



## What is Tweed Shire Councils doing to assist in keeping mosquito numbers low?

Tweed Shire Council has been actively involved in mosquito abatement since 1983. It has a formal agreement with Gold Coast City Council, Logan City and Redland Shire Councils to cooperate in mosquito research and information exchange aimed at reducing mosquito nuisance and disease risks in South East Queensland and Northern New South Wales.



Mosquito larvae

## The following mosquito related activities are carried out by Tweed Shire Council's Pest Management Unit.

- Mosquito monitoring traps.
- Habitat reduction: Council has carried out some innovative forms of habitat modification to reduce the breeding potential of mosquitoes in semi-tidal saltmarshes without the use of chemicals.
- Mosquito larvae control: When extensive areas hatch mosquito larvae following heavy rain or higher than usual tides. Larger areas are treated by aircraft, whereas smaller areas are treated with on-ground works. Biological larvicides are used.
  - Bacillus thuringiensis - Council uses a bacterial larvicide called Bti to spray mosquito breeding areas when warranted. This larvicide is specific to mosquitoes and several other closely related flies. Bti poses no harm to other aquatic non-target organisms.
  - Methoprene – This chemical is an insect growth regulator with sustained release formulations to inhibit mosquito larvae from turning into adult mosquitoes.

## Mosquitoes

The Tweed Shire area is home to many species of mosquitoes



As well as being a nuisance, some mosquito species spread human disease-causing pathogens such as Dengue fever, Ross River and Barmah Forest viruses, and Murray Valley encephalitis. They can also be a vector of dog heartworm.

For further information go to  
[www.tweed.nsw.gov.au](http://www.tweed.nsw.gov.au) or  
[www.health.nsw.gov.au](http://www.health.nsw.gov.au)

Some mosquito species that are capable of spreading these viruses breed in water-filled containers around your home such as buckets, old tyres, poorly-aligned roof gutters and pot plant holders. Don't let your home **be a haven** for disease spreading mosquitoes.

## I have noticed a lot of mosquitoes around my home, what can I do?

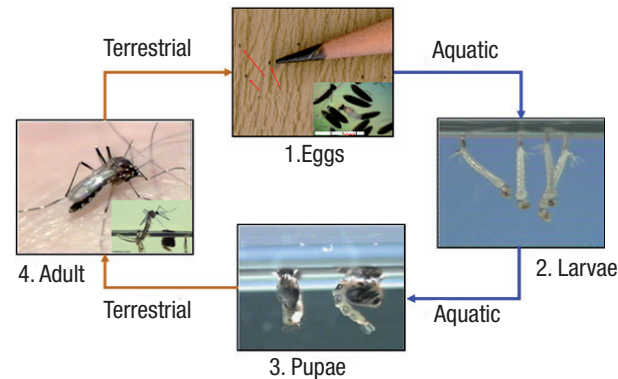
Your home could be a potential site for breeding mosquitoes, so take steps to reduce mosquito numbers and your exposure to mosquito-borne disease.

### Some things you can do to make your house and yard mosquito safe are:

- Keep your yard well-maintained, mow lawns regularly, and limit areas of dense vegetation.
- Ensure you cover all windows, doors, chimneys, vents and other entrances with insect screens that are in good condition.
- Clean up your yard and remove all water-holding containers or rubbish and keep house gutters clean and properly aligned.
- Empty and refill pet water bowls and bird baths at least weekly.
- Ensure all openings to water tanks and septic tanks are screened securely.
- Place sand or fine gravel in pot plant trays, or flush them out weekly.
- Keep ornamental ponds stocked with native fish species that will feed on mosquito larvae. Tweed Shire Council can usually supply native mosquito feeding fish to stock small ponds.



### Mosquito life cycle



### And for the farmers:

If you live on a farm, mosquitoes can breed in a number of places, so take the following precautions to reduce that likelihood.

- Cattle troughs are a potential breeding site for mosquitoes. Emptying troughs weekly will keep larvae numbers low.
- Check dam walls and irrigation bays for water leaks.
- Be careful not to over-irrigate, to avoid water from laying around in low-lying areas for long periods of time.
- Do not let irrigation water flow into and lie stagnant in roadside table drains.



## What can you do to avoid mosquito bites when outdoors? Cover up and take care.

During summer and warm weather, make sure you take special care to protect yourself, your family and your friends from mosquito bites.

There are some simple steps you can take to reduce your chances of picking up a serious mosquito-borne infection.

- Avoid outdoor activity at dawn and dusk, or other periods when mosquito numbers are high.
- Cover up as much as possible with long loose fitting clothing and sensible footwear.
- Use an effective repellent on exposed skin areas. Re-apply repellent every few hours, according to the instructions, as protection wears off from perspiration, particularly on hot nights or during exercise. Note that prolonged or excessive use of repellents can be dangerous, particularly on babies and young children.
- Cover your clothes with repellent as mosquitoes can bite through material, but be careful, some repellents stain clothes.
- Provide mosquito netting, where necessary — both indoors and outdoors.