

Mosquitoes appear after spring rains

Mosquito season is about ready to zoom in on unsuspecting campers and backyard nature lovers.

That's the word buzzing around the Oakland County Health Division, 27725 Greenfield, Southfield.

Part of the method for defeating the little pests is knowing their living habits.

A group of related species known as floodwater mosquitoes is nearing the completion of larval stage of development at this time. Among them are several types suspected as transmitters of viral diseases from birds and animals to humans and of heartworms to dogs.

The occurrence of these diseases has been sporadic in the state, causing a great deal of concern during certain years.

The presence of these mosquitoes never goes unnoticed, since they include the most aggressive and persistent biting pests.

The term floodwater refers to the type of breeding sites exploited by these insects. Typical breeding sites are found in woodlands and fields where depressions in the ground fill

with water which usually dries up before fall.

These temporary bodies of water offer particular advantages for creatures like mosquitoes which require water only during their relatively brief larval stage.

Fish and aquatic organisms which prey on mosquito larvae are absent from these pools because they are unable to survive the periods of drought. The mosquitoes can complete their larval development unchecked by predators and having to share the food and living space with only a few other kinds of animals.

Roadside ditches, tire tracks from off-road vehicles and artificial containers, such as an old tire or tin can, can offer similar conditions.

Female mosquitoes of the floodwater type deposit their eggs on moist soil near the edge of receding pools of water. Eggs laid during the summer months remain inactive in the soil, capable of surviving drought and freezing until they are submerged by rising water levels. For many species, this dormant egg stage will last until

the following spring but may last through several years of low rainfall.

The hatching of flooded eggs is often sequential. As waters rise, more and more eggs become active and hatch. But development soon becomes synchronized so that typical pools will contain tremendous numbers of larvae, all at the same stage of development.

This leads to a period of warm weather in the latter part of May, when astronomical numbers of adult mosquitoes emerge from the water and begin to seek out blood meals.

ADULT female mosquitoes mate and feed during specific periods of the day or night and rest during the remainder of the 24-hour cycle. Resting places must provide shelter from wind and predators. Trees, shrubs and tall grasses are usual resting sites as

well as structures such as the eaves of houses or barns housing livestock.

Where sufficient hosts are not present, many mosquito species can migrate many miles to find their food. Since they are prolific breeders, it takes only a few to insure their continued existence.

Several species which readily bite humans never stray from breeding areas adjacent to residential lands or woodlands or fields. They persist as active feeding adults throughout the warm weather months. But the species capable of migration are also abundant and may become very numerous in densely populated areas 20 or more miles from any known breeding sites. During the season there are a few people who manage to remain untouched by biting mosquitoes.

EMU confers degrees

Eastern Michigan University students from Farmington and Farmington Hills recently received degrees from the school based in Ypsilanti.

Those from Farmington receiving degrees were: David Balint, 32729 Meadowlark, BS; Vicki Lynn Haller, 35432 Heritage Lane, BSA; Kim David Jaske, 21243 Robinwood, BBA; Kevin Bernard Pardo, 21107 Meadowlark, BS; and Douglas Phillip Pozniak, 33209

Shiawassee, BBA.

Those from Farmington Hills were: Deborah Lynn Anderson, 35402 Sky Drive, BS; Emil Raoul Benoit, 2450 Glen Orchard Drive, BBA; Ruth Evelyn Brown, 21461 Oxford, BS; Fara Beth D'Angelo, 2142 Hystone, BS; Dorothy Frances Dore, 30151 Gladstone, BS; Joann Marie Koscielniak, 35005 Thirteen Mile, BS; and Debra Marie Lynn, 21315 Rensselaer, BS.

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