



STATE OF IOWA DEPARTMENT OF  
**Health** AND **Human**  
SERVICES

2019 IOWA RABIES SUMMARY

OCTOBER, 2023

## Animal Rabies in Iowa

In 2019, 8 cases of animal rabies were reported in Iowa, all were bats.

### POSITIVE RABIES CASES 2009-2019

Species	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	Total
Bat	11	10	12	17	6	10	7	12	6	9	8	108
Cat	3	1	3	1	0	1	1	1	2	0	0	13
Cow	5	1	3	4	2	2	0	1	0	1	0	19
Dog	2	1	0	0	0	0	3	3	0	0	0	9
Fox	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Horse	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1
Skunk	13	13	7	9	4	2	1	1	2	0	0	52
Squirrel	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Total	35	27	25	31	12	15	12	19	10	10	8	204

During 2019, 1,426 animals in Iowa were tested for rabies and 8 were confirmed positive (0.56%). Historically, the percent positive varies greatly by species. It is important to note that this data is greatly influenced by the number of animals tested. Many animals are tested because they have contact with humans or domestic animals and they exhibit unusual behavior or clinical signs making them more likely to be infected with the rabies virus. For these reasons, the percentages should not be considered representative of the true distribution of disease within the animal population in Iowa.

### PERCENT POSITIVE IN 2019

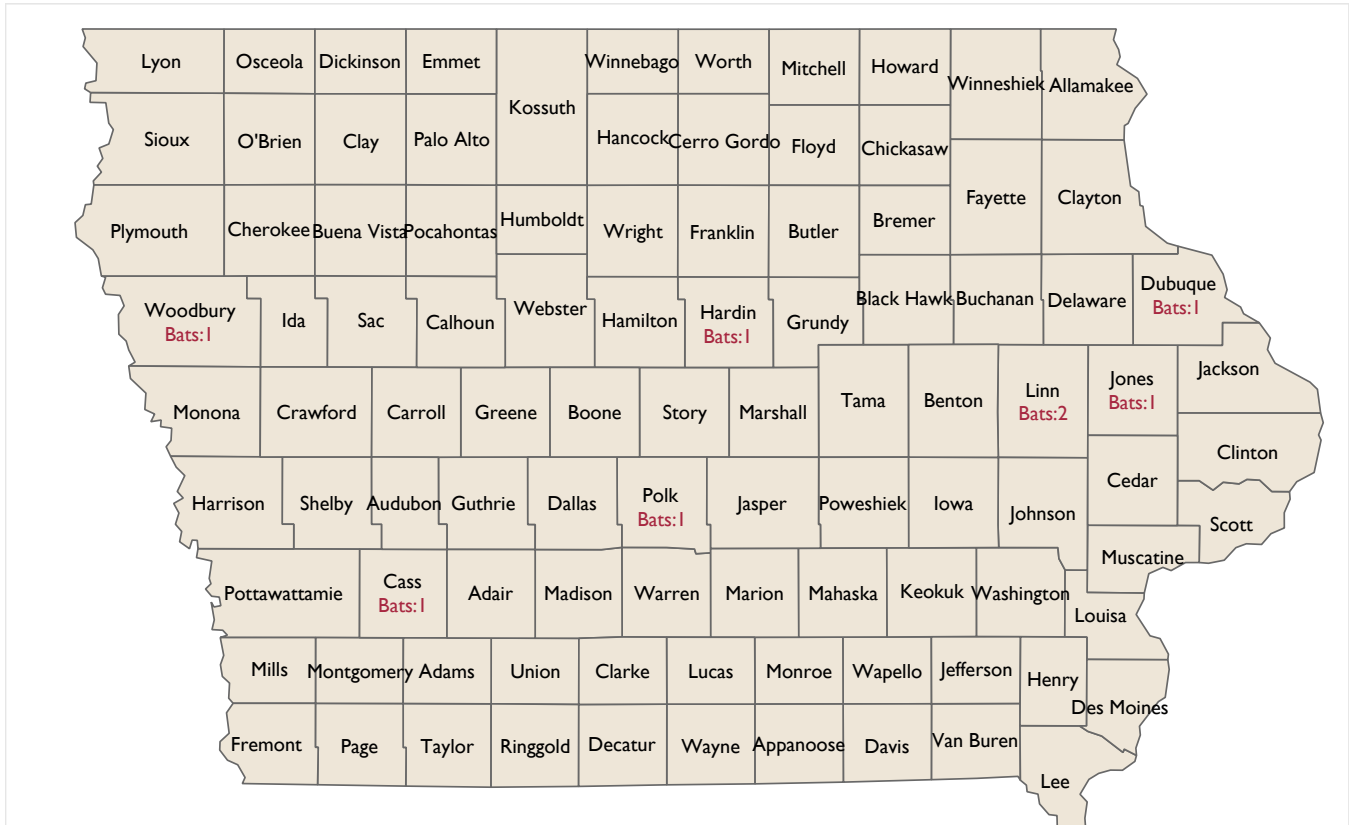
Animal	Positive	Total Tested	% Positive
Bat	8	544	1.47%

In Iowa, typically the most common bat species submitted for testing are the *Eptesicus fuscus* (big brown bat) and *Myotis lucifugus* (little brown bat); however other bat species are occasionally tested.

### BAT SPECIES TESTED FOR RABIES IN 2019

Species	Positive	Total Tested	% Positive
<i>Eptesicus fuscus</i>	7	502	1.39%
<i>Lasiurus borealis</i>	0	2	0.00%
<i>Lasiurus cinereus</i>	1	2	50.00%
<i>Myotis lucifugus</i>	0	1	0.00%
<i>Rousettus aegyptiacus</i>	0	2	0.00%
Unknown Bat	0	35	0.00%

2019 RABIES MAP



Species Count

Bat	8
Badger	0
Bovine	0
Canine	0
Equine	0
Feline	0
Fox	0
Human	0
Skunk	0
Squirrel	0

There are two laboratories that test animals for rabies in Iowa:

- State Hygienic Laboratory at the University of Iowa (tested 807 Iowa animals in 2019)
- Iowa State University Veterinary Diagnostic Laboratory (tested 619 Iowa animals in 2019)

Iowa animals are also periodically tested in out-of-state laboratories.

## Human Rabies in Iowa

Iowa's most recent human rabies case occurred in 2002, and was caused by the bat strain. Prior to that, the last reported case occurred in 1951. The United States Department of Agriculture estimates 60,000 people receive PEP each year. The exact number of Iowans who receive PEP each year is unknown.