

## **Mosquito Control Update** **March 5, 2012**

Mosquito activity requiring control measures has arrived earlier than usual. Normally, mosquito control operations get into full swing after the 15<sup>th</sup> of March or later. Weather conditions over the past two to three months have set the stage for highly productive early season mosquito populations. The mild winter and timely rainfalls have been responsible for the increase in mosquito production.

Floodwater mosquito species have been at their highest level for this time of year in recent memory. *Aedes vexans*, the inland floodwater mosquito, has emerged in sizeable numbers in several locations throughout the parish. Mosquito control officials have treated many of the breeding sites with methoprene, an insect growth regulator, with success; however, the problem is so widespread that it is not practical to treat all the sites. The floodwater species, *Psorophora ferox* and *Aedes canadensis*, have also been a problem in selected areas of the parish, especially in low lying wooded locations. The southern house mosquito, *Culex quinquefasciatus*, initially had very high counts; however, larviciding of the roadside ditches where this mosquito breeds has drastically reduced the numbers. The salt marsh mosquito, *Aedes sollicitans*, also has emerged as a problem species, mainly along the coastal areas of the parish.

Late winter and early spring is one of the most difficult times of the year to control adult mosquitoes, due to frequent adverse weather such as high winds, cool nighttime temperatures, and periodic fog. Two aerial adulticide treatments were successfully performed last week, however two nights were canceled due to high winds. The insecticide label does not permit the application of aerosol sprays when winds are in excess of 10 miles per hour. Ground ULV spray trucks were employed on three nights last week. Six larvicide crews have been busy 5 days a week treating the roadside ditches for the control of the southern house mosquito. It is expected that more aerial and ground treatments for the control of adult mosquitoes will be required this week, hopefully the weather conditions will be favorable for performing these tasks.