

**Anthrax in the Delta**  
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Historical accounts suggest that anthrax was one of the plagues of Egypt in the days of the Pharaohs. This killing disease struck Desha County, Arkansas, during the summer of 1963, and an estimated 90 percent of the deer herd on Beulah Island died. At that time, a SCWDS field team that was in the area to examine deer witnessed many fires burning along the levee as cattle and horse carcasses were burned to prevent spread of infection. During June 1985, SCWDS received a report from Arkansas that anthrax had been diagnosed in cattle in close proximity to a high density deer population. This time the disease did not spread into the deer. Why in 1963 but not now? Perhaps the massive domestic livestock vaccination program sponsored by the Arkansas State Department of Agriculture and good deer management by the Arkansas Game and Fish Commission stopped spread of infection to prevent a recurrence of the catastrophic outbreak of 1963.