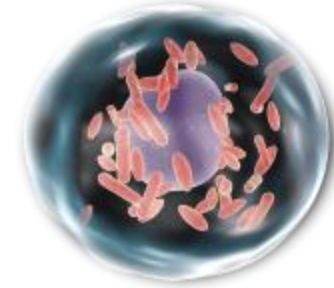


# Découvertes sur le réservoir animal de la fièvre Q en Amazonie

Loïc Epelboin

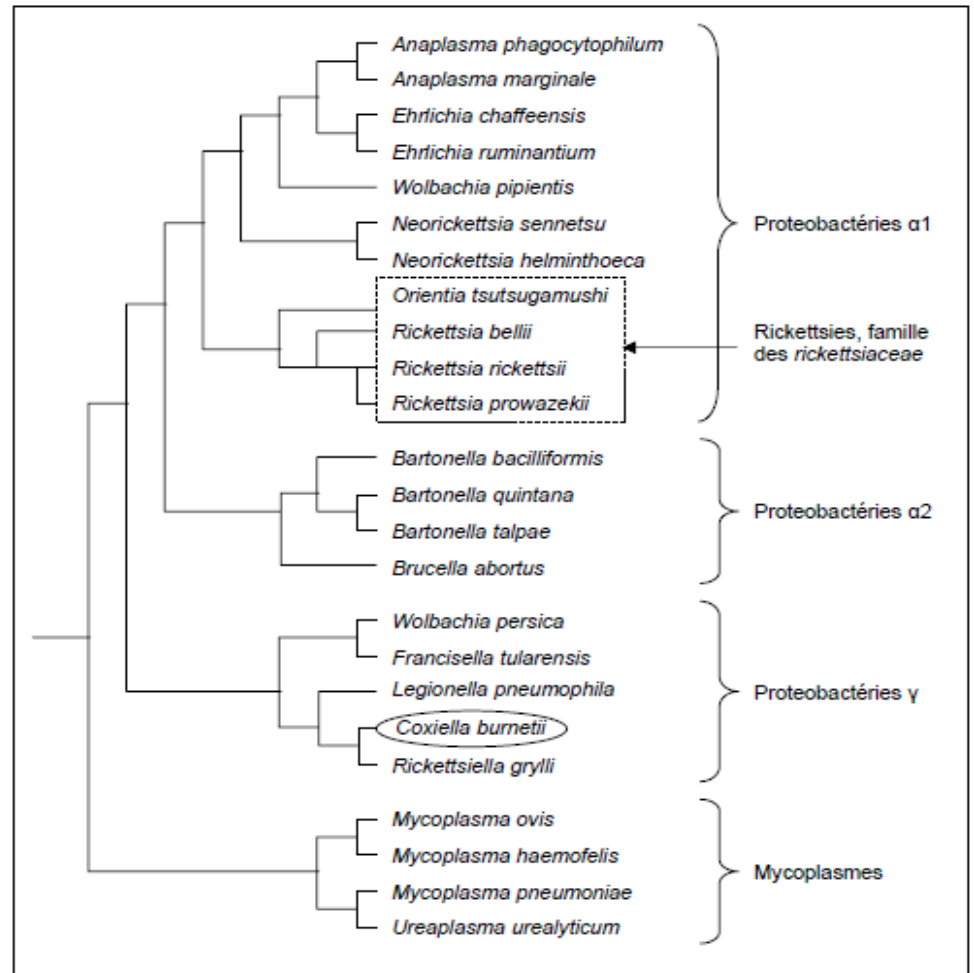
Unité des Maladies Infectieuses et Tropicales  
CIC Inserm 1424  
Centre Hospitalier de Cayenne



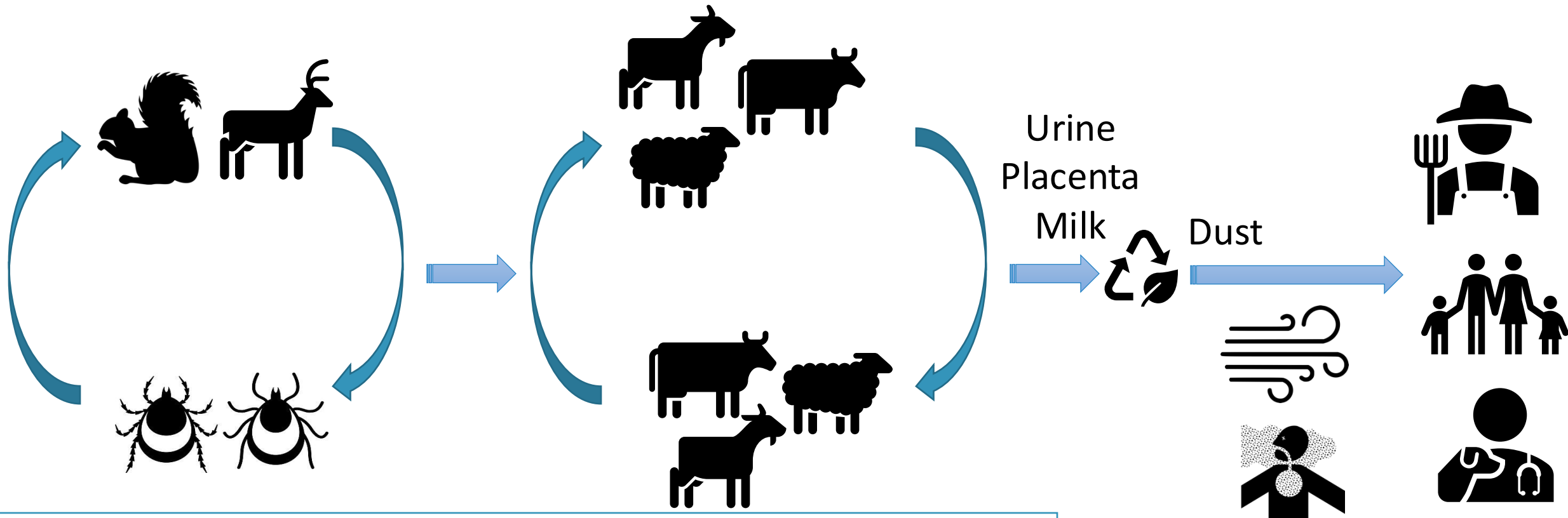
# Q fever



- Ubiquitous bacterial zoonosis = *Coxiella burnetii*
- High environmental resistance
- 1<sup>st</sup> clinical description in 1935 in Australia: epidemic of **unexplained fever (query)** in a slaughterhouse in Queensland
- Acute Q fever vs. Chronic (persistent focalized) Q fever



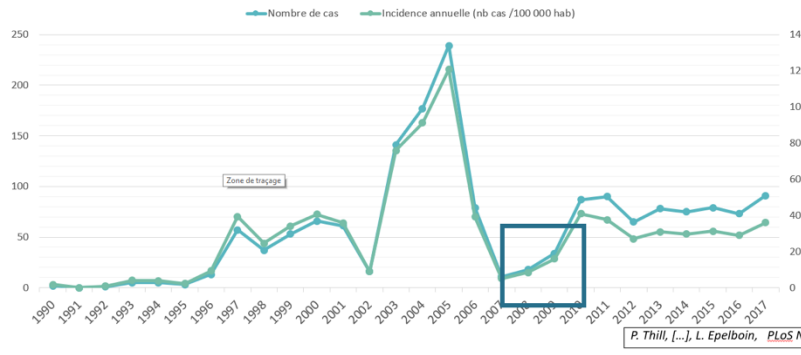
# Epidemiological cycle of *Coxiella burnetii*



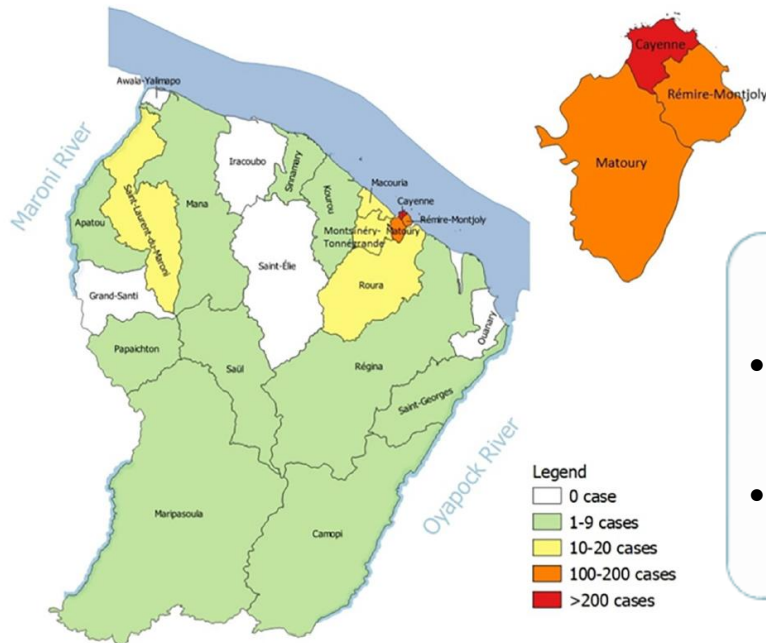
- ⇒ Inhalation of aerosolized dust from farms ++
  - ⇒ Parturition products ++ (amniotic fluid, placenta) or wool
  - ⇒ Transport of infectious aerosols, sometimes by wind over several kilometers
- ⇒ Also reported: ingestion of milk, tick bites, exposure to animal products in the cosmetics industry.

- ✓ High-risk professions
  - ✓ Farmers
  - ✓ Veterinarians
  - ✓ Slaughterhouse workers
- ✓ Ecotourism

Incidence of Q fever in French Guiana 1990-2017



P. Thill, [...], L. Epelboin, PLoS NTD, 2022



# French Guiana = a very particular epidemiological feature

- IR < 4 /10<sup>5</sup> inhab/year before 2005
- Jusqu'à 120 /10<sup>5</sup> inhab/year around 2004-2005
- Stable 25-40 /10<sup>5</sup> inhab/year 2010-2017
- Incidence France < 4 /10<sup>5</sup> inhab/year

Highest incidence rate in the world

A unique strain MST17 / Cb 175

- Only genotype found in French Guiana
- Only found in French Guiana
- More virulent strain : in vitro, in silico, in vivo
- Majoritary pulmonary presentation  
Pulm involvement in >90% of acute Q fever
- 24 to 38,5% of hospitalized pneumonias

