

Mosquito Control in Delaware 1942

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and

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The Delaware Legislature at its last session made available to the State Highway Department the sum of

\$33,250 for mosquito control work, for each year of the present biennium.

Breeding was unusually heavy during late July and early August. Many things accounted for this such as very wet unfavorable weather, the shortage of labor, and lack of ditch maintenance. During the summer period our crews located 5,821 breeding places totaling approximately 31