

# HEALTH SCHOOL

Pennsylvania State Department of Health

Questions

(1) What variety of mosquito is responsible for the spread of malaria fever?

(2) Where do mosquitoes deposit their eggs?

(3) How may mosquitoes be exterminated?

## MOSQUITOES

Madame Anopheles, pronounced (an-zo-fel), yawning and stretched, then with characteristic abandon proceeded to stand on her head—rather unhygienic, but Madame Anopheles was a mosquito and after all that position was natural to her special family, thus differing from her cousins, the Culex's, who always stand with their slim bodies parallel to the object upon which they are resting.

Madame Anopheles had subsisted for the first two days of her life upon

vegetable diet, when her instinct warned her that the eggs which were already forming in her body, would not develop unless she had a meal of blood, she sallied forth to find a victim. She flitted through an open window and softly settled on the chest of a man sleeping in the profound sleep of exhaustion following a paroxysm of the chill, fever and sweating of malarial fever.

Only a few drops of blood served to fill her stomach to distention, yet these few drops, drawn at the favorable time, contained numbers of the red elements which, only in the stomach of the Anopheles Mosquito (according to present knowledge) can combine to reproduce the Anopheles which are the active causes of malarial fever.

Soon in her body thousands of new born Anophelinae were ready to be carried into the blood of the next person whose skin she punctured.

In a week Madame Anopheles, before simply an annoyance, had become a carrier of malarial fever and a grave menace to public health.

All mosquitoes deposit their eggs in either stagnant or very slow moving water. A rain barrel, an unturned tin can, a water bucket—pitcher, anything which will hold water.

A few days later the eggs split and

wrigglers emerge, fuzzy, spinning thread-like they dart about erratically now and again coming to the surface for air. The Anophelinae are equipped with short breathing tubes along the rear portion of the body. As they thrust their air tubes through the surface they are forced to assume a position almost parallel with the top of the water.

Other on the surface there grow much longer breathing tubes situated at the extremity of the back, which cause them to hang with the head downwards when taking air—this way the Anophelinae may be distinguished from the larvae of other insects.

Next comes the pupal stage when the larvae changes its form somewhat and floats at the surface eating something like a curled up caterpillar. After a few days of this life the pupa splits and the full grown mosquito emerges.

Male mosquitoes do not bite, it is not at all a matter of preference, but because they are not so constructed that they can.

Anopheles Mosquitoes are found in all hot countries, they abound in our own southern states.

They are also found in Pennsylvania.

There is no malaria where there are no Anopheles Mosquitoes. The Anopheles can not give malaria unless it sucks blood from a malaria patient.

The Anopheles may be distinguished from other varieties of mosquito by their characteristic posture, standing almost on their heads and by the black spots on their wings.

Patients with malaria must be screened against mosquitoes.

Mosquitoes can be exterminated in any locality by destroying their breeding places.

Marshes should be drained, pools of standing water which cannot be drained should be covered with a thin layer of oil—kerosene or a crude oil dilution. A small quantity of oil soon distributes itself evenly over a large body of water.

When mosquito larvae come to the surface to breathe, the oil fills the breathing tube and they die from suffocation. Small receptacles about the house containing water may prove excellent breeding places for mosquitoes.

The drip from the back yards hydrant, the clogged rain spout, the horse trough are all favorable to mosquito breeding.

In long continued dry seasons the water traps between surface drains and sewers in towns and cities afford excellent breeding places for mosquitoes. Such traps should either be oiled after each rain or routinely flushed over a week to wash out the larvae before they have time to develop into mosquitoes.

With no Anopheles Mosquitoes there can be no malaria—with no standing water there can be no mosquitoes.

## State Brieflets

A pig with eight legs is in W. S. Bowman's farm at Orangeville.

Lock Haven has 24 scarlet fever cases, but will not close the schools yet.

Mifflin County Agricultural Association has elected S. H. Leach as president.

Thirty-four retailers and three brewers are seeking licenses in Blair county.

Lewisburg chair factory, the largest of its kind in the country, has resumed work.

The Public Service Commission has revoked the jitney permit of George Gerhaugh at Bedford.

An 8-inch ice harvest is being taken in the northern section for fear there will be nothing better.

The State Industrial Board is considering a rule forbidding electric knife switches of the open type.

The State Highway Department has turned into the treasury \$1,212,119 from auto licenses up to December 23.

Miss Grace S. Swan has been elected employees' representative on the State School Employees' Retirement Board.

For the second time since slot machines and gambling devices were licensed in Northumberland county County inspectors twice raided Kulpmont and made a half dozen arrests.

Eric county's 1920 grape crop was about 20,000 tons.

Water furnished in the Monongahela Valley is being investigated by the State.

The State Banking Department has called for 1920 building and loan association reports.

Councils will stop objectionable dances by refusing permits to persons who allow them.

Middle-aged men are complaining that they are not wanted at present around anthracite fields.

Shamokin Cemetery Association will permit no Sunday burials hereafter except in emergency cases.

The State Belt Transit Company, Northampton county, has increased zone fares from 7 cents to 10.

Carnegie Institute will have its twentieth international show of paintings at Pittsburgh in May and June.

The Small Handbook for 1920 shows by maps for the first time, the roads and forest reserves of the State.

Catamounts are reported numerous around Freeland.

Lewisburg gas works were sold at sheriff's sale to E. M. Berle.

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