

Mosquito Control Update

December 8, 2009

Cooler temperatures in November caused a decrease in mosquito biting activity. When temperatures fall below approximately 55 degrees F., adult mosquitoes become relatively inactive. This was the case for most days in November, because by sunset temperatures fell to the mid 50's and below. As a result, spraying to control adult mosquitoes is not effective. Biting activity was mostly limited to about two hours before sunset and a couple of hours at midmorning. The primary mosquito species involved were *Aedes vexans* and *Aedes sollicitans*, floodwater breeding mosquitoes that resulted from rainfall in October and early November. Ground adulticiding was mainly limited during the daytime in areas where field inspectors encountered these mosquitoes while taking landing rates. One aerial adulticide treatment was employed during the first week of November along the southern coast of the parish. Larviciding of roadside ditches continued throughout the month for the control of the southern house mosquito. Gravid trap collections and larval breeding indexes indicated very low populations of this species.

A total of 60 mosquito pools were tested for the presence of West Nile virus and one returned positive. The positive pool was in the southern house mosquito collected from the Mandeville area. Only nine mosquitoes were collected in the positive pool. As temperatures continue to get cooler, fewer adult mosquitoes will be attracted to the traps for collection.

Winter activities involving preventative maintenance and repairs of vehicles, sprayers and equipment have been outlined and began at the end of November. These activities will continue through the winter.