A very particular geographical distribution

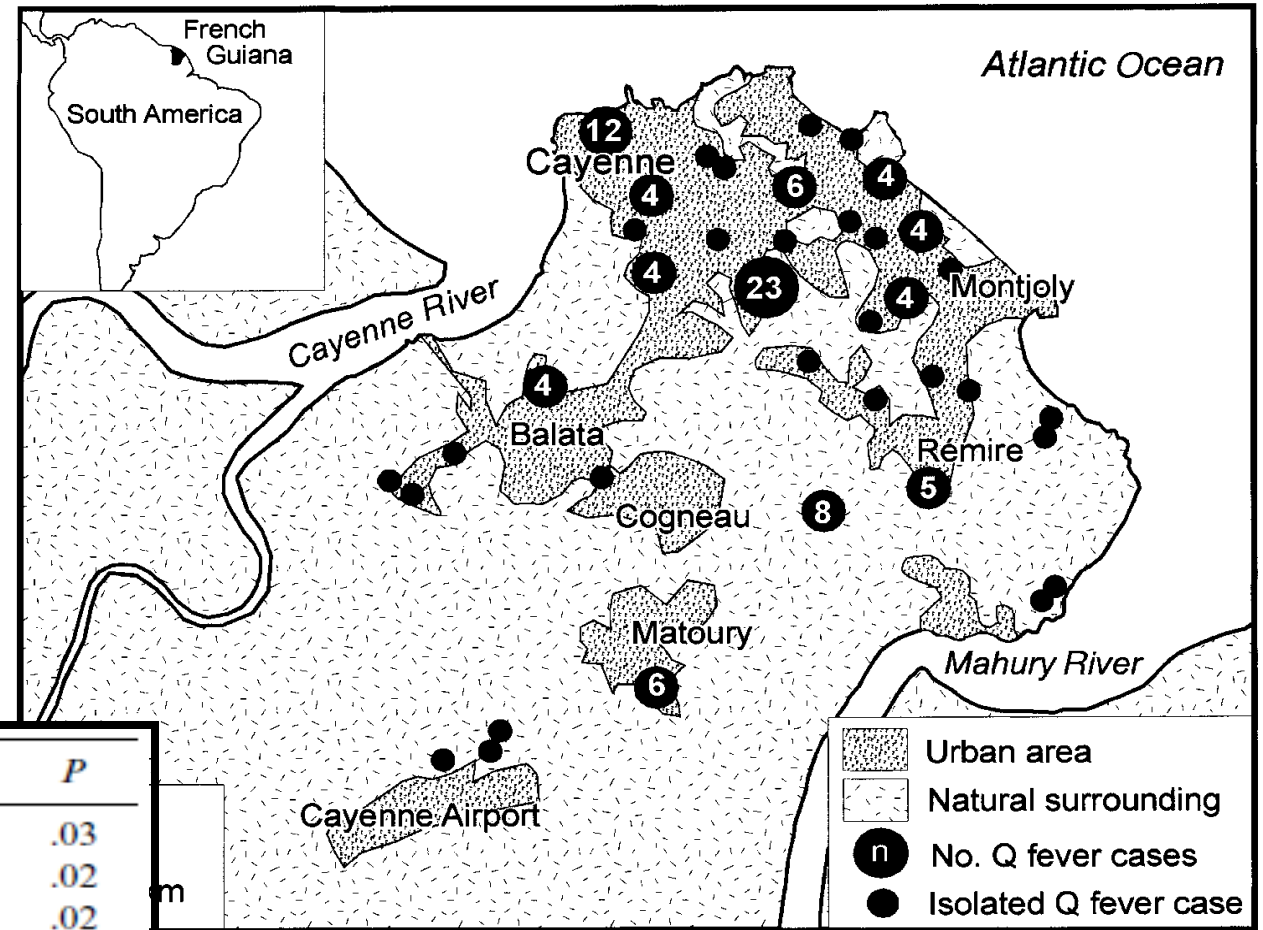
Unclear and unusual environmental reservoir

- No evident link with cattle
- Reservoir in the wildlife?
- What about Raoult's famous sloth?

- French Guiana >> rest of Latin America, including Amazonia
- Cayenne and surroundings >> rest of French Guiana

# Search for an animal reservoir

- Prospective human + animal, wild and domestic epidemiological study
- No domestic animal reservoir
- PCR and cultures (-)
- Risk factors for FQ:



| Variable                               | OR   | CI       | P   |
|--|------|----------|-----|
| Work in building trade or public works | 3.54 | 1.1–11.0 | .03 |
| See bats near house                    | 2.58 | 1.2–5.6  | .02 |
| See other wild mammals near house      | 3.07 | 1.2–8.1  | .02 |
| Proximity to forest                    | 2.71 | 1.2–6.3  | .02 |

Location of Q fever cases 07/1996 - 10/2000

(Gardon, *J Inf Dis*, 2001)

# Search for an animal reservoir in wildlife 1997-2000

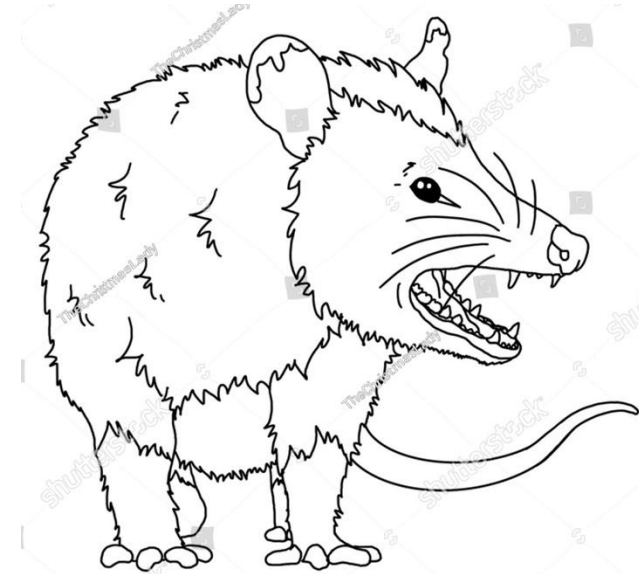
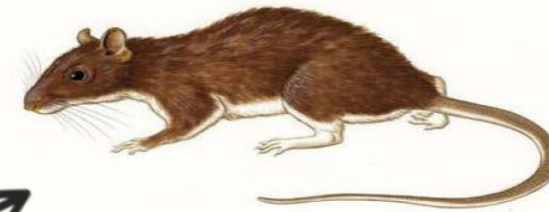
**Table 3.** Results of serologic testing for *Coxiella burnetii* in wild animals captured in French Guiana, September 1997 through September 2000.

| Animal                                 | No. tested | No. positive |
|--|------------|--------------|
| Rodent                                 |            |              |
| <i>Mus musculus</i>                    | 58         | 0            |
| <i>Proechimys species</i> <sup>a</sup> | 26         | 4            |
| <i>Rattus rattus</i>                   | 17         | 0            |
| Other                                  | 16         | 0            |
| Marsupial                              |            |              |
| <i>Philander opossum</i>               | 36         | 4            |
| <i>Didelphis marsupialis</i>           | 4          | 1            |
| Other                                  | 2          | 0            |
| Chiropters                             |            |              |
| <i>Molossus molossus</i>               | 57         | 0            |
| <i>Phyllostomus hastatus</i>           | 17         | 0            |
| Other                                  | 12         | 0            |
| Birds <sup>b</sup>                     | 69         | 1            |
| Batrachians                            |            |              |
| <i>Buffo marinus</i>                   | 21         | 0            |
| <i>Leptodactylus pentadactylus</i>     | 20         | 0            |
| Other                                  | 6          | 0            |

<sup>a</sup> *P. cuvieri* and *P. cayennensis*.

<sup>b</sup> *Progne chalybea* and *Progne tapera*.

*Proechimys species*



(Gardon, J Inf Dis, 2001)

# Search for an animal reservoir in fauna 1997-2016

*Pommier de Santi, Epelboin, et al, Bull Acad Vet France, 2016*

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| Ovins   | FC   | 0% (0/200)                       | François <i>et al.</i> 1997  | Rongeurs                 | IFI                                  | 3,4% (4/117)                | Gardon <i>et al.</i> 2001<br>Titres élevés pour 4 rats épineux                            |
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|         | ELISA  | 0% (0/16)                        | Debin, 2007  |                          | qPCR IS1111<br>Jus musculaire        | 3,2% (1/31)                 | Données non publiées, 2013*<br>1 capybara positif ;<br>1 capybara avec Ct>35              |
| Porcs   | FC   | 0% (0/25)                        | Gardon <i>et al.</i> 2001  | Suidés sauvages          | qPCR IS1111<br>Jus musculaire        | 0% (0/38)                   | Données non publiées, 2013*<br>3 pécaries avec Ct>35»                                     |
|         | ELISA  | «1,9% (2/103)<br>dont 2 douteux» | Debin, 2007  | Marsupiaux               | IFI                                  | 11,9% (5/42)                | Gardon <i>et al.</i> 2001   |
| Chevaux | ELISA  | 3,4% (3/88)<br>dont 2 douteux    | Debin, 2007  |                          | PCR                                  | 0% (0/42)                   |   |
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|         | IFI  | 1% (1/95)                        | Données non publiées, 2016*  | Batraciens               | IFI                                  | 0% (0/47)                   | Gardon <i>et al.</i> 2001   |
|         |  |                                  | PCR  |                          | 0% (0/47)                            |                             |   |

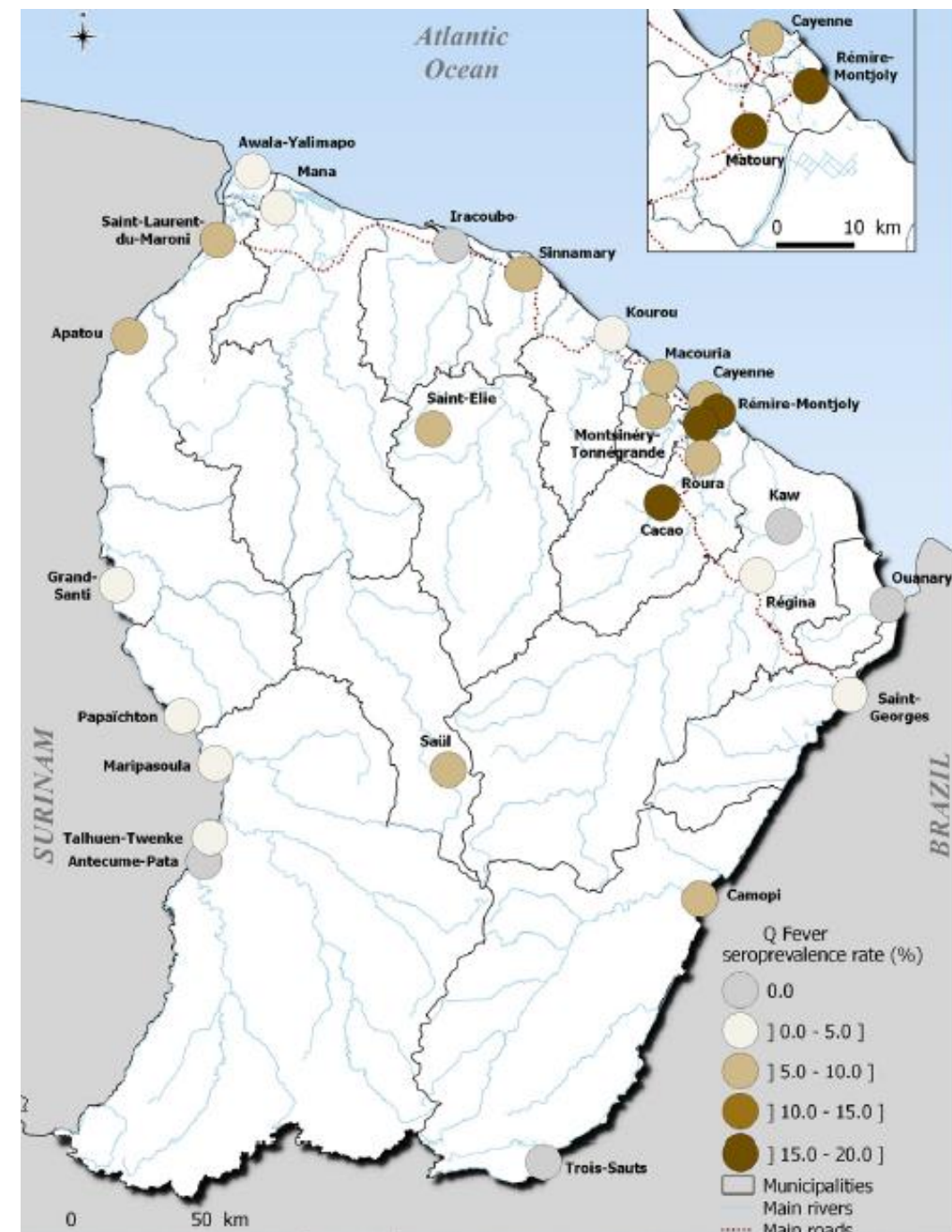
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*Pommier de Santi, Epelboin, et al, Bull Acad Vet France, 2016*

