

Ticks seen shopping at convenience store; fear factor?

Zuraidah A¹, VC Anuratha S²

¹Entomology & Pest Unit, Batang Padang District Health Office, Perak, ²Batang Padang District Health Office, Perak

ABSTRACT

Introduction: Ticks infestation (Acari: Ixodidae) is a threat either to an animal or other vectors such as birds, rodents or even to humans. This is a case study of ticks creating fear among shoppers and neighbouring office occupants nearby a convenience store which was heavily infested with ticks in Bidor, Perak. It led to work routine disturbances, frequent cleaning for tick control, businesses were affected and caused distress even among the customers. **Materials and Method:** Upon a report being lodged to the Entomology & Pest Unit in the district health office, a team began investigations on 23rd of December 2023. Field visit with environmental risk assessment was done. Sampling techniques of direct sampling via visual examination and tick collection from the building premises with dragging method were used. Dragging method was used for the active collection of ticks whereby a cloth is dragged across and regularly checked for the presence of ticks. **Results:** Upon analysis, it was shown that dominant species was *Rhipicephalus sanguineus*, which is also known as Brown Dog Ticks. Areas visited by stray dogs were seen to have high infestations from creek of buildings to rooftop. The infestation was seen involving an area of 100 meters. A total of 410 ticks were obtained, including 33 eggs, 17 larvae, 152 nymphs, and 208 adults. The high number of stray dogs led to the infestations of ticks in the buildings. **Conclusion:** Although there are reports of ticks, biting humans and causing diseases in other countries, it is not commonly reported in this region. Fear towards the ticks, or entomophobia may lead to mental health issues among people frequenting the shops, shop workers and even cleaners around the area. Fortunately, the multiagency collaboration led to resolution of this tick infestation.