



## DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

### INFORMATION SERVICE

UNITED STATES FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

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#### HELP WATERFOWL WHILE CONTROLLING MOSQUITO IS FWS PROGRAM

Research programs in areas heavily infested with mosquitoes have resulted in development of new techniques which provide for considerable reduction in the mosquito nuisance and a great improvement in waterfowl habitat. Hence, officials of the Fish and Wildlife Service, Department of the Interior, believe that under certain conditions salt-marsh mosquitoes can be controlled without widespread destruction of duck marshes and without the excessive use of chemical insecticides which at times cause direct harm to fish and shellfish.

In many areas the trend in mosquito abatement is toward permanent control instead of temporary control with insecticides, and increasing attention is being given to the environmental factors. The prime reason for this change is the mounting resistance of mosquitoes to insecticides.

Filling a marsh has been found to be expensive and results in the loss of waterfowl habitat; drainage not only impairs a resource but often is impossible, especially in the tidal areas. However, diking and flooding have in many instances been effective in controlling salt-marsh mosquitoes, and at the same time have resulted in an improved duck marsh.

Because of this the Bureau of Sport Fisheries and Wildlife of the United States Fish and Wildlife Service advocates joint studies and planning for the integration of mosquito control and wildlife management programs. The officials urge continued research since the work already done, while effective and indicative, has left many questions unanswered.

As a step toward a long-range program to coordinate mosquito control and waterfowl management, Service officials conducted a tour of the coastal marshes of New York, Connecticut, Rhode Island, and Massachusetts August 12-15. The tour was similar to that arranged by the Service last year for the marshes of Maryland, Delaware, and New Jersey.

In attendance were representatives of State and local mosquito control boards State fish and game departments, the United States Department of Agriculture, the United States Public Health Service and the Bureau of Sport Fisheries and Wildlife. The purpose of the tour was to acquaint the participants with the area's mosquito problems and control measures, and to discuss, in the field, the possibilities of coordinating the pest abatement plans with wildlife activities.

Members of the party saw untreated natural wetlands, sprayed marshes, open ditching, impoundments, sump drainage, and ditching with controlled water levels. Only those areas of significant value to wildlife were visited.

The Bureau of Sport Fisheries and Wildlife is conducting continuing mosquito control studies at the Patuxent Research Refuge and Blackwater National Wildlife Refuge in Maryland and last year completed a three-year cooperative project with the University of Delaware at the Bonbay Hook National Wildlife Refuge on Delaware Bay. Various States and counties which have mosquito problems have also inaugurated studies on the control of these pests.

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