



Imagine a teeny, tiny creature that's smaller than a pencil eraser but has a big role in nature. That's the American dog tick! These little bugs are reddish-brown and have a flat, oval shape. When they've had a good meal (we'll get to that later), they can become almost as round as a marble. And even though they're called 'dog' ticks, they aren't just found on dogs.

Speaking of meals, let's dive into what these tiny creatures eat. American dog ticks aren't picky eaters; they feed on the blood of various animals including humans, dogs, and even some birds! These ticks find their meals by waiting in tall grass or shrubs and latching onto any critter that brushes past. It's a sneaky way to find dinner, but it works for them.

Now that we've talked about their meals, let's look at where they live and their life cycle. These ticks are found throughout the United States, but they especially like areas with little to no tree cover. The life cycle of an American dog tick includes four stages: egg, larva, nymph, and adult. In each stage, they need a good meal of blood to grow and move on to the next stage.



You may be wondering about how these ticks interact with humans and other animals. While they can be a nuisance due to their habit of hitching rides and feeding on us and our pets, they also play a role in the food chain. Various animals, like birds and spiders, eat these ticks, and some even use the ticks' discarded exoskeletons for their nests. Even though they may seem a little gross, American dog ticks are an important part of our natural world.



**Solve each problem.****Use the article to answer the question.**

- 1) What color are the American dog ticks?
 - A. Greenish-yellow
 - B. Reddish-brown
 - C. Pinkish-purple
 - D. Blueish-orange
- 2) What is not a stage in the life cycle of an American dog tick?
 - A. Pupa
 - B. Egg
 - C. Adult
 - D. Nymph
- 3) Where are American dog ticks commonly found?
 - A. Dense forests with lots of trees
 - B. Snowy mountains with trees
 - C. Areas with little to no tree cover
 - D. Sandy beaches with rocks
- 4) What shape do the American dog ticks become after having a good meal?
 - A. Become long and skinny
 - B. Remain flat and oval
 - C. Almost as round as a marble
 - D. Become square
- 5) Who eats the American dog ticks?
 - A. Cats and mice
 - B. Fish and frogs
 - C. Birds and spiders
 - D. Dogs and humans
- 6) Where do these ticks wait to find their meals?
 - A. Buried in sand
 - B. On high tree branches
 - C. In slow moving water
 - D. In tall grass or shrubs
- 7) Where can you find American dog ticks?
 - A. The southern part of Japan
 - B. All around Russia
 - C. Throughout the United States
 - D. The northern part of Ireland
- 8) Do ticks need a meal of blood to move on to the next stage of their life?
 - A. Only young ticks
 - B. Only from the egg
 - C. No
 - D. Yes
- 9) What do American dog ticks eat?
 - A. Grass from lawns
 - B. Blood of animals
 - C. Insects smaller than them
 - D. Other ticks

Determine if the statements is something the animal would say (W) or it it is not something the animal would say (N).

- 10) "I only feed on dogs, hence my name."
- 11) "I am a choosy eater and prefer certain types of blood."
- 12) "After having a good meal of blood, I balloon up and look like a little grape."
- 13) "I am the same size as a marble when I am not fed."
- 14) "I dislike being in open areas without any tree cover."
- 15) "I love to eat plants!"



- 16) "I'm not a picky eater. I feed on all kinds of animals, be it humans, dogs, or even birds."
- 17) "I go through four stages in my life: from being an egg, to a larva, a nymph, and finally an adult."
- 18) "When my stomach is empty, I have a reddish-brown color and I'm flat and oval shaped."
- 19) "I enjoy living in areas with lots of trees."
- 20) "I don't feed on humans."
- 21) "Birds, spiders and other animals steer clear of me."
- 22) "Even though people call me an 'American dog tick', I don't just feed on dogs."
- 23) "I jump on my meals."
- 24) "In every stage of my life, I need blood-meals to help me grow and mature."
- 25) "You can find me all around the United States, but I really like areas with less trees."
- 26) "I wait in tall grass or shrubs for my dinner to pass by, then latch onto them for a blood-meal."
- 27) "I only live in one region of the United States."
- 28) "I'm a tiny creature, no larger than a dime."
- 29) "Birds and spiders feed on me, and some even use my discarded skin for their nests."

Determine if the statement is a fact or opinion based on the information in the article.

- 30) American dog ticks are commonly found in areas with little to no tree cover.
- 31) It's a bit scary to think that American dog ticks can also feed on human blood.
- 32) These ticks wait in tall grass or shrubs and latch onto any animal that brushes past them to get their meals.
- 33) It's really interesting that American dog tick eggs are almost as tiny as dust particles.
- 34) When the American dog tick finishes eating, it can become as round as a marble.
- 35) The idea of ticks using discarded exoskeletons for their nests is kinda neat.
- 36) The life cycle of the American dog tick has four stages: egg, larva, nymph, and adult.
- 37) The American dog tick can feed on dogs, humans, and some types of birds.
- 38) Dog ticks look absolutely gross.
- 39) Seeing a well fed American dog tick is really interesting.

Determine if the statement is true or false.

- 40) Dog ticks feed on the blood of animals and humans.
- 41) American dog ticks travel miles to hunt for their meals.
- 42) American dog ticks love areas with little to no tree cover.
- 43) American dog ticks are microscopic when they haven't eaten blood.
- 44) Birds and spiders eat these ticks.
- 45) Dog ticks rarely eat blood, mostly they eat smaller insects.
- 46) Dog ticks are mainly found in forested areas.
- 47) American dog ticks only feed on dogs.



- 48) After a meal the tick can become almost as round as a marble.
- 49) American dog ticks wait in tall grass or shrubs to find their meals.

Determine if the sentence is a declarative(d), exclamatory(e), interrogative(i) or imperative(m).

- 50) American dog ticks can lay thousands of eggs at a time.
- 51) If you see a "bull's eye" rash that's a useful clue, you may have been bit!
- 52) American dog ticks are brown or reddish-brown in color.
- 53) Where can American dog ticks be found?
- 54) What do American dog ticks look like?
- 55) It's incredible that female ticks lay thousands of eggs at a time!
- 56) American dog ticks feed on the blood of mammals, including dogs.
- 57) What diseases can American dog ticks transmit?
- 58) Their bite can cause Rocky Mountain spotted fever in humans, that's pretty scary!



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|---------------------------------|---------------------------------------|---|
| 1. <u> B </u> | 26. <u> true </u> | 51. <u> exclamatory </u> |
| 2. <u> A </u> | 27. <u> false </u> | 52. <u> declarative </u> |
| 3. <u> C </u> | 28. <u> true </u> | 53. <u> interrogative </u> |
| 4. <u> C </u> | 29. <u> true </u> | 54. <u> interrogative </u> |
| 5. <u> C </u> | 30. <u> fact </u> | 55. <u> exclamatory </u> |
| 6. <u> D </u> | 31. <u> opinion </u> | 56. <u> declarative </u> |
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| 8. <u> D </u> | 33. <u> opinion </u> | 58. <u> exclamatory </u> |
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| 23. <u> false </u> | 48. <u> true </u> | |
| 24. <u> true </u> | 49. <u> true </u> | |
| 25. <u> true </u> | 50. <u> declarative </u> | |

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C. D.
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A. Become long and skinny B.
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