

San Gabriel Valley Mosquito and Vector Control District

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Third Invasive Mosquito Species Identified in the San Gabriel Valley

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The San Gabriel Valley Mosquito and Vector Control District (SGVMVCD) has identified a third species of invasive mosquito within its boundaries. On June 24th during a routine property inspection, Vector Ecologist Gimena Ruedas collected a sample of larvae and pupae from a residence in the City of Alhambra. The adult mosquitoes that emerged were positively identified as *Aedes aegypti*. This non-native, invasive mosquito has previously been identified in other parts of the state including San Bernardino, Riverside, Orange, and San Diego Counties and other parts of Los Angeles County outside the San Gabriel Valley. *Aedes aegypti* joins *Aedes albopictus* and *Aedes notoscriptus* as the third species that the SGVMVCD collectively refers to as invasive *Aedes* mosquitoes.

Vector control agencies across the state have stepped up surveillance in recent years as they anticipated local infestations of these invasive *Aedes* mosquitoes. “After the populations of invasive *Aedes* exploded in California in 2015, we felt it was a matter of time before we found *Aedes aegypti* in our District,” says Dr. Kenn Fujioka, District Manager at the SGVMVCD. “We have been battling invasive *Aedes* in the San Gabriel Valley since discovering *Ae. albopictus*, the first of the three species, in 2011 and because they all share similar characteristics and transmit similar diseases, finding *Aedes aegypti* will not significantly impact our management strategy.”

Invasive *Aedes* are a major nuisance that bite aggressively during the day and thrive in urban environments. They can transmit dangerous pathogens including dengue, chikungunya, and Zika viruses. “Although no mosquitoes in California have yet tested positive for these viruses, the potential for local transmission exists in Los Angeles County,” explains Dr. Wakoli Wekesa, Scientific Program Manager at the SGVMVCD. “This latest finding makes it even more important that everyone is vigilant about removing habitat where mosquitoes can grow, reports day-biting mosquitoes, and takes personal precautions to avoid mosquito bites.” A local outbreak can occur when infected travelers introduce a new virus to local mosquitoes. Public health agencies are urging those traveling abroad to check the CDC’s website for travel warnings and follow suggested protocol to prevent mosquito bites and potential infections.

The San Gabriel Valley Mosquito and Vector Control District is working closely with other vector control and public health agencies both at the county and state levels to address the expanding infestation of invasive *Aedes*. These mosquitoes are resilient and difficult to manage because they prefer to live close to humans and lay their eggs in small containers of water most often found in backyards. Their eggs are extremely durable and can lay dormant for several months waiting for the right conditions to hatch. “Vector control agencies rely heavily on the diligence of residents to keep their properties free from potential breeding sources. Flower vases, plant saucers, buckets, used tires, and plants that hold water like bamboo and bromeliads are just a few examples of where mosquitoes can grow. Residents should inspect their property regularly, looking for and eliminating standing water,” advises Dr. Wekesa.

Vector control is calling upon all residents to do their part by following these steps:

- Inspect your property regularly and remove any clutter or containers that may hold water.
- Scrub containers with a brush and hot, soapy water to destroy mosquito eggs.
- Remove bromeliads and other plants that collect and hold water from your landscape.
- If you collect rain water, make sure that all containers are tightly covered to keep mosquitoes out. Do not store water for any extended period of time.
- Wear mosquito repellent when spending time outdoors.
- Talk to your neighbors - share what you know.

For more information please visit the District’s website at www.SGVmosquito and follow on social media @SGVmosquito.



@SGVMosquito #OutWithAedes #DumpAndDrain