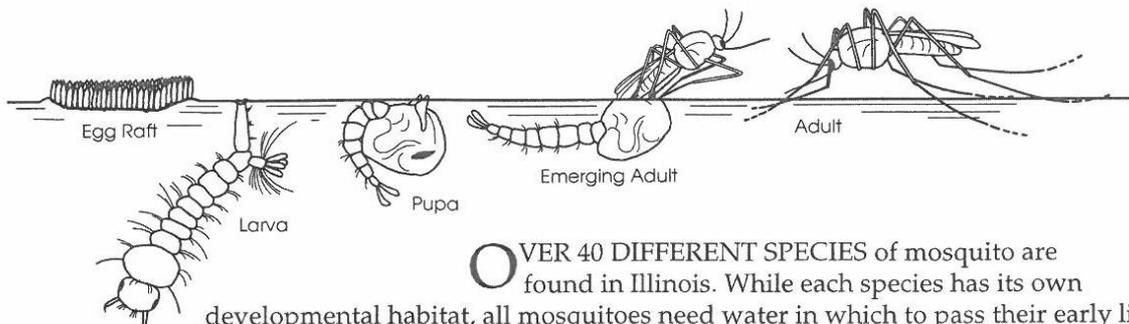


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## The Mosquito's Life



OVER 40 DIFFERENT SPECIES of mosquito are found in Illinois. While each species has its own developmental habitat, all mosquitoes need water in which to pass their early life stages. Some mosquitoes lay their eggs directly on the surface of water. Other mosquitoes lay their eggs in areas that will eventually fill with water. Once eggs come in contact with water, they hatch into larvae within several days. Mosquito larvae undergo four stages of growth and development called instars. Larvae feed on organic material and microorganisms in the water and return to the surface of the water to breathe. Larval development may be as rapid as 5-7 days in warm weather. After the larval stages are complete the larvae shed their skins and emerge as comma-shaped pupae. Pupae are very active and dive vigorously if disturbed. Pupae do not feed while they undergo metamorphosis to the adult stage. The adult mosquito emerges from the pupal skin and rests on the water's surface until it dries.

Both male and female adult mosquitoes feed on plant nectar, but only the female bites to get the blood needed for the development of eggs. Although not all species of mosquito transmit diseases, many species throughout the world can carry (vector) diseases to humans and other warm-blooded animals. In our area, there are several species that are of primary concern regarding the transmission of diseases.

## How you can help

Since disease carrying mosquitoes develop in stagnant water, places that can hold water for more than a week are potential sources of mosquitoes. Many potential breeding sites can be found around the home. These include old tires, buckets, wheelbarrows, clogged rain gutters, childrens' wading pools, etc. In addition, disease carrying mosquitoes are "home bodies" and tend to stay near their breeding sites. Residents can take the following simple steps to eliminate potential sources for these mosquitoes.

- Throw away all trash that can hold water (cans, jars, tires, etc.).
- Clean rain gutters and downspouts to prevent water from standing in gutters or on flat roofs.
- Change water in bird baths, wading pools, etc. at least once a week. Maintain swimming pools properly.
- Keep ditches and streams on or around property free of grass clippings, garbage, and other debris to insure proper flow.
- Stack pails, barrels, tubs, wheelbarrows, and similar containers upside down.
- Stock ornamental ponds with goldfish or other surface-feeding fish to control mosquito production.
- Clean out and fill treeholes.
- Dispose of used tires properly. The District is a licensed waste tire hauler, and ensures tires are taken to a shredding facility. For residents with four or fewer tires to dispose of, contact the District for assistance.