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|         | Immunofluorescence<br>indirecte (IFI)              | 3,6% (2/56)                      | Données non publiées, 2014*  |                               | IFI                                  | 0% (0/47)  |   |
|         | IFI  | 1% (1/95)                        | Données non publiées, 2016*  | Batraciens                    | PCR                                  | 0% (0/47)  | Gardon <i>et al.</i> 2001   |



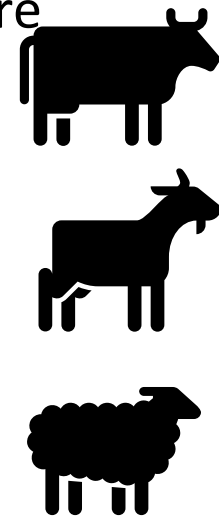
# Seroprevalence study : link with farms



| Characteristic                 | Total tested individuals | Weighted prevalence % [95% CI] | Crude IRR [95% CI] | Pearson p-value   | Adjusted IRR [95% CI] |
|--------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------------|--------------------|-------------------|-----------------------|
| (Continued from previous page) |                          |                                |                    |                   |                       |
| Distance to sheep farms        |                          |                                |                    |                   |                       |
| >5 km                          | 795                      | 3.62 [2.32-5.62]               | Ref                | <10 <sup>-4</sup> | Ref                   |
| [5 km-2 km]                    | 902                      | 9.87 [7.72-12.55]              | 2.73 [1.64-4.52]   |                   | 2.57 [1.03-6.38]      |
| <2 km                          | 1001                     | 10.84 [8.97-13.04]             | 2.99 [1.85-4.84]   |                   | 2.10 [0.83-5.28]      |
| Distance to goat farms         |                          |                                |                    |                   |                       |
| >5 km                          | 839                      | 6.35 [4.29-9.32]               | Ref                | 0.09              | Ref                   |
| [5 km-2 km]                    | 994                      | 9.91 [8.06-12.13]              | 1.56 [1.00-2.42]   |                   | 0.66 [0.32-1.37]      |
| <2 km                          | 865                      | 10.65 [8.41-13.39]             | 1.67 [1.07-2.63]   |                   | 0.76 [0.37-1.56]      |
| Distance to cattle farms       |                          |                                |                    |                   |                       |
| >5 km                          | 1086                     | 8.25 [6.39-10.58]              | Ref                | 0.05              | Ref                   |
| [5 km-2 km]                    | 659                      | 12.54 [9.77-15.94]             | 1.52 [1.07-2.16]   |                   | 1.60 [0.96-2.69]      |
| <2 km                          | 953                      | 9.40 [7.49-11.74]              | 1.14 [0.81-1.60]   |                   | 1.22 [0.69-2.15]      |
| Distance to pig farms          |                          |                                |                    |                   |                       |
| >5 km                          | 1047                     | 7.51 [5.59-10.03]              | Ref                | 0.11              | Ref                   |
| [5 km-2 km]                    | 860                      | 10.34 [8.15-13.03]             | 1.38 [0.94-2.00]   |                   | 1.00 [0.59-1.69]      |
| <2 km                          | 791                      | 10.84 [8.66-13.49]             | 1.44 [0.99-2.08]   |                   | 0.86 [0.46-1.59]      |
| Distance to poultry farms      |                          |                                |                    |                   |                       |
| >5 km                          | 926                      | 6.69 [4.83-9.20]               | Ref                | 0.02              | Ref                   |
| [5 km-2 km]                    | 650                      | 9.69 [7.13-13.04]              | 1.45 [0.93-2.25]   |                   | 0.66 [0.34-1.28]      |
| <2 km                          | 1122                     | 11.44 [9.52-13.7]              | 1.71 [1.18-2.48]   |                   | 0.85 [0.39-1.85]      |

# More recent data on livestock in French Guiana

- Blood from 834 cattle, 219 goats and 175 sheep on 86 farms from 2015 to 2017.
- Evidence of significant potential exposure to Cb, which had not been demonstrated until now:
  - Herd prevalence : 66.3% of sampled herds were exposed to Cb
  - Real prevalence estimated at 14.2% in cattle, with a confidence interval of [10; 19.4].
- Higher prevalence in cattle than in goats and sheep in French Guiana vs. mainland France



Saout et al, ESCCAR and ESCR, Lausanne, Swiss, 2022

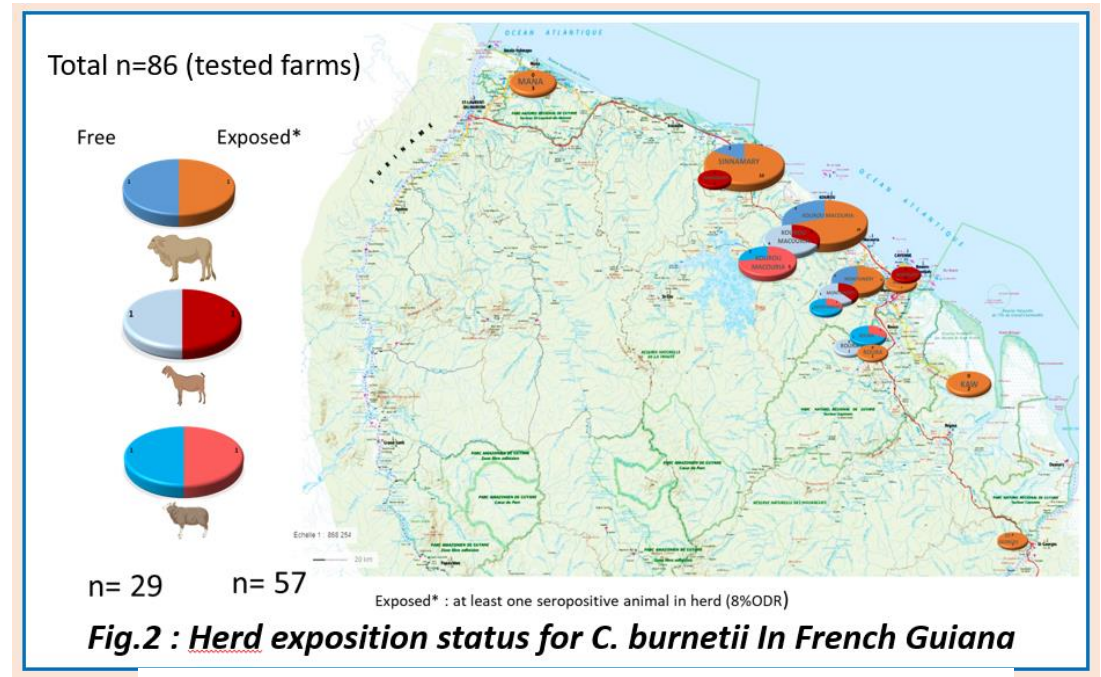


Table 1 : Apparent seroprevalence (manufacturer's) and real seroprevalence (according to modelisation)

| Year    | Species | Number | Number of positives (OD>40%) | Apparent prevalence [CI 95%] | Number of positives (OD>8%) | Real prevalence [CI 95%] |
|---------|---------|--------|------------------------------|------------------------------|-----------------------------|--------------------------|
| 2015    | Cattle  | 275    | 1                            | 0.4 [0 ; 2.3]                | 48                          | 13.2 [7 ; 20.3]          |
|         | Goat    | 86     | 0                            | 0 [0 ; 5.3]                  | 4                           | 0.9 [0 ; 6.7]            |
|         | Sheep   | 46     | 4                            | 8.7 [2.8 ; 21.7]             | 6                           | 4.8 [0 ; 19.1]           |
| 2016    | Cattle  | 296    | 2                            | 0.7 [0.1 ; 2.7]              | 85                          | 28 [20.6 ; 37.5]         |
|         | Goat    | 31     | 0                            | 0 [0 ; 13.7]                 | 6                           | 16.2 [2.9 ; 35]          |
|         | Sheep   | 62     | 0                            | 0 [0 ; 7.3]                  | 8                           | 4.4 [0 ; 16.8]           |
| 2017    | Cattle  | 263    | 2                            | 0.8 [0.1 ; 3]                | 19                          | 0.7 [0 ; 4.9]            |
|         | Goat    | 102    | 2                            | 2 [0.3 ; 7.6]                | 5                           | 0.9 [0 ; 6.2]            |
|         | Sheep   | 67     | 0                            | 0 [0 ; 6.8]                  | 7                           | 2.5 [0 ; 12.7]           |
| 2015-17 | Cattle  | 834    | 5                            | 0.6 [0.2 ; 1.5]              | 152                         | 14.2 [10 ; 19.4]         |
|         | Goat    | 219    | 2                            | 0.9 [0.2 ; 3.6]              | 15                          | 1.8 [0 ; 6.6]            |
|         | Sheep   | 175    | 6                            | 2.3 [0.7 ; 6.1]              | 21                          | 3.7 [0 ; 10.8]           |

# Search for an animal reservoir in fauna 1997-2016

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|         |  |                                  |  | Batraciens                    |                                      |  |   |

