

**TABLE 1.2**  
**Emerging Parasites of Potential Concern**

| Parasite name                                           | Concern                                                                                                                                                                                                                                | Signs of infection in dogs/cats                                                                                                                                                                                                                      | Treatment <sup>†</sup>                                                                                                                                                                                               |
|---------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b><i>Ancylostoma ceylanicum</i><sup>a,b</sup></b>      | Zoonotic canine hookworm in the Caribbean. May be introduced into the United States.                                                                                                                                                   | Diarrhea, anemia, and hypoproteinemia                                                                                                                                                                                                                | Products efficacious against <i>Ancylostoma caninum</i> (e.g., fenbendazole, MLs, and pyrantel pamoate)                                                                                                              |
| <b><i>Angiostrongylus cantonensis</i><sup>c,d</sup></b> | Zoonotic rat lungworm transmitted by snails and slugs. Can incidentally infect dogs. Detection in southeastern United States.                                                                                                          | Ataxia, pain, ascending paralysis, hind-limb weakness, hyperesthesia, urinary incontinence, and muscle atrophy                                                                                                                                       | Supportive care (e.g., analgesics and corticosteroids); fenbendazole or MLs may be efficacious                                                                                                                       |
| <b><i>Angiostrongylus vasorum</i><sup>e,f</sup></b>     | French heartworm of dogs and wildlife, transmitted by snails and slugs. Occasionally diagnosed in North America. Endemic in Eastern Canada.                                                                                            | Coughing, dyspnea, lethargy, coagulopathy, and weight loss                                                                                                                                                                                           | Fenbendazole, milbemycin, moxidectin; some products available in North America have label claims for this parasite in other regions.                                                                                 |
| <b><i>Dirofilaria repens</i><sup>g,h</sup></b>          | Zoonotic, subcutaneous filariid of canids transmitted by mosquitoes. Rare diagnoses in the United States.                                                                                                                              | Subclinical or cold and painless nodules containing parasites in skin                                                                                                                                                                                | Topically applied moxidectin or selamectin are likely efficacious; products are licensed in some European countries. Nodule removal by surgery or aspiration.                                                        |
| <b><i>Hepatozoon americanum</i><sup>i</sup></b>         | Protozoan transmitted by the Gulf Coast tick ( <i>Amblyomma maculatum</i> ). Potential cause of myositis in dogs.                                                                                                                      | Altered gait, bilateral mucopurulent ocular discharge, decreased tear production, cachexia, generalized weakness and reluctance to move, muscle atrophy, lethargy, and painfulness                                                                   | Ponazuril or combination of trimethoprim–sulfadiazine, clindamycin, and pyrimethamine; long-term use of decoquinatone is typically needed to prevent relapse. Nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs may be necessary. |
| <b><i>Leishmania infantum</i><sup>h,j</sup></b>         | Zoonotic protozoan of dogs transmitted by sand flies with occasional, but increasing, recognition in the southern United States.                                                                                                       | Highly variable depending on location of parasite; ulcerative cutaneous lesions, alopecia, nodules, hyperkeratosis, severe dermatitis, conjunctivitis, weight loss, weakness, muscle atrophy, lameness, epistaxis, hematuria, vomiting, and diarrhea | Meglumine antimoniate or miltefosine in combination with allopurinol                                                                                                                                                 |
| <b><i>Leishmania mexicana</i><sup>k</sup></b>           | Zoonotic protozoan transmitted by sand flies causing cutaneous lesions in cats in the southern United States.                                                                                                                          | Cutaneous nodules, scales, erosions, or ulcers typically on pinnae or muzzle                                                                                                                                                                         | Allopurinol, meglumine antimoniate, miltefosine, or artemisinin                                                                                                                                                      |
| <b><i>Onchocerca lupi</i><sup>l,m,n</sup></b>           | Zoonotic nematode of the eye transmitted by flies. Increasing diagnoses in dogs and cats in the southwestern United States. Infection reported in Alberta and Prince Edward Island, Canada associated with dog importation and travel. | Subclinical or ocular nodules in conjunctiva, sclera, or eyelids with resulting inflammation                                                                                                                                                         | Surgical removal of worms from nodules, melarsomine, ivermectin, topical antibiotics, and corticosteroids                                                                                                            |
| <b><i>Thelazia callipaeda</i><sup>b,o</sup></b>         | Zoonotic eyeworm transmitted by flies. Occasionally diagnosed in dogs and cats in the northeastern United States and a case in the southwest United States.                                                                            | Subclinical or conjunctivitis, blepharitis, epiphora, periocular pruritus, or keratitis                                                                                                                                                              | Saline flush to remove worms; MLs appear to be efficacious                                                                                                                                                           |

(Continued on next page)

**TABLE 1.2, CONTINUED**  
**Emerging Parasites of Potential Concern**

\*Most treatments are extralabel use. Consult a specialist for assistance with diagnosis, reporting, and additional treatment information.  
 ML, macrocyclic lactone.

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- k. Hopke K, Meyers A, Auckland L, et al. *Leishmania mexicana* in a central Texas cat: clinical presentation, molecular identification, sandfly vector collection and novel management. *JFMS Open Rep*. 2021;7(1):2055116921999595.
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- n. Roe CC, Yaglom H, Howard A, et al. Coyotes as reservoirs for *Onchocerca lupi*, United States, 2015–2018. *Emerg Infect Dis* 2020;26(12):2989–93.
- o. Manoj RRS, White H, Young R, et al. Emergence of thelaziosis caused by *Thelazia callipaeda* in dogs and cats, United States. *Emerg Infect Dis* 2024;30(3):591–4.

**2026 AAHA One Health Guidelines: Emerging Concerns in Canine and Feline Parasitology are available at [aaha.org/one-health-parasitology](https://aaha.org/one-health-parasitology)**

These guidelines were prepared by a Task Force of experts convened by the American Animal Hospital Association (AAHA) and were subjected to a formal peer-review process. This document is intended as a guideline only, not an AAHA standard of care. These guidelines and recommendations should not be construed as dictating an exclusive protocol, course of treatment, or procedure. Variations in practice may be warranted based on the needs of the individual patient, resources, and limitations unique to each individual practice setting. ©2026 AAHA.

