

Commonly Found Mosquito Species in Gem County

Anopheles

Anopheles freeborni, the Western Malaria Mosquito, overwinters in sheltered locations and emerges in early spring. The species is one of the first biters of the season, attacking when the air is still cold. They bite freely from dusk to dawn. Females lay eggs in permanent water sources associated with poor irrigation practices.

Aedes

Aedes vexans, the Inland Floodwater Mosquito, overwinters in the egg stage and there are generally one or more broods per season. Irrigation practices with poor drainage suits this species well. The females feed in shady places during the day and can be particularly annoying at dusk and after dark. They are troublesome biters and have a flight range of 1 to 5 miles.

Culiseta

Culiseta inornata, the Winter Marsh Mosquito, prefers to feed on larger mammals, and at times, is very troublesome to livestock. Active biting by this mosquito can occur during the fall. Dusk is the most common time for biting activity. They are active flyers and can disperse 5 to 10 miles from their emergence sites.

Culex

Culex pipiens, the Northern House Mosquito, is named so because of its close association with human habitation. The species is considered a domesticated mosquito species because of this close association. It is a multi-brood mosquito and eggs are laid in rafts in temporary and permanent sites, such as catch basins, retention ponds, road side ditches, and any open container where water may hold for ten days or longer. Birds are the preferred hosts for this mosquito. *Culex pipiens* is a vector of WEE, SLE, and WNV.

Culex tarsalis, the Western Encephalitis Mosquito, overwinters in protected places such as cellars, outbuildings, culverts, animal burrows and other sheltered locations. Upon emerging, the female seeks a blood meal to mature her eggs. Preferred development sites include temporary to permanent water sites such as marshes, waste irrigation water, ditches, retention ponds, catch basins, and open containers. Females are persistent biters and prefer birds in the spring, then later turn to mammals and humans as a source for a blood meal. *Culex tarsalis* is a vector of WEE, SLE, and WNV.

Ochlerotatus

Ochlerotatus nigromaculis, the Irrigated Pasture Mosquito, is a common pest mosquito of the agricultural communities and surrounding areas of southern Idaho. It is a ferocious biter, inflicting a painful bite. It is a strong flyer and may migrate several miles from its development site. The primary habitat of this species has been largely created by agriculture, irrigated pastures are the most common development sites. The winter is passed in the egg stage with hatching occurring within hours of flooding. This mosquito species is capable of transmitting WEE, SLE, and California encephalitis virus.