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| Caprins | FC   | 0% (0/500)                       | François <i>et al.</i> 1997  |                                      | qPCR IS1111<br>Foie           | 0% (0/27)   | Données non publiées, 2013*<br>Rongeurs de la région de Roura<br>1 rat épineux avec Ct>35 |
|         | ELISA  | 0% (0/16)                        | Debin, 2007  | qPCR IS1111<br>Jus musculaire        | 3,2% (1/31)                   | Données non publiées, 2013*<br>1 capybara positif ;<br>1 capybara avec Ct>35    |   |
| Porcs   | FC   | 0% (0/25)                        | Gardon <i>et al.</i> 2001  | Suidés sauvages                      | qPCR IS1111<br>Jus musculaire | 0% (0/38)   | Données non publiées, 2013*<br>3 pécaries avec Ct>35»                                     |
|         | ELISA  | «1,9% (2/103)<br>dont 2 douteux» | Debin, 2007  | Marsupiaux                           | IFI                           | 11,9% (5/42)  | Gardon <i>et al.</i> 2001   |
| Chevaux | ELISA  | 3,4% (3/88)<br>dont 2 douteux    | Debin, 2007  | Chiroptères                          | PCR                           | 0% (0/42)   |   |
| Chiens  | IFI  | 5,2% (1/19)                      | Boni <i>et al.</i> 1998  |                                      | IFI                           | 0% (0/86)   | Gardon <i>et al.</i> 2001   |
|         | FC   | 12,3% (7/57)                     | Gardon <i>et al.</i> 2001  |                                      | PCR                           | 0% (0/86)   |   |
|         | ELISA  | 20,33% (12/59)<br>dont 6 douteux | Debin, 2007  | qPCR (IS30A)<br>Écouvillons vaginaux | 0% (0/199)                    | Données non publiées, 2013*<br>Chiroptères du littoral<br>6 positifs avec Ct>35 |   |
|         | qPCR <sup>+</sup> (IS1111)<br>Écouvillons vaginaux | 5,6% (6/107)                     | Données non publiées, 2013*<br>12 positifs avec Ct>35 <sup>+</sup> | ELISA                                | 0% (0/41)                     | Données non publiées, 2013*   |   |
|         | qPCR (IS30A)<br>Écouvillons vaginaux               | 0% (0/95)                        | Données non publiées, 2014*  | Oiseaux (hirondelles)                | IFI                           | 1,4% (1/69)   | Gardon <i>et al.</i> 2001   |
|         | Immunofluorescence indirecte (IFI)                 | 3,6% (2/56)                      | Données non publiées, 2014*  | PCR                                  | 0% (0/69)                     | Prison de Remire  |   |
|         | IFI  | 1% (1/95)                        | Données non publiées, 2016*  | Batraciens                           | IFI                           | 0% (0/47)   | Gardon <i>et al.</i> 2001   |
|         |  |                                  |  | PCR                                  | 0% (0/47)                     |   |   |

# Search for an animal reservoir in fauna 1997-2016

*Pommier de Santi, Epelboin, et al, Bull Acad Vet France, 2016*

| Espèces | Méthodes   | Prévalence                       | Références et observations   | Espèces                       | Méthodes                             | Prévalence   | Références et observations  |
|---------|--|----------------------------------|--|-------------------------------|--------------------------------------|--|---|
| Bovins  | Fixation du complément (FC)                        | 1,7% (6/355)                     | François <i>et al.</i> 1997  | Chats                         | FC                                   | 0% (0/6)   | Gardon <i>et al.</i> 2001   |
|         | ELISA  | 0% (0/179)                       | Debin, 2007  |                               | IFI                                  | 0% (0/10)  | Données non publiées, 2016*   |
| Ovins   | FC   | 0% (0/200)                       | François <i>et al.</i> 1997  | Rongeurs                      | IFI                                  | 3,4% (4/117)   | Gardon <i>et al.</i> 2001   |
|         | ELISA  | 0% (0/37)                        | Debin, 2007  |                               | PCR                                  | 0% (0/117)   | Titres élevés pour 4 rats épineux   |
| Caprins | FC   | 0% (0/500)                       | François <i>et al.</i> 1997  |                               | qPCR IS1111<br>Foie                  | 0% (0/27)  | Données non publiées, 2013*<br>Rongeurs de la région de Roura<br>1 rat épineux avec Ct>35 |
|         | ELISA  | 0% (0/16)                        | Debin, 2007  | qPCR IS1111<br>Jus musculaire | 3,2% (1/31)                          | Données non publiées, 2013*<br>1 capybara positif ;<br>1 capybara avec Ct>35 |   |
| Porcs   | FC   | 0% (0/25)                        | Gardon <i>et al.</i> 2001  | Suidés sauvages               | qPCR IS1111<br>Jus musculaire        | 0% (0/38)  | Données non publiées, 2013*<br>3 pécaries avec Ct>35»                                     |
|         | ELISA  | «1,9% (2/103)<br>dont 2 douteux» | Debin, 2007  | Marsupiaux                    | IFI                                  | 11,9% (5/42)   | Gardon <i>et al.</i> 2001   |
| Chevaux | ELISA  | 3,4% (3/88)<br>dont 2 douteux    | Debin, 2007  | PCR                           | 0% (0/42)                            |  |   |
| Chiens  | IFI  | 5,2% (1/19)                      | Boni <i>et al.</i> 1998  | Chiroptères                   | IFI                                  | 0% (0/86)  | Gardon <i>et al.</i> 2001   |
|         | FC   | 12,3% (7/57)                     | Gardon <i>et al.</i> 2001  |                               | PCR                                  | 0% (0/86)  |   |
|         | ELISA  | 20,33% (12/59)<br>dont 6 douteux | Debin, 2007  |                               | qPCR (IS30A)<br>Écouvillons vaginaux | 0% (0/199)   | Données non publiées, 2013*<br>Chiroptères du littoral<br>6 positifs avec Ct>35           |
|         | qPCR <sup>+</sup> (IS1111)<br>Écouvillons vaginaux | 5,6% (6/107)                     | Données non publiées, 2013*<br>12 positifs avec Ct>35 <sup>+</sup> | ELISA                         | 0% (0/41)                            | Données non publiées, 2013*  |   |
|         | qPCR (IS30A)<br>Écouvillons vaginaux               | 0% (0/95)                        | Données non publiées, 2014*  | Oiseaux (hirondelles)         | IFI                                  | 1,4% (1/69)  | Gardon <i>et al.</i> 2001<br>Prison de Remire   |
|         | Immunofluorescence indirecte (IFI)                 | 3,6% (2/56)                      | Données non publiées, 2014*  | Batraciens                    | PCR                                  | 0% (0/69)  |   |
|         | IFI  | 1% (1/95)                        | Données non publiées, 2016*  |                               | IFI                                  | 0% (0/47)  | Gardon <i>et al.</i> 2001   |
|         |  |                                  |  | PCR                           | 0% (0/47)                            |  |   |

Q fever

When the media get

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 LUNDI 11 SEPTEMBRE 2017

# Des problèmes sanitaires causés par les chauves-souris

Si les chauves-souris sont inoffensives, leurs fientes peuvent transmettre l'histoplasmosse et la fièvre Q, qu'un habitant de Matoury a contracté. Objectif : éviter qu'elles entrent chez vous

page 4

19:48 **1**

QUIBI, exerçant Route de l'aéroport, Concorde à  
 ur Joelfabien RADAMONTHE, né le 22 Décembre  
 erg Residence Concorde 97351. Matoury.

ent un suivi medical regulier pour une pathologie  
 on logement (fientes de chauve-souris).

t et remis en main propre pour faire valoir ce que

**GUYANE SOIR** FIÈVRE Q : UN TÉMOIGNAGE POUR PRÉVENIR

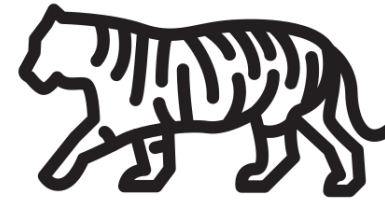
19:47 **1**

**JOSÉ RADAMONTHE**  
 RÉSIDENT DE LA CITÉ CONCORDE

**GUYANE SOIR** FIÈVRE Q : UN TÉMOIGNAGE POUR PRÉVENIR

# Turning point in the knowledge : Tiger Camp Epidemic 2012-2013

- Epidemic from December 2012 to June 2013 in the housing estate inhabited by military families
- Attack rate = 20% (11/54).50% (8/16) of households affected
- 3 positive PCRs, including 1 with MST17 identification



*Pommier de Santi et al., Comp Immunol Microbiol Infect Dis, 2018*

|                          | Malades<br>(n=11) | Non malades<br>(n=43) | Univariée             | Multivariée            |
|--------------------------|-------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|------------------------|
| Facteurs d'exposition    | n (%*)            | n (%**)               | RR (IC95%)            | RRa (IC95%)            |
| Age ≥ 15 ans             | 10 (28,6)         | 1 (5,3)               | 5,4 [ 0,8-39,3]       | -                      |
| Faire le ménage          | 10 (34,5)         | 1 (4,6)               | <b>8,6 [1,2-62,7]</b> | <b>7,5 [1,03-55,3]</b> |
| Nettoyeur haute pression | 5 (41,7)          | 6 (14,3)              | <b>2,9 [1,1-7,9]</b>  | -                      |
| Bricoler au sous-sol     | 7 (33,3)          | 4 (12,1)              | 2,8 [0,9-8,3]         | -                      |
| Jardiner                 | 5 (27,8)          | 6 (16,7)              | 1,7 [0,6-4,7]         | -                      |
| Morsure de tique         | 1 (25,0)          | 3 (20,0)              | 1,3 [0,2-7,5]         | -                      |
| Porter un paresseux      | 3 (60,0)          | 8 (14,8)              | <b>3,7 [1,4-9,6]</b>  | <b>2,6 [1,1-5,8]</b>   |

\* Incidence de la fièvre Q pour les exposés ; \*\* Incidence de la fièvre Q chez les non exposés

# The famous sloth of the camp du tigre

- Three-toed sloth found dead close to the houses (*Bradypus tridactylus*)
- Faeces and spleen PCR14/16 positive (88%)
- ticks (*Amblyomma geayi*) positive
- MST 17
- Serology and PCR negative for all other animals, including small ruminants sampled.



## Three-Toed Sloth as Putative Reservoir of *Coxiella burnetii*, Cayenne, French Guiana

Davoust, *Emerg Inf Dis*, 2014  
Million & Raoult, *J Infection*, 2015



Figure 1 The three-toed sloth (*Bradypus tridactylus*), a putative reservoir of the Cayenne *C. burnetii* geotype responsible for the ongoing French Guiana outbreak. Picture of a three-toed sloth (*Bradypus tridactylus*) typically found in French Guiana. Courtesy of S. Fernandez with permission.



# Is the mystery solved?

Nous avons pu, après avoir testé une centaine d'échantillons d'animaux, identifier le paresseux à trois doigts comme source probable de l'épidémie de fièvre Q à Cayenne, en Guyane française. Cet animal est spécifique à cette région d'Amérique du Sud et de fortes concentrations de *C. burnetii* ont été trouvées dans ses selles et dans les tiques qui le parasitent. Ces animaux peuvent vivre à proximité du périmètre de la ville, ce qui correspond aux données épidémiologiques. **L'augmentation significative des cas de fièvre Q diagnostiqués dans cette même ville de Cayenne dans les années 2000 semble être liée à l'ouverture d'un refuge pour ces animaux dans le centre ville qui est très visité en raison de l'intérêt de la population pour ces animaux.** Il semble donc que l'épidémie de fièvre Q à Cayenne soit liée à un réservoir d'animaux sauvages vivant en très grande proximité avec les habitants de la ville de Cayenne et à l'existence d'une souche au génotype particulier et générant une gravité supérieure à celle habituellement observée.



epidemiological data. The significant increase in cases of Q fever diagnosed in the same city of Cayenne in the 2000s seems to be related to the opening of a shelter for these animals in the city center that is highly visited due to the interest of the population in these animals. So it seems that the epidemic of Q fever in Cayenne is linked to a wild animal reservoir living in very close proximity with the inhabitants of the city of Cayenne and the existence of a strain with a particular genotype and generating a gravity greater than that usually observed.

