West Millard Mosquitoes Abatement News

2018

Typically, around the first of August is when the Mosquito Abatement Districts find mosquitoes with West Nile Virus in their traps. In 2017 the trapped mosquitoes sorted on August 2 had West Nile Virus in them. In 2018, West Nile Virus has been found in Box Elder County, Davis County, Duchesne County, Salt Lake County, and on the Ute Indian Reservation. In the boundaries of the West Millard Mosquito Abatement District this year, the numbers of mosquitoes capable of replicating the virus are down because of the drought. There are places dry this year that have not been dry before. This does not mean that there will be no West Nile Virus this year. West Nile Virus is passed to mosquitoes by birds. When water is scarce birds and mosquitoes congregate to the same water sources. When a viral bird is at the water source the mosquitoes will take blood from the bird and pass it to the rest of the birds at the sight. In a short time, all the birds and all the mosquitoes at the site have West Nile Virus. When most of the mosquitoes have the virus, the likelihood of getting the virus from a single bite is greatly magnified. Please be careful when you are outside in the evening and in the morning. These West Nile Virus carrying mosquitoes do not bite in the midday.

By far the most abundant mosquitoes in the District are flood water mosquitoes. There are several different species of flood water mosquitoes in the district. They do not carry West Nile Virus, but they can be annoying biters. These mosquitoes will lay eggs in the vegetation and mud as water dries out. When the water dries out as has done in many of the open drains this year, the mosquitoe eggs in the drain will hatch out the next time the farmer irrigates. These eggs will hatch in great numbers. The period from egg to adult mosquito usually takes five to seven days in the hot weather. This gives the abatement district time to kill most of them in the water before they become a problem. This year the District has found a new mosquito in the traps that has not been recorder in the area since trapping started in 2002. This mosquito is called *Psorophora signipennis.* This new variety takes only four to five days to become an adult giving the district a shortened window to kill them.

When workers treat the water in the drainage diches usually they can drive the drain and spray from the truck. However, in recent years, many of the drains have become overgrown with brush and tamarisks making it very difficult for the spray to get into the water. Many of the landowners have good roads and have kept the vegetation down on their drainage diches. This has helped a great deal. The district is thankful for any help we can get that promotes access to the drains. We ask landowners to please help us out if you can.

Female mosquitoes must have a blood meal to reproduce. They find the blood meal by following CO2 to their victim. The District uses CO2 bated traps to catch mosquitoes. One reason mosquitoes are trapped is to test the trapped mosquitoes for diseases. Another reason is to find out where the mosquitoes are abundant so that the ultra-low volume (fogging) machines can spray them in the evening after the bees have gone to bed. The district cannot send out the sprayers without documentation of where the mosquitoes are. The trapping helps greatly to collect information for documentation, but the traps cannot be placed everywhere. It helps us a great deal if the constituents of the district will call and make service requests. We are often not in the office, so please just leave a message and unless the wind is blowing, the fogger should be able to get to your area fairly quickly.

In summary: (1) West Nile Virus can still be a threat even with low mosquito numbers.

(2) There is a new mosquito in the area *Phorophora signipennis.*

(3) Landowners can do a great deal to help the abatement district by creating access to the water source areas.

(4) Please request help from the district when you have abundant mosquitoes.

Thank you

West Millard Mosquito Abatement District

Eldon Rowley, Manager