rabbits (Inman and Takeuchi, 1979, Vet. Pathol. 16: 89–95; Rehg et al., 1979, Lab. An. Sci. 29: 656–660), but this is the first report of *Cryptosporidium* sp. in a wild rabbit.

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