Million & Raoult, *J Infection*, 2015

# A magic solution found too quickly



- Other sloths in the Tiger camp
  - 1 young male (feces, hair) and 55 ticks: negative
  - 1 mother, her small size (feces, hair) and 30 ticks: negative
- Sloths of the CHOU-AI association
  - Feces in approx. 10 cages: negative
  - 12 anal swabs: negative
  - No ticks

*Davoust, Emerg Inf Dis, 2014*  
*Million & Raoult, J Infection, 2015*

# The capybara of the Comté River



- Common features: "rotofil" brushcutter
- Multiple environmental samples: stool PCR positive for *C. burnetii*, identification = capybara (*Hydrochoerus hydrochaeris*)

## Capybara and Brush Cutter Involvement in Q Fever Outbreak in Remote Area of Amazon Rain Forest, French Guiana, 2014

Jacques-Robert Christen, Sophie Edouard, Thierry Lamour, Enguerrane Martinez, Claire Rousseau, Franck de Laval, François Catzeflis, Félix Djossou, Didier Raoult, Vincent Pommier de Santi,<sup>1</sup> Loïc Epelboin<sup>1</sup>




Christen [...], Epelboin, *Emerg Inf Dis*, 2020

# Coxiella burnetii Infection in wildlife in Latin America and the Caribbean: a Comprehensive Review of the Literature

Current Tropical Medicine Reports (2023) 10:94–137  
<https://doi.org/10.1007/s40475-023-00288-7>

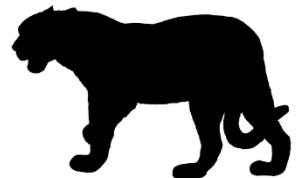


## *Coxiella burnetii* Infection in Livestock, Pets, Wildlife, and Ticks in Latin America and the Caribbean: a Comprehensive Review of the Literature

Loïc Epelboin<sup>1,2</sup>  · Mateus De Souza Ribeiro Mioni<sup>3</sup> · Aurelie Couesnon<sup>4</sup> · Mona Saout<sup>5</sup> · Edith Guilloton<sup>2</sup> · Salma Omar<sup>2</sup> · Vincent Pommier De Santi<sup>6</sup> · Bernard Davoust<sup>7,8</sup> · Jean Lou Marié<sup>7,9</sup> · Anne Lavergne<sup>10</sup> · Damien Donato<sup>10</sup> · Alexandro Guterres<sup>11</sup> · Sebastien Rabier<sup>2</sup> · Justin Destoop<sup>12</sup> · Felix Djossou<sup>1</sup> · Xavier Baudrimont<sup>13</sup> · Antoine Roch<sup>13</sup> · Gabriel Leonardo Cicuttin<sup>14</sup> · Tatiana Rozental<sup>11,15</sup> · Mathieu Nacher<sup>2</sup> · Javier Millán<sup>16,17,18</sup> · Elba R. Sampaio De Lemos<sup>11</sup> · Jorlan Fernandes<sup>11</sup> · Olivier Duron<sup>19</sup> · Benoit De Thoisy<sup>10,20</sup> · Elodie Rousset<sup>4</sup>



*Epelboin et al, Curr Trop Med Rep, 2023*



# Summary of wildlife species with molecular evidence for Cb in Latin America

| Order / Sub-order | Family         | Species English name         | Species Latin name               | Number | Year of publication | Country       | Place  | Publication       | Cycle threshold                       |
|-------------------|----------------|------------------------------|----------------------------------|--------|---------------------|---------------|--|-------------------|---------------------------------------|
| Pilosa            | Bradypodidae   | Three-toed sloth             | <i>Bradypus tridactylus</i>      | 1      | 2014                | French Guiana | Cayenne  | Davoust (76)      | 23                                    |
| Cingulata         | Dasypodidae    | Nine banded armadillo        | <i>Dasypus novemcinctus</i>      | 1      | 2013                | French Guiana | NA   | Marié (122)       | >35                                   |
| Suina             | Tayassuidae    | White-lipped peccary         | <i>Tayassu pecari</i>            | 3      | "                   | "             | "  | "                 | >35                                   |
| Suina             | Tayassuidae    | Collared peccary             | <i>Pecari tajacu</i>             | 3      | "                   | "             | "  | "                 | >35                                   |
| Perissodactyla    | Tapiridae      | South American tapir         | <i>Tapirus terrestris</i>        | 2      | "                   | "             | "  | "                 | 1 >35; 1 <35                          |
| Rodentia          | Cricetidae     | Cursor grass mouse           | <i>Akodon cursor</i>             | 3      | 2017                | Brazil        | Rio de Janeiro Atlantic forest   | Rozental_(124)    | \$                                    |
| Rodentia          | Muridae        | House mouse                  | <i>Mus musculus</i>              | 1      | "                   | "             | "  | "                 | \$                                    |
| Rodentia          | Cricetidae     | Atlantic Forest hociudo      | <i>Oxymycterus dasytrichus</i>   | 1      | "                   | "             | "  | "                 | \$                                    |
| Rodentia          | Cricetidae     | Black-footed pygmy rice rat  | <i>Oligoryzomys nigripes</i>     | 1      | "                   | "             | "  | "                 | \$                                    |
| Rodentia          | Echimyidae     | Spiny rat                    | <i>Proechimys cuvieri</i>        | 1      | 2013                | French Guiana | NA   | Marié (122)       | >35                                   |
| Rodentia          | Caviidae       | Capybara                     | <i>Hydrochoerus hydrochaeris</i> | 1      | 2019                | French Guiana | Comté River, Roura   | Christen (119)    | 31                                    |
| Rodentia          | Caviidae       | Capybara                     | <i>Hydrochoerus hydrochaeris</i> | 2      | 2013                | French Guiana | NA   | Marié (122)       | 1 >35; 1 <35                          |
| Chiroptera        | Phyllostomidae | Seba's short-tailed bat      | <i>Carollia perspicillata</i>    | 3      | "                   | "             | Cayenne, Régina, and Saint Jean du Maroni  | "                 | >35                                   |
| Chiroptera        | Mormoopidae    | Parnell's mustached bat      | <i>Pteronotus parnellii</i>      | 1      | "                   | "             | Cayenne, Régina  | "                 | >35                                   |
| Chiroptera        | Phyllostomidae | Lesser spear-nosed bat       | <i>Phyllostomus elongatus</i>    | 1      | "                   | "             | Régina   | "                 | >35                                   |
| Chiroptera        | Noctilionidae  | Lesser bulldog bat           | <i>Noctilio albiventris</i>      | 1      | "                   | "             | Saint Jean du Maroni   | "                 | >35                                   |
| Chiroptera        | Phyllostomidae | Fringed fruit-eating bat     | <i>Artibeus fimbriatus</i>       | 1      | 2018                | Brazil        | Atlantic Forest  | Ferreira (132)    | \$                                    |
| Chiroptera        | Phyllostomidae | Great fruit-eating bat       | <i>Artibeus lituratus</i>        | 3      | "                   | "             | "  | "                 | \$                                    |
| Chiroptera        | Molossidae     | Brazilian Free-tailed Bats   | <i>Tadarida brasiliensis</i>     | 5      | 2020                | Chile         | Metropolitan Region  | Muller (131)      | 33.05, 33.55, 34.06, 35.34, and 36.45 |
| Chiroptera        | Phyllostomidae | Seba's short-tailed bat      | <i>Carollia perspicillata</i>    | 3      | 2022                | Colombia      | Macaregua cave, located in Las Vueltas village, Municipality of Curiti, Santander Department | Silva-Ramos (186) | NA                                    |
| Chiroptera        | Mormoopidae    | ghost-faced bat              | <i>Mormops megalophylla</i>      | 2      | "                   | "             | "  | "                 | NA                                    |
| Chiroptera        | Natalidae      | Trinidadian funnel-eared bat | <i>Natalus tumidirostris</i>     | 3      | "                   | "             | "  | "                 | NA                                    |



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# The Faunacox study

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# Objectives of the study

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## Main objective

Identifying *Coxiella burnetii* reservoir(s) in wildlife (and challenge the peremptory assertions of some French researchers)

## Secondary objectives

- ✓ Geolocate animal sources
- ✓ Evaluate the feasibility of a Q fever reservoir study without sacrificing animals



# Method : collect animal samples

## Bat captures

- either directed at hotspots Cayenne and surroundings
- or opportunistic, based on already-organized capture assignments





# Method : collect animal samples

## Find wild animal droppings

- Zoo de Guyane : 1 visit every 3 months
- SOS Faune sauvage
- ONCA



# Method : collect animal samples

## Find wild animal droppings

- Sharing the collection of cat droppings and various herbivores collected mainly at the Guiana Space Center and Petit Saut Dam by the OFB (French Biodiversity Office).



# Method : collect animal samples

## Sampling free-living animals : other methods

---



# Method : collect already dead animals

A call for contributions to collect dead animals is posted on social networks: roadkill, other causes of death, notably from dogs and cats



**UN MAMMIFÈRE SAUVAGE TROUVÉ MORT ?**  
SUR CAYENNE, RÉMIRE-MONTJOLY ET MATOURY

DANS LE CADRE DE RECHERCHES SUR LES MALADIES DES MAMMIFÈRES DE GUYANE, NOUS COLLECTONS DES ANIMAUX MORTS RÉCEMMENT (Y COMPRIS RONGEURS ET CHAUVES-SOURIS).

**Vous pouvez nous aider !**

- Signalez l'emplacement en contactant Edith au **06 95 32 99 20**
- Si vous le pouvez : apportez l'animal à l'institut Pasteur

