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*Large*

# Roundworms

of Poultry

➤ LIFE CYCLE

➤ SYMPTOMS

➤ CONTROL AND TREATMENT

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By  
Raymond F. Shumard  
Assistant Parasitologist  
and

Irving J. Mork  
Extension Poultryman

NDAC Extension Service, Fargo  
NORTH DAKOTA AGRICULTURAL COLLEGE



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# Large Roundworms of Poultry

Raymond F. Shumard, Assistant Parasitologist

Irving J. Mork, Extension Poultryman

**T**he large roundworm of poultry is one of many roundworms that affect our domestic birds. It is, however, the most widely distributed and most common roundworm in poultry.

## Life Cycle

Infected birds pass out worm eggs in the droppings. The young worms develop in the eggs in from 10 to 14 days. They may live in this stage for one year or longer. Other birds pick up and swallow the worm eggs. Worm development in the small intestine of the bird may produce slight bleeding. In very heavy infections, considerable destruction of the intestinal lining may occur. The worms develop to adults in about 50 days after being taken in by the birds.

## Symptoms

Light infections usually produce no outward symptoms. In heavy infections birds may become sluggish, lose their appetite, have diarrhea, lose weight and become anemic. The usual flock infections are light and, therefore, little or no symptoms are evident. This does not mean that the worms are not injuring the birds. Most of the damage probably results in lowered feed conversion efficiency.

## Control and Treatment

Efficient control and treatment depend on breaking the life cycle of the parasite. Customary recommendations of good sanitation and efficient culling cannot be emphasized too strongly.

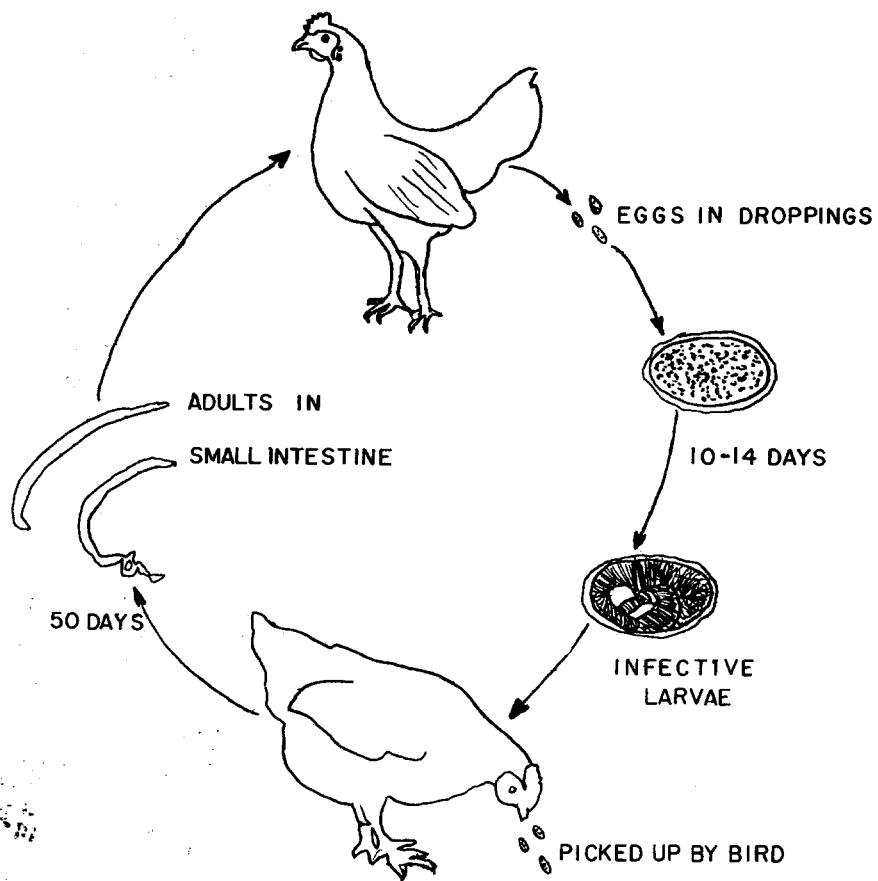
Direct sunlight for a period of 10 minutes or more will kill the worm eggs. Eggs are highly resistant to climatic changes other than conditions which freeze or dry the eggs.

The use of deep litter is not recommended when large roundworms are present. Although many of the worm eggs may be destroyed by the fermentive processes taking place in deep litter, many will survive. The more eggs you can remove, the fewer worms your birds will have.

On pasture, move your flock often and keep vegetation on unused pasture mowed so the worm eggs may be exposed to sunlight.

The safest and probably the most efficient drugs for removing large roundworms from poultry are the piperazines. These may be used in combination with other drugs or alone. The piperazines are easy to use (many can be given in drinking water) and have a low toxicity. Piperazine compounds do not remove other worms with much efficiency. For example, they will not remove cecal worms.

It is best to treat for roundworms every 40 to 50 days until control is effective.



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