

Tick Rap II

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August 2008

We're tiny flat critters, not picky 'bout our food
We don't need candlelight to set the mood
We like tall grass and shrubs near the ground
Most of our time we just hang around
We're the Ticks, yeah. **WE'RE THE TICKS**
We're the Ticks, yeah. **WE'RE THE TICKS**

Some of us like the Spring, some like the fall
Some even like winter most of all We sit on the plants, wait for luck
If you've got blood, we'll attach and suck
We're the Ticks. Yeah. **WE'RE THE TICKS [repeat]**

Dermacentor, Amblyomma, Ixodes. Our scientific names sound like these
The females lay big groups of eggs Despite the spurs on their legs
We're the Ticks. Yeah. **WE'RE THE TICKS [repeat]**

Haemaphysalis are getting rare But nobody here really cares
We've got six legs when first we hatch. Later we get two more that match
We're the Ticks. Yeah. **WE'RE THE TICKS [repeat]**

When lunchtime comes we eat for days Don't dis us for our crazy ways
We don't spread West Nile * virus Don't blame us for Encephalitis
We're the Ticks. Yeah. **WE'RE THE TICKS. [repeat]**

Spirochetes, viruses, rickettsia. Sometimes we've got them in our gut.
Doxycycline if you're bitten. Makes the spirochete be smitten
We're the Ticks. Yeah. **WE'RE THE TICKS [repeat]**

Most of the time we just hang around. Gets too dry, we burrow in the ground
Rky Mtn Spotted Fever, Lyme Disease We also inject antibodies
We're the Ticks. Yeah. **WE'RE THE TICKS. [repeat]**

Short mouthparts have the young ones all
So they like birds and mammals small
We don't like DEET or Picaradin. Be sure to tuck your pantlegs in.
We're the ticks. Yeah. **WE'RE THE TICKS [repeat]**

I wrote the original version (5 verses then) in 2002, after hearing a friend perform a rap about a bodhran player. In 2008 I added three more verses. In case you haven't heard us perform it live (or haven't seen the video) it has 4 beats per line; 8 beats last line in each set. I tend to do it at a relatively slow pace because that makes it easier to understand the words. In the earlier version I used the word Permethrin in the last verse instead of Picaridin. Sometimes I revert to that. One is an acaricide, while the other is a repellent. Several years after I wrote this, NH had its first case of Powassan disease, and by then it was sometimes referred to as Powassan encephalitis. That made one person suggest that I ought to change the 5th verse. I decided to leave it as it is. I wrote that verse in reference to mosquito-vectored diseases, like Eastern Equine Encephalitis. Enjoy!

–Alan Eaton University of New Hampshire December 2015.

