

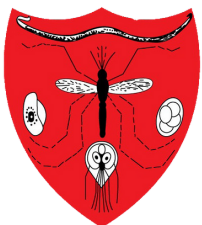
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Cover Illustration

Tick Espresso: Nature's Little Blood-Filled 'Beans'

By Dr. Tan Li Peng, Universiti Malaysia Kelantan, Malaysia

Here we have a gourmet selection of “coffee beans” that you definitely wouldn’t want in your morning brew! These are actually ticks – *Rhipicephalus* sp., fully engorged after feasting on an unsuspecting host, plumping up like nature’s little blood balloons. Their shiny, bean-like appearance might fool a caffeine lover from afar, but these “beans” pack a whole different kind of buzz—potential diseases! Perfectly roasted by the sun and filled to the brim, these tick “lattes” remind us that not all beans are brewed equally.

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