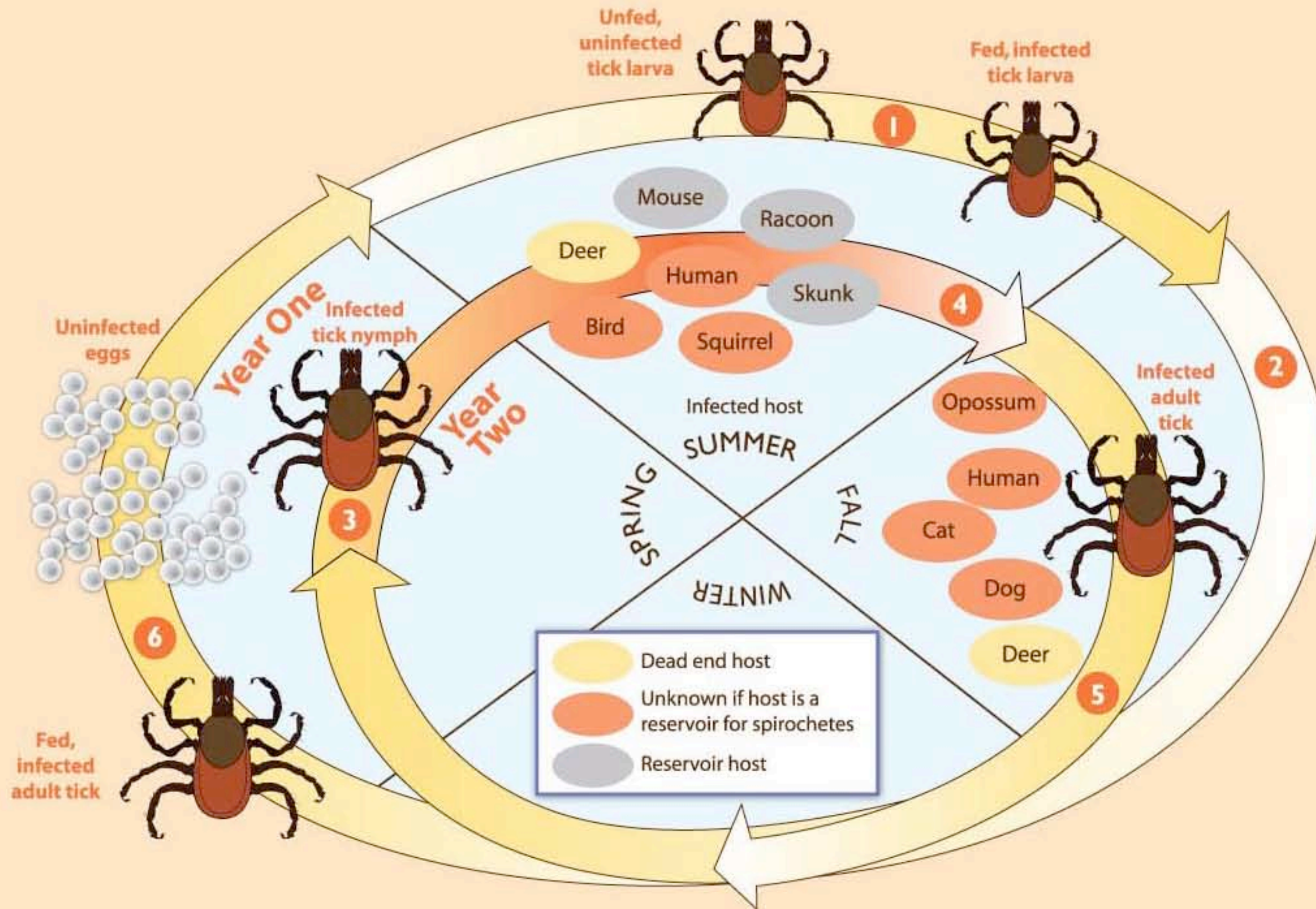


# Two-year Life Cycle of the Deer Tick



The deer tick — *Ixodes scapularis* — lives its two-year life cycle in four stages, from egg to larva to nymph to adult. Each spring the larvae emerge from eggs that were laid the previous fall. These pinhead-sized, six-legged larvae must have a blood meal to grow into

nymphs. In fact, each tick will need a new blood meal to advance to the next stage of its life. Because Lyme disease is transmitted to the tick through the blood of its host, the host's life cycle is closely tied to the life cycle of the tick.