



Culex pipiens complex Biology

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The *Culex pipiens* complex is thought to be a hybrid of two mosquito species, *Cx. pipiens* (The northern house mosquito.) and *Culex quinquefasciatus* (the southern house mosquito). Both larval types are found in foul water in rain barrels, tubs, catch basins, faulty cesspools, ditches, and other similar habitats. Water containing vegetable wastes from food processing plants often provides favorable conditions for larval development. It is a domesticated species developing in close association with man.

It is a troublesome species that commonly infests houses and bites at night. It is said to display a preference for avian blood. Adult females pass the winter hibernating in cellars, basements, outbuildings, caves, and other warm places which afford protection from the cold. Typically the *Cx. pipiens* complex is a late season mosquito in Brunswick County. This species appears to thrive in drought conditions when organic matter is concentrated in its larval habitats.

Typically, this mosquito can be collected in Brunswick County from May through November. This mosquito was a problem until the invention of indoor plumbing, window screens and air conditioning. It is one of the primary vectors of West Nile Virus in North Carolina. She is considered to be of high importance in Brunswick County because of her disease transmission potential.

REFERENCE

Carpenter, S. J. and W. J. LaCasse. 1955. Mosquitoes of North America (North of Mexico), University of California Press, Berkeley. 360 pp., 127 pl.