

INVASIVE MOSQUITOES

What mosquitoes are invasive?

Certain *Aedes* mosquitoes are not native to Washington, and when introduced, may spread rapidly. Two species of concern, *Aedes aegypti* and *Aedes albopictus*, are known carriers of Zika, dengue, chikungunya, and yellow fever viruses. Though these mosquitoes are not present in Washington state, other recently introduced invasive *Aedes* species have become established here.

How can they get here?

Invasive *Aedes* mosquitoes lay eggs in natural locations, such as tree holes and plant axils, as well as artificial containers that can hold water. Commercial shipping of water-holding containers and plants, both international and within the country, can transport mosquitoes into new areas. Past findings of *Aedes albopictus* determined that mosquito larvae arrived in Washington via cargo containers of lucky bamboo plants.

Where would I find them?

Check water-holding containers and plants for mosquitoes in their immature life stages – eggs, larvae, and pupae. Common mosquito breeding sources include flowerpot saucers, tires, kiddie pools, rooted plants in water, containers or buckets, and pet water bowls. Adult mosquitoes bite people and animals, so they tend to stay close to homes or in neighboring woods. Both *Aedes albopictus* and *Aedes aegypti* are daytime biters.

Mosquito Control

- Check your yard for containers that collect water. Throw away or recycle containers that are not needed.
- Cover or turn over empty containers and large objects—buckets, barrels, wheelbarrows, boats, and old appliances that must be stored. Or place under a roof to keep them from filling with water.
- Clean and scrub bird baths and pet dishes weekly.
- Dump water from overflowing saucers under potted plants and flowerpots.
- Clean clogged gutters and cover rain barrels with mosquito screens.
- Fill or drain areas in your yard where water can pool.

What can I do to help?

Take steps to control mosquitoes inside and outside of your home. Be on the watch for invasive *Aedes aegypti* and *Aedes albopictus* mosquitoes. Report any sightings to the Washington State Department of Health, Zoonotic and Vector-borne Disease Program at 206-418-5500 or zd@doh.wa.gov.

How to prevent mosquito bites:

- Wear long sleeves, long pants, and light-colored, loose-fitting clothing when mosquitoes are most active.
- Properly apply an EPA-registered repellent with an active ingredient like DEET, picaridin, IR3535, oil of lemon-eucalyptus, or 2-undecanone.
- Repair or replace window and door screens to keep out mosquitoes.

How do I distinguish *Aedes aegypti* and *Aedes albopictus* from native species?

Aedes albopictus

Small, dark mosquito with a white dorsal stripe and banded legs.



Aedes aegypti

Small, dark mosquito with a white lyre-shaped marking and banded legs.



Egg



Female *Aedes aegypti* and *Aedes albopictus* lay black eggs above the water line on the inner walls of water-holding containers.

Larva



Larvae hatch when water inside the container covers the eggs. They feed on organic matter and microorganisms.

Adult

Pupa



Pupae change into adult mosquitoes. When development is complete, the pupal skin splits and the adult emerges.



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