

The hidden risk in domestic gardens

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48% of all tick bites in Flanders are contracted in **private gardens**, inaccessible to researchers

We investigated the presence of **ticks** and **tick-borne pathogens** in relation to **garden characteristics** through **citizen science**

We highlight the significant risk of ticks and tick-borne pathogens in gardens, stressing the need for protective practices and appropriate garden maintenance

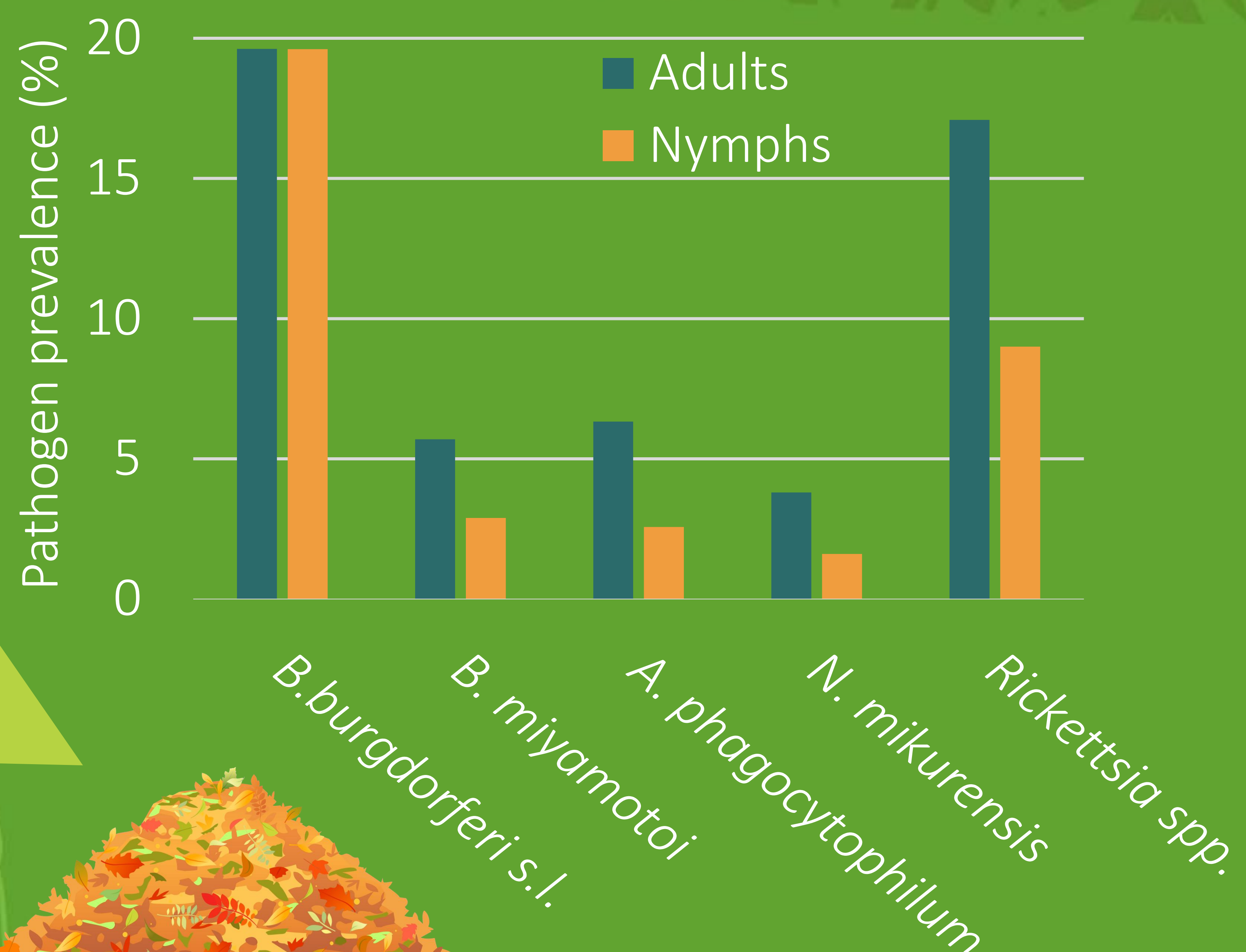
Higher tick abundance was found on fallen leaves and wild vegetation in comparison to flower beds, mown – and tall grass

1162 ticks were collected in 44% of 185 gardens, of 3 different species and all life stages

We found higher tick abundance in rural and urban gardens compared to suburban ones, and in gardens with more mammals

We found at least one infected tick in 77% of gardens with ticks

In 33% of these gardens a tick with a co-infection was present



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