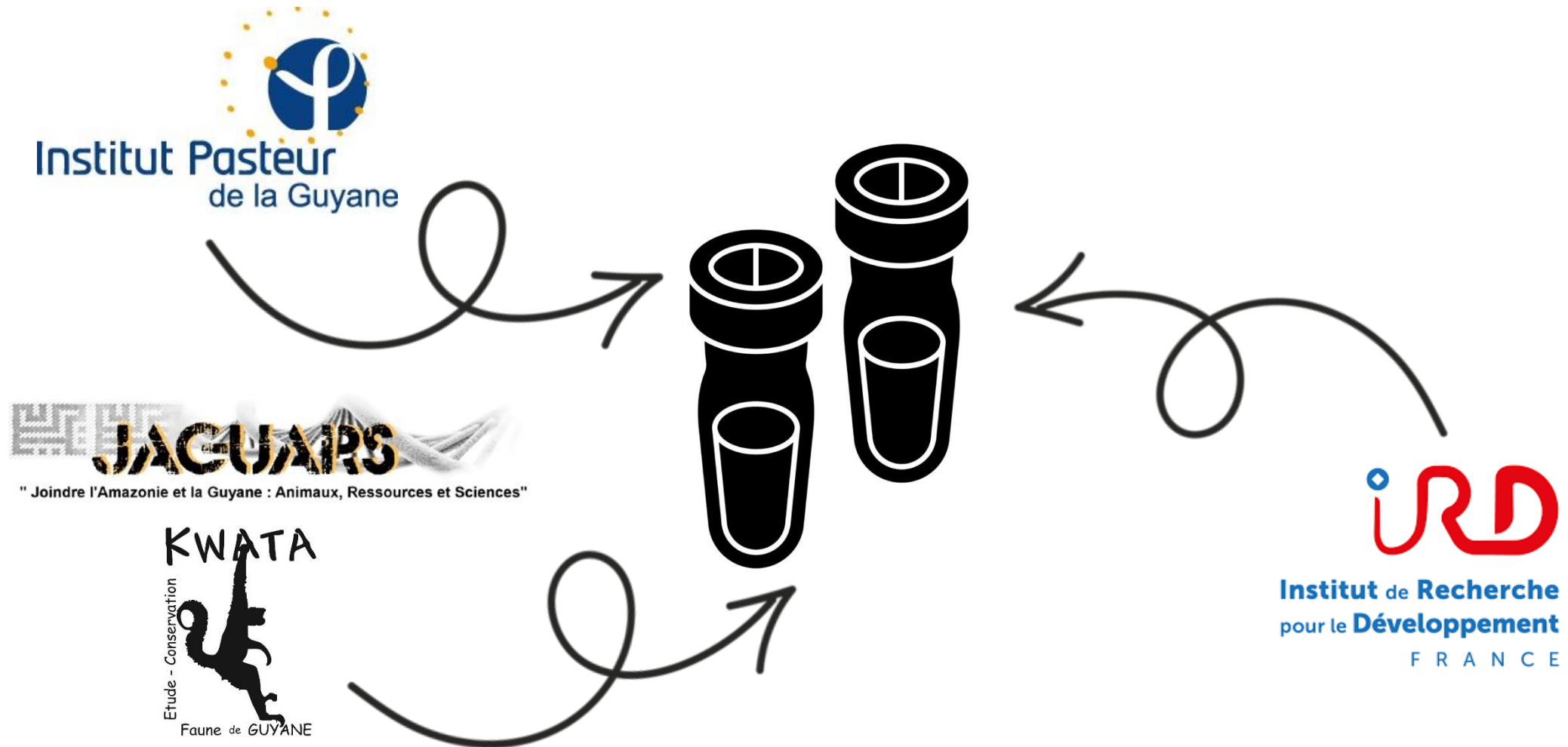
S'il s'agit d'une espèce protégée, ce dernier ne pouvant être transporté, nous nous déplacerons !

\* LISTE DES ESPÈCES PROTÉGÉES EN GUYANE : <https://guyane.ofb.fr/connaître-la-faune-sauvage-en-guyane/fiches-de-reconnaissance-des-especes-protégées/>

Logos: l'Europe en Guyane, CENTRE HOSPITALIER CAYENNE, CIC ANTIILLES GUYANE, TBIP, Université de Guyane, KWATA.

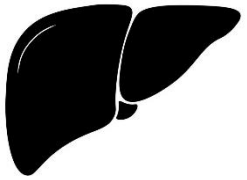
# Method : collect animal samples

## Using processed samples from pre-existing collections



# Method : molecular biology

## Extraction methods



- Liver, Kidney, Spleen, uterus, muscle, bladder : Qiagen DNeasy Blood & Tissue Kits



- Anal and vaginal swab : Qiagen QIAamp mini DNA kit

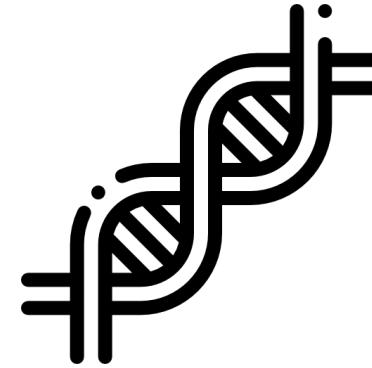


- Stool : Qiagen QIAamp Fast DNA Stool Mini Kit

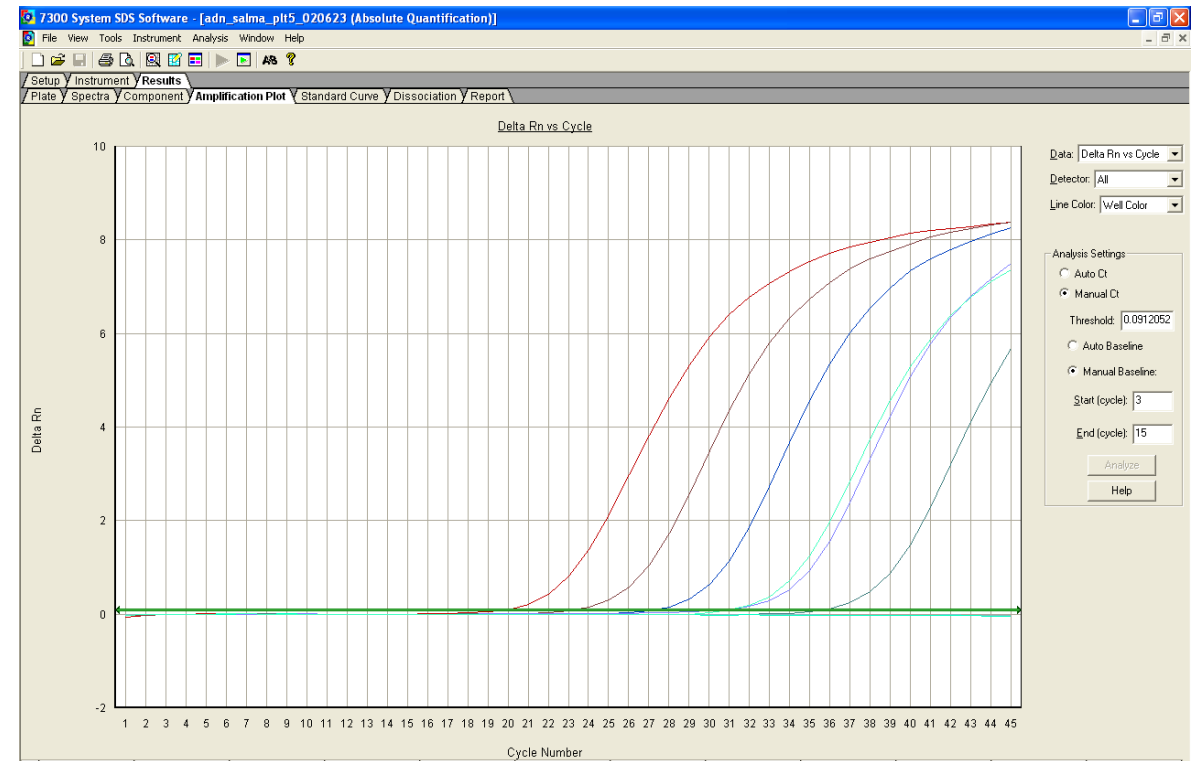


# Method : molecular biology

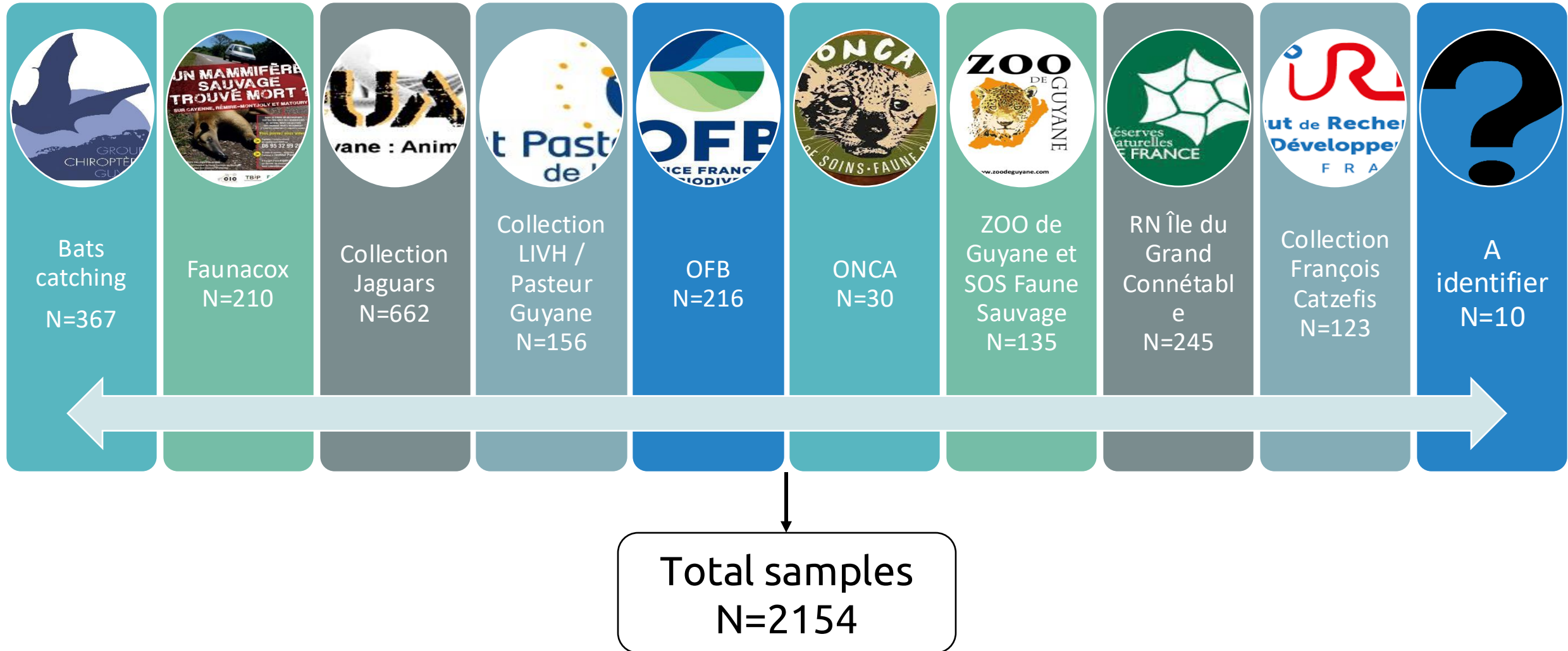
## qPCR screening



- Targeted *C. burnetii* IS 1111 multicopy insertion sequence (Rousset . 2012).
- Addition of an internal positive control (IPC), that allows to verify the efficiency of the DNA extractions and confirm the absence of PCR inhibitors.
- Serial dilutions of genomic DNA reference material used as quantitative standards.
- qPCR with deletion Cb175
- Sequencing
  - 16S PCR
  - MLST sequencing (Sanger, MinION) was performed for 4 *C. burnetii*-specific pairs: Cox2, Cox20, Cox51, Cox56.
- Cytochrome c oxidase subunit 1 (COX1) based PCR to confirm species of animals



# Origin of samples





# Flow chart

Total samples  
N=2154

10 different orders of mammals

Lost  
N=107

No data on species  
N=25

Not mammals  
N=8

Samples with qPCR  
N= 2014

- Artiodactyla N=1
- Carnivora N=235
- Cetartiodactyla N=7
- Chiroptera N= 460
- Cingulata N= 38
- Marsupiala N= 246
- Perissodactyla N=7
- Pilosa N= 80
- Primata N= 86
- Rodentia N= 800
- Not known N= 53

Swab  
N=218

Stool  
N=498

Urine  
N=15

Tissue  
N=1283

|               |     |
|---------------|-----|
| Anal          | 147 |
| Anal / Urine  | 14  |
| Anal / Vagina | 3   |
| Stool         | 13  |
| Milk          | 2   |
| Urine         | 21  |
| Vagina        | 18  |

