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Invasive *Aedes aegypti* mosquitoes found in Carpinteria

Two aggressive daytime-biting mosquito species threaten to infest Santa Barbara County

(July 20, 2026) — The Santa Barbara County Mosquito and Vector Management District collected a specimen of *Aedes aegypti*, commonly known as the yellow fever mosquito, in Carpinteria on July 14, 2026. This aggressive daytime biter, which was last known to be in Santa Barbara County in 2021, marks the second invasive mosquito species currently threatening to establish itself in Santa Barbara County.

The first invasive species, *Aedes notoscriptus*, the Australian backyard mosquito, was detected earlier this year in Santa Barbara's West Side neighborhood in March and the Mesa neighborhood in June.

Unlike native mosquitoes, both *Aedes* species feed aggressively on humans during both daytime and nighttime hours, indoors and outdoors. Because they frequently target people around the feet and lower legs, residents in areas where these pests have established often refer to them as "ankle biters." Infestations in Santa Barbara County are expected to cause significant irritation and discomfort for residents in local neighborhoods.

"Public awareness of these two *Aedes* species in our area will be very important in slowing their spread and reducing the potential for a significant nuisance becoming established in our communities," said Brian Cabrera, General Manager of the Mosquito and Vector Management District. "Local residents can help 'fight the bite' by eliminating the sources of water where they lay their eggs and develop, as well as contacting the District if they suspect they are being bitten by these mosquitoes."

Native to Africa, *Aedes aegypti* was first detected in California in 2013 and has since spread across Southern California and the Central Valley. Globally, it can transmit viruses such as Dengue, Zika, Chikungunya, and yellow fever. In the 2024 and 2025 there have been 20 confirmed cases of locally-transmitted Dengue infection in Los Angeles County. The other three viruses are not known to be present in California.

In Australia, *Aedes notoscriptus* is the primary carrier of dog heartworm. While a native mosquito species serves as the primary vector for dog heartworm in California, pet owners are

encouraged to ensure their pets are protected. Preventative medications are readily available through local veterinarians.

Both *Aedes* species prefer to stay close to human dwellings. Females lay their eggs in practically anything that holds stagnant water—including buckets, tires, birdbaths, pet dishes, potted plant saucers, clogged yard drains and even water trapped inside plants like bromeliads. Remarkably, mosquito larvae can complete their development in the amount of water that fills a single bottle cap, and their eggs can resist drying out for many months.

How Residents Can "Fight the Bite"

The District urges all Santa Barbara County residents to take the following preventative measures:

- **Dump and Scrub:** Remove all sources of standing water inside and outside your home. Scrub the sides of containers to destroy clinging eggs.
- **Protect Your Home:** Close open doors and ensure all window and door screens are in good repair.
- **Protect Yourself:** Wear long-sleeved shirts and long pants, and apply EPA-approved insect repellent when outdoors.
- **Protect Your Pets:** Consult your veterinarian to confirm your dogs are on heartworm prevention medication.

Report Daytime Mosquitoes

If you are experiencing aggressive mosquito bites—especially around the feet and ankles during daytime hours—or notice large collections of standing water in your neighborhood, please report it immediately. Contact the Mosquito and Vector Management District at 805-969-5050 or submit a report through the "Contact Us" page on the District website, mvmddistrict.org.

About the Mosquito and Vector Management District of Santa Barbara County:

Our mission is to protect the public's health and safety from vectors and vector-borne diseases. The Mosquito & Vector Management District is an independent local government agency offering community based services with tax funding and decision-making by an elected board of directors. For more information, visit mvmddistrict.org or follow us on Instagram and Facebook @mosquitosantabarbara.