

Mosquito Larvae Identification and Prevention



Mosquito larvae at the water's surface

A mosquito does not spend all of its life as a flying insect. Most of its life is spent in aquatic environments, including pools of water in low-lying areas as well as in man-made structures that hold water including: pop cans, buckets, flower pots, tires, bird baths, and more. If one of these areas is left with standing water, you are more than likely to see small figures, like the ones in the picture above, wiggling around in the water. These are mosquito larvae that will go through a complete metamorphosis until they reach adulthood and emerge from their water environment.

One of the best ways to prevent having a nuisance mosquito problem around your home is by eliminating mosquito breeding grounds where female mosquitoes can lay her eggs. If you have any of the structures listed above, you can start by removing any standing water that has been left in the structures at least once a week and pick up any trash around your home that may be able to hold even the smallest amount of water. Bird baths and your pet's outdoor water bowls should be changed at least once a week with fresh water to eliminate the possibility of mosquito larvae. If there are standing pools of water in your yard that do not dry up within a week, try to drain the pool or apply larvicide dunks to kill the mosquito larvae that are present.

Mosquitoes usually only travel 1 mile or less away from where they hatch, so if a water source is left for long periods of time without emptying, that area around your home could become the perfect long-term breeding grounds for mosquitoes. They will stay around you and your home since they have located an adequate breeding area and a food source – you. So, if you notice structures around your home with mosquito larvae (pictured above), remove the water from the structure, and check other structures to make sure they do not have any larvae as well.

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For more resources about mosquito prevention, please visit the Ohio Department of Health's website at: <https://odh.ohio.gov/wps/portal/gov/odh/know-our-programs/zoonotic-disease-program/resources/mosquito-borne-diseases>

For more information about the lifecycle of a mosquito and how to identify each stage, please visit the Vector Disease Control's Website at: <http://www.vdci.net/mosquito-biology-101-life-cycle>

For more mosquito resources and pesticide resources, please visit the Ohio Mosquito and Vector Control Association's website at: <http://www.ohiomosquito.org/resources.html>

For more information about how to control mosquitoes around your home, visit the Center for Disease Control's website at: <https://www.cdc.gov/zika/prevention/controlling-mosquitoes-at-home.html>