

DRAGON MOSQUITO CONTROL

July 2017 UPDATE

Last year's drought and the subsequent water restrictions prompted me to invest in a rain barrel for my garden this summer. Today most rain barrels are designed to exclude mosquitoes from laying eggs thereby eliminating a potential mosquito breeding habitat. I keep a close eye on my watering can and other garden items that hold water to make sure no mosquito larvae are present.

Mosquitoes are well adapted to manmade containers that hold water. Buckets, boats, trash cans and dog bowls all provide a breeding habitat for mosquito larvae in our yard. Every town has catch basins or storm drains along the side of the road or in parking lots. Many hold water in a sump at the bottom of the basin which has become a favorite breeding habitat for a number of mosquito species. This year, the number of mosquito larvae found in these catch basins is very high. In some towns, 90% of the catch basins have mosquito larvae. Treatment to control catch basin mosquitoes has been completed or is nearly complete. The four species of mosquitoes found in the basins are capable of carrying West Nile Virus (WNV) and Eastern Equine Encephalitis (EEE).

Surveillance of adult mosquitoes is conducted weekly at fixed sites throughout town using three different types of traps. Mosquitoes are collected, frozen, sorted and identified to species. Select species are sent to the State lab in Concord. The State Lab tests the adult mosquitoes each week for WNV and EEE. Currently, no WNV or EEE has been found in New Hampshire. Neighboring Massachusetts has seen many cases of WNV in mosquitoes this season.

This is the time of year when diseases like WNV and EEE start showing up in mosquitoes so it's important to avoid mosquito bites. Use repellent. Wear long sleeves and long pants. Make sure the screens at your house fit well and have no holes. In areas that receive occasional thunderstorms, mosquitoes can hatch within 5-7 days. Be sure to empty water from containers in your yard. Be vigilant to reduce your exposure to mosquitoes.

Sincerely,

Sarah MacGregor

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