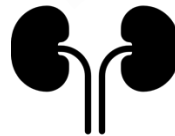
|         |     |
|---------|-----|
| Hair    | 1   |
| Heart   | 77  |
| Kidney  | 115 |
| Liver   | 244 |
| Lung    | 89  |
| Muscle  | 32  |
| Spleen  | 702 |
| Uterus  | 9   |
| Vagina  | 5   |
| Bladder | 8   |

# Synthesis of the results

---



- 34/2014 positive samples 7 orders of mammals
- 16 species
- Distribution over entire study area
- Low bacterial load (high CT) qPCR with MST17 / Cb175 deletion: 3 samples from 2 individuals



| Type de prélèvement  | Nombre    |
|----------------------|-----------|
| Stool                | 7         |
| Anal swab            | 2         |
| <b>Organs</b>        | <b>24</b> |
| Kidney               | 8         |
| Liver                | 6         |
| Lung                 | 3         |
| Muscle               | 1         |
| Spleen               | 3         |
| Uterus               | 1         |
| Bladder              | 2         |
| Hair                 | 1         |
| <b>Total général</b> | <b>34</b> |

# Method : molecular biology

- 16S PCR 16S
  - 16S PCR: detection of the genome of a bacterium other than *C. burnetii*
  - Nested PCR: multiple bacteria detected, therefore uninterpretable
  
- MLST sequencing was performed on V1254 for 4 *C. burnetii*-specific pairs: Cox2, Cox20, Cox51, Cox56.
  - Cox20 et Cox56 : not sensitive enough
  - Cox2.3 et Cox 51.10
  - Comparison with strains available on the Institut Hospitalier Universitaire Méditerranée Infection website ([https://ifr48.timone.univ-mrs.fr/mst/coxiella\\_burnetii/strains.html](https://ifr48.timone.univ-mrs.fr/mst/coxiella_burnetii/strains.html))

MÉDITERRANÉE INFECTION

## MULTI SPACERS TYPING - COXIELLA BURNETII

| MST group | Cox2 | Cox5 | Cox18 | Cox20 | Cox22 | Cox37 | Cox51 | Cox56 | Cox57 | Cox61 |
|-----------|------|------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| 1         | 5    | 6    | 3     | 4     | 6     | 5     | 8     | 1     | 5     | 6     |
| 2         | 5    | 6    | 3     | 5     | 6     | 5     | 8     | 1     | 5     | 6     |
| 3         | 5    | 6    | 3     | 4     | 6     | 7     | 8     | 1     | 5     | 6     |
| 4         | 5    | 6    | 3     | 2     | 6     | 5     | 8     | 1     | 5     | 6     |
| 5         | 4    | 6    | 3     | 5     | 6     | 2     | 8     | 2     | 5     | 6     |
| 6         | 4    | 3    | 3     | 5     | 6     | 5     | 8     | 2     | 5     | 6     |
| 7         | 4    | 6    | 3     | 5     | 6     | 5     | 8     | 2     | 5     | 6     |
| 8         | 5    | 4    | 2     | 5     | 1     | 5     | 3     | 3     | 4     | 4     |
| 9         | 1    | 4    | 2     | 5     | 1     | 5     | 2     | 3     | 4     | 6     |
| 10        | 5    | 4    | 2     | 5     | 1     | 5     | 2     | 3     | 2     | 6     |
| 11        | 6    | 5    | 1     | 6     | 5     | 4     | 5     | 4     | 3     | 2     |

| MST group       | Cox2     | Cox5 | Cox18 | Cox20 | Cox22 | Cox37 | Cox51     | Cox56 | Cox57 | Cox61 |
|-----------------|----------|------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-----------|-------|-------|-------|
| <b>Faunacox</b> | <b>3</b> |      |       | -     |       |       | <b>10</b> | -     |       |       |
| MST17           | 3        | 8    | 5     | 7     | 4     | 1     | 10        | 8     | 6     | 7     |
| MST75           | 3        | 14   | 6     | 6     | 5     | 4     | 10        | 21    | 14    | 5     |
| MST76           | 3        | 14   | 6     | 6     | 5     | 4     | 10        | 22    | 14    | 5     |
| MST82           | 3        | 8    | 1     | 6     | 3     | 4     | 10        | 9     | 6     | 3     |

| Strain name | Origin            | Geographic resource | MST group |
|-------------|-------------------|---------------------|-----------|
| CB175       | Human Heart Valve | French Guiana       | 17        |
| CB176       | Human Blood       | French Guiana       | 17        |
| CB179       | Human Blood       | French Guiana       | 17        |
| CB181       | Human Blood       | French Guiana       | 17        |
| CB182       | Human Blood       | French Guiana       | 17        |
| CB77        | Human Heart Valve | French Guiana       | 17        |
| NA          | Rodent            | Senegal             | 75        |
| NA          | Rodent            | Senegal             | 76        |
| E111        | Human Heart Valve | Iran                | 82        |

# Positive samples

---



*Collared peccary (Pecari tajacu)*



*Jaguar (Panthera onca) N=1*  
*Kinkajou (Potos flavus) N=1*



*Velvety free-tailed bat (Molossus molossus) N=1*  
*Seba's short-tailed bat ((Carollia perspicillata)) N=1*



*Common opossum (Didelphis marsupialis) N=4*  
*Gray four-eyed opossum (Philander opossum) N=1*



*Linne's two-toed sloth (Choloepus didactylus) N=1*



*Guianan squirrel monkey (Saimiri sciureus) N=3*  
*tufted capuchin (Sapajus apella) N=1*  
*Guyanese red howler (Alouatta macconnelli) N=2*



*Black rat (Rattus rattus) N=8*  
*Brown rat (Rattus norvegicus) N=1*  
*House mouse (Mus musculus) N=1*  
*Brazilian spiny tree-rat (Makalata didelphoides) (N=1)*  
*Guyenne spiny rat (Proechimys guyannensis) N=1*

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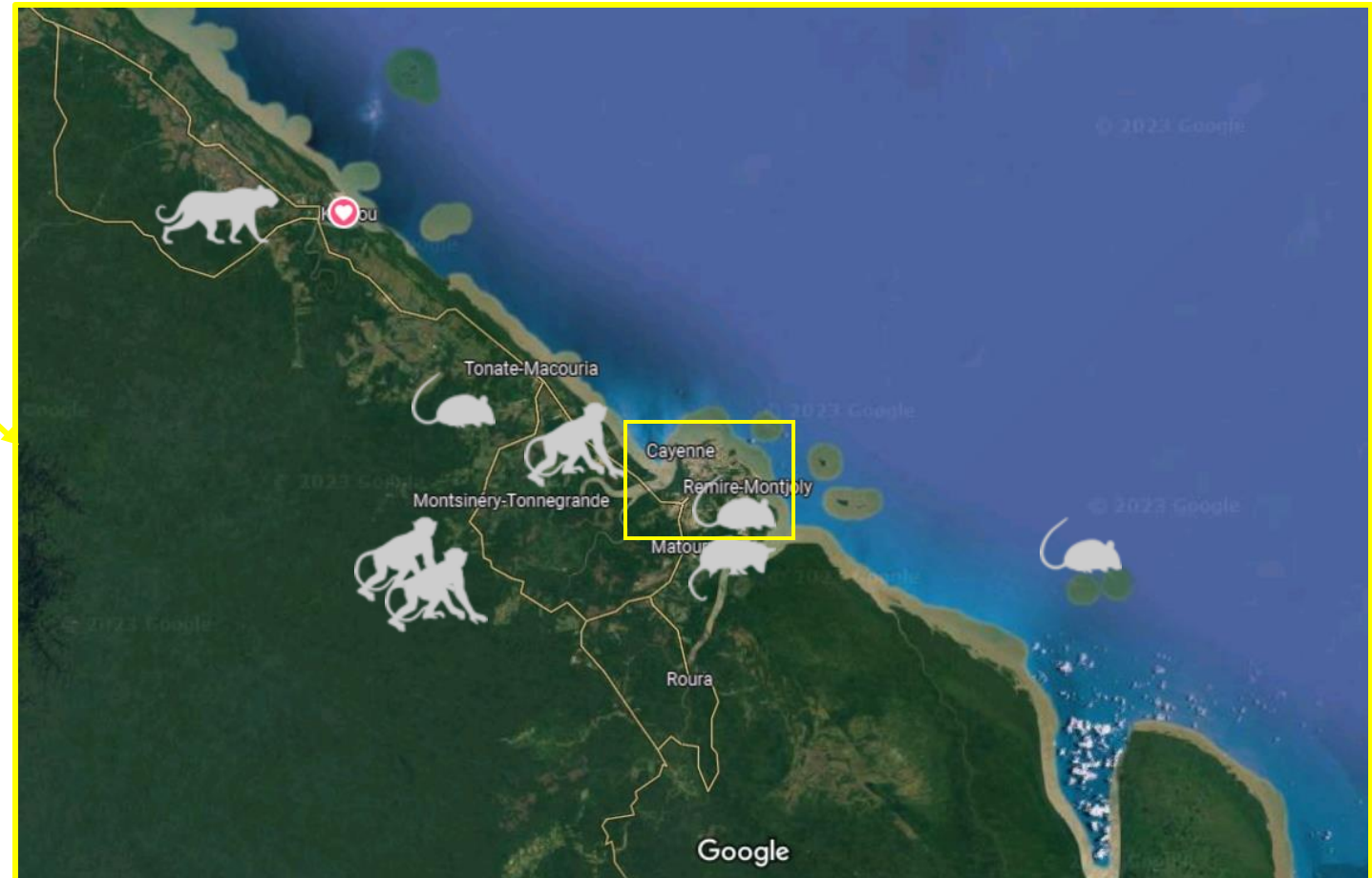
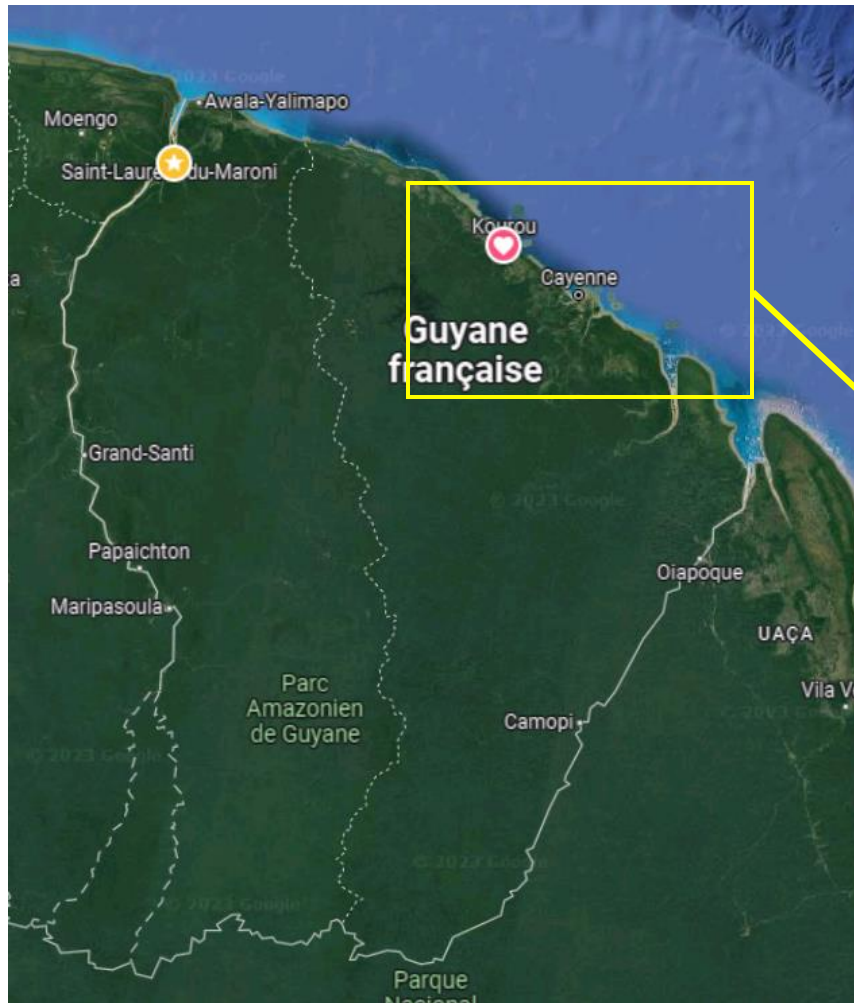




