

## **Investigation of *Rickettsia*, *Coxiella burnetii* and *Bartonella* in ticks from animals in South Africa.**

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### **Abstract**

Ticks are involved in the epidemiology of several human pathogens including spotted fever group (SFG) *Rickettsia* spp., *Coxiella burnetii* and *Bartonella* spp. Human diseases caused by these microorganisms have been reported from South Africa. The presence of SFG *Rickettsia* spp., *C. burnetii* and *Bartonella* spp. was investigated in 205 ticks collected from domestic and wild animals from Western Cape and Limpopo provinces (South Africa). *Rickettsia massiliae* was detected in 10 *Amblyomma sylvaticum* and 1 *Rhipicephalus simus* whereas *Rickettsia africae* was amplified in 7 *Amblyomma hebraeum*. Neither *C. burnetii* nor *Bartonella* spp. was found in the examined ticks. This study demonstrates the presence of the tick borne pathogen *R. massiliae* in South Africa (Western Cape and Limpopo provinces), and corroborates the presence of the African tick-bite fever agent (*R. africae*) in this country (Limpopo province).