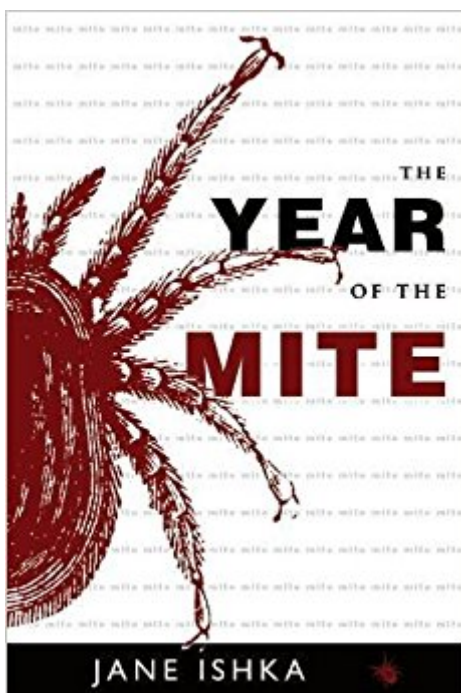


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# The Year Of The Mite



## Synopsis

All it took was a few baby chicks and a carpeted floor, and soon, Jane Ishka, a San Francisco Bay Area homesteader, literally felt her skin crawling. She and her house, her car, and all of her belongings had been infested by the red poultry mite, *Dermanyssus gallinae*. Driven from her home and bed by the biting and itching, Jane used her scientific background to figure out what was wrong, and most importantly, how to fix it.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Jane Ishka is a biotechnology professional living in Berkeley, California. Her work is typically read by FDA reviewers, who have approved everything from prostate cancer assays to an implantable glucose monitor based on her regulatory filings. She plays the steel drum and is a collage artist.

Year of the mite is an amazing, and scientifically backed story. The new 'bed bug' is here--the 21st century plague, the parasitic blood-feeding mite. As a family who has gone through a mite infestation for over a year, we have seen it all. Jane Ishka has captured our anguish perfectly in the book, detailing entirely what happened to her and her family during a mite infestation. The traumatic reality (which entomologists need to catch up on and for some reason haven't) of a mite infestation is of true devastation: Thousands of dollars can be spent, insurance doesn't recognize it as a catastrophe, real estate is lost and drops in value, skin can be damaged, and psychological and physical trauma/scarring result. Clothing and possessions are lost. Normal, rational people even

resort to dangerous internal remedies to keep mites at bay because their doctors and entomologists have failed them. Victims must isolate themselves as mites easily and quickly spread. Relationships are deeply affected, and families torn apart by something that has no official 'treatment' and as poultry farmers can attest, can only be 'managed.' As someone who has lost everything to a mite infestation, the danger lies in everything all around us now: from wild birds nesting on houses, to pet birds, and even rats. There is not enough literature warning of the very dangerous reality of ectoparasites. But this book does an amazing job of explaining that, and showing readers every aspect to the problem, including that there is little to no psychological counsel for victims of mite infestations or help for affected individuals and it can literally happen to anyone. This is an extremely dangerous public health issue.

I started at 9 am, (four hours ago) intending to read for an hour -I just finished it! A gripping account of the author's personal experience of being infested with the virtually unknown red chicken mite. You will learn how these parasites can form incredibly resistant host colonies in and on the human body, and its devastating effects. As mother of a toddler and wife to a man, then her twenty year marriage to a woman, adoption, and two divorces, Ms. Ishka tells with brutal honesty, the year she faced the herculean battle to rid her body of the invader that was ruining her life. Filled with scientific details, up to date research, support and resources, *The Year of the Mite* is forthright and compelling to say the least. But it's Ms. Ishka's deep sense of compassion for life, her honesty and her generosity, that keeps you turning the pages.

What a fascinating story of real life perseverance and investigative science writing. I also follow Jane's posts on FB and on her blog where she continues to develop the main thrust of her book: namely that science says that what happened to her and others like her is impossible (there are a couple of exceptions who helped her out with understanding and interest), and therefore they are delusional. I enjoyed the writing style, personal and precise, and, no doubt, cathartic for Jane. The personal life story that "cannot happen" as experienced by a scientist is both fascinating and awe inspiring. Jane's determination to cure the mite infestation and to explain the "how" in an approachable scientific way. Easily consumed by non-science readers, the book includes the invaluable 'Mite Protocols' that will be useful to anyone who is fighting mite infestation.

This is an important book about the under-recognized problem of mite infestation. Last September, something we couldn't see started biting us in our home, and we thought it was mosquitos until the

weather turned cold. Then, after researching online, we realized that we probably had microscopic mites left over from an earlier mouse infestation. Before this experience, we had no idea that a few species of animal mites sometimes attack humans. As the book explains, mites can be difficult to catch, and the bites affect some people worse than others. Many individuals may be unaware of an infestation because the bites don't bother them. For people who are sensitive to the bites, however, an infestation can be an ordeal, as Ishka attests. Because the effects of the bites may mimic other physical and emotional conditions, sufferers are often misdiagnosed; so the problem may be more common than many doctors and even entomologists realize. We need more public awareness about mite infestations to stimulate research for better diagnostic techniques and miticides than are currently available. Many thanks to Ms. Ishka for her intelligent narrative, dry humor, and wise coping strategies. She has inspired me to do a lot of work around the house to make the place less hospitable to mites.

I cannot thank Jane Ishka enough for this book! If you are dealing with bird mites (or ever did in the past), I highly recommend reading this book for both your sanity and education. I took comfort in every word of it! I also urge anyone battling bird mites to go immediately to Jane Ishka's website. It is by far the best source of protocols on getting rid of bird mites. I fully credit Jane for my success with finally getting rid of these things. I'm only sad that I didn't find her sooner. I had to deal with them at my house, my husband's house, and my office (I was in deep). Had I found her website and book sooner, I could have saved a lot of time, sanity and money. It takes a heartbreaking amount of work, but the sooner you come to terms with the reality of it, stop doubting yourself, and strongly request the cooperation of those in your life, the sooner you will be able to work through it. It has been an incredibly humbling experience, and I am so grateful to Jane for taking the time to share her experience, invaluable list of protocols and continued research!

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