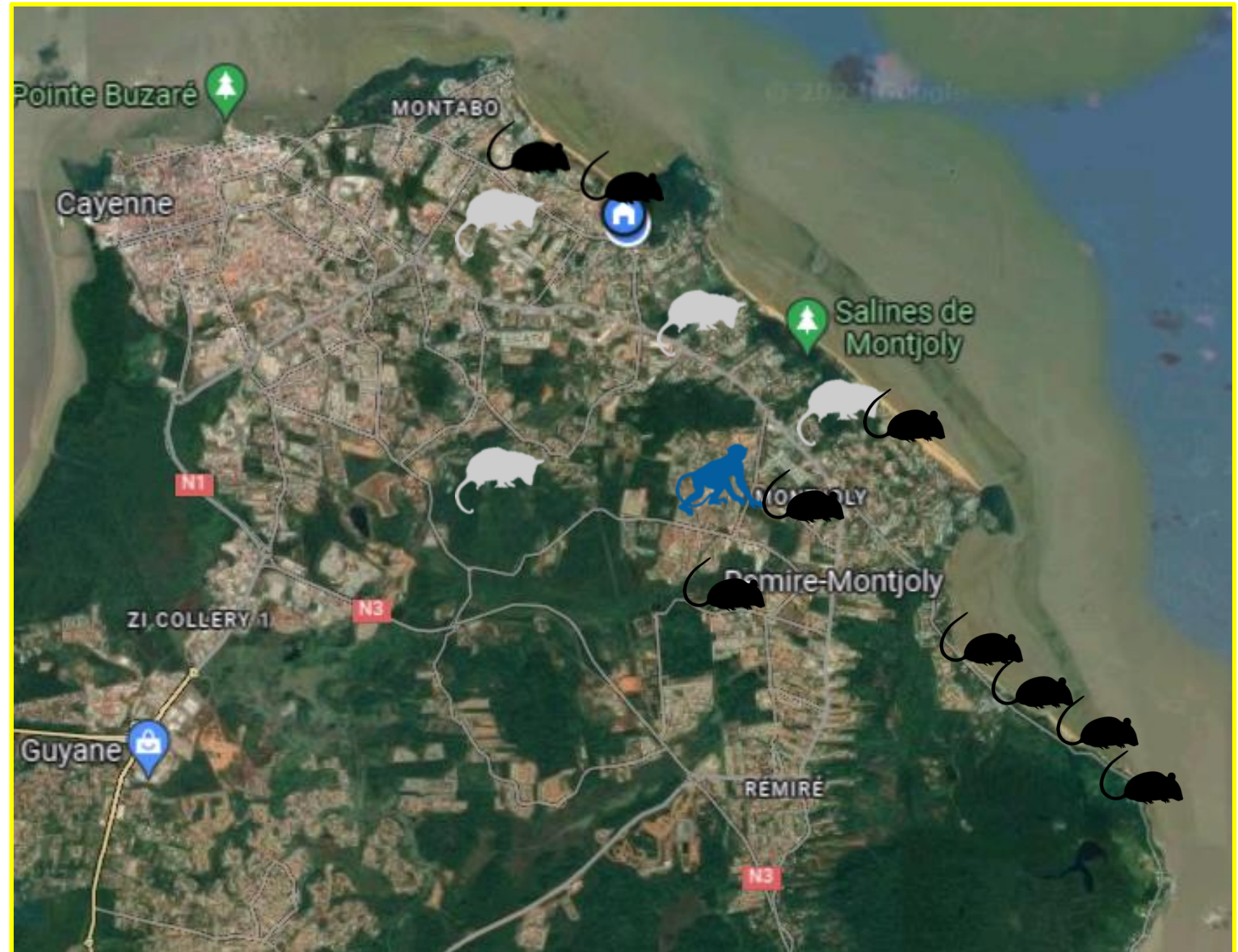
# Cycle Treshold and quantity of the positive results

| Individual | Organ                 | Species                       | Cycle treshold                    | Quantity (Ge/mg)               |
|------------|-----------------------|-------------------------------|-----------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| FQ-C228    | Stool                 | <i>Panthera onca</i>          | 35,36                             | 83,73                          |
| M5793      | Bladder               | <i>Didelphis marsupialis</i>  | 35,55                             | 2,8                            |
| v1254      | Liver, Kidney, Spleen | <i>Philander opossum</i>      | 32,22(Li)/31,09(K)/33,3-31,09 (S) | 144,6 (LI)/743,8(K)            |
| M5786      | Lung, Kidney, Spleen  | <i>Didelphis marsupialis</i>  | 35,21; 36,86; 36,89               | 3,52 (LU) / 2,84 (K), S (1,11) |
| M5794      | Kidney                | <i>Didelphis marsupialis</i>  | 36,37                             | 4                              |
| M5811      | Kidney                | <i>Saimiri sciureus</i>       | 38,67                             | 10,68                          |
| ZDG1-04    | Stool                 | <i>Saimiri sciureus</i>       | 38,68                             | 2,08                           |
| ZDG3-06    | Stool                 | <i>Sapajus apella</i>         | 36,57                             | 0,41                           |
| M5799      | Kidney                | <i>Saimiri sciureus</i>       | 38,6                              | 0,9                            |
| M5776      | Liver                 | <i>Rattus rattus</i>          | 37,92                             | 3,9                            |
| M5787      | Kidney                | <i>Mus musculus</i>           | 37,62                             | 0,6                            |
| RNC14      | Mu                    | <i>Rattus rattus</i>          | 37,05                             | 1                              |
| M1208      | Liver                 | <i>Proechimys guyannensis</i> | 36,6/40,16                        | 8,94/1,7                       |
| M1153      | Liver                 | <i>Makalata didelphoides</i>  | 39,13                             | 2,8                            |
| M5580      | Kidney, Liver         | <i>Rattus rattus</i>          | 36,6                              | 3,4 (K) / 0,2 (Li)             |
| M5581      | Liver                 | <i>Rattus rattus</i>          | 35,17                             | 3,648                          |
| M5585      | Bladder               | <i>Rattus rattus</i>          | 34,81                             | 4,7                            |
| M5780      | Spleen                | <i>Rattus rattus</i>          | 36,17                             | 1,8                            |
| M5791      | Kidney                | <i>Mus musculus</i>           | 37,01                             | 1                              |
| M5805      | Lung                  | <i>Rattus rattus</i>          | 36,41                             | 0,9                            |

# Distribution of positive animals in French Guiana

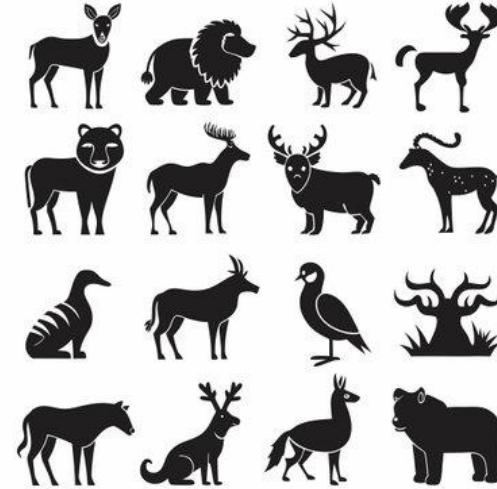


# Distribution of positive animals on Cayenne Island



# Conclusion

- 7 mammalian orders positive, 16 species
- All organs can be affected + faeces
- Different biotopes
- Free-ranging and captive animals
- Rodents +++
- Guyanese epidemiology probably not linked to a single species, although
  - Camp du Tigre = three-toed sloth
  - Carbet de la comté = capybara
- Role of these species and wildlife yet to be determined



**UNE SEULE SANTÉ**  
avec Loïc Epelboin

CAFÉ des SCIENCES

Réservoir animal de la fièvre Q en Amazonie et si le Pr Raoult s'était trompé ?

mardi 13 Août - 18h  
au café de la gare

La Canopée des Sciences  
www.ccs1973.fr



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Solène Lefort, André Chaumet



Margo Traimon



Matthieu Delfault

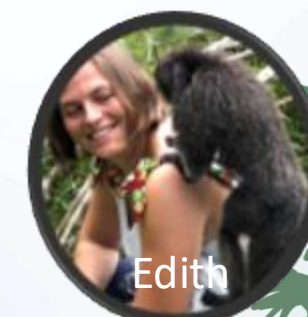


Jean-Philippe Magnone, Gaspard Schulz



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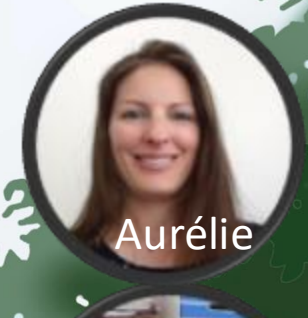
Frédégo nde About, Michaël Bau mann, Leila Beaux, Loïs Bouchet, Yves Antoine e Brice, Lia Byon de Noyer, Ann e Durand, Yannick Estevez, Bounty Galak, Alexandre Grandgeorge, Alexandre Grave, JF Guégan, Florian Jean ne, Yo ann Kibler, Marina Lamblin, Romane Lessieur, Au de Lucarelli, Lynn Luttringer, Patrick Malherbe, Priscia Monjo, Nathan, Paul in e, Amaury Perreon, Alizée Picault, Guillaume Quezel, Bénédicte Sauvage, Jungle Vet



Edith



BdT



Aurélie



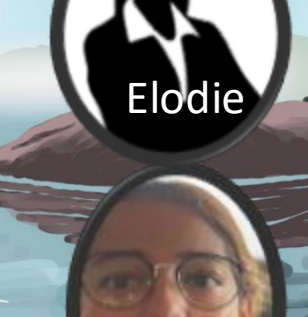
Mona



Anne



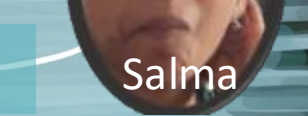
Dédé



Elodie



Antoine



Salma

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