

With the summer slipping away and even the feel of autumn in the air, it is tempting to think the mosquito season is also coming to an end. Fortunately, in spite of an extraordinarily wet spring, careful placement of larvicide and judicious and timely treatment of adult mosquitoes have controlled the populations “in most locations, most of the time”. But now is not the time to let your guard down. About mid-August the concerns for mosquito borne diseases tend to increase. Thus it’s important to know the roles of the BLSG, the Vermont Departments of Agriculture and Health and the general public in reducing both the nuisance and the health risks of late season mosquitoes.

The BLSG Insect Control District’s (BLSG) mission is to address mosquitos and other biting flies as nuisance pests. The BLSG sets adult mosquito traps in over 70 potential sites during the season. People often stop to inquire about the traps and ask about testing for viruses that mosquitos can carry. The BLSG does not currently test for arboviruses such as West Nile Virus (WNV) or Eastern Equine Encephalitis (EEE) which may be carried by mosquitos. The BLSG monitors the numbers of mosquitos and identifies the specific species of mosquitos that are caught in the adult mosquito traps. Some mosquito species are considered vector species, meaning they have the potential to carry certain diseases. The BLSG maintains records of the identified species and is aware of areas that breed potential vector mosquitos. As part of the Integrated Pest Management Plan, the BLSG target’s areas prone to potential vector mosquitos. The Department of Agriculture, in conjunction with the Department of Health, currently survey the entire state for WNV/EEE prevalence. Information about their important programs can be found at the following website: <https://agriculture.vermont.gov/public-health-agricultural-resource-management-division/plant-health-and-pest-management-2>

Both WNV and EEE are viruses that are carried by birds and then transmitted to vector mosquitos when the female mosquito feeds on an infected bird. Historically, The Department of Agriculture has identified positive pools of WNV from mid-July thru the end of the season. The EEE was mostly identified during the same seasonal period, but was last reported in 2014.

Based on this information the BLSG encourages residents to be more vigilant about the prevention of mosquito bites during the end of the mosquito season. This includes wearing long sleeves and pants, using insect repellent according to the label directions, keeping screens free of rips, tears or holes and eliminating all standing water. If you have a localized mosquito problem on your property within the BLSG District you can always call the District (247-6779) to request that your property be inspected and/or treated for mosquitos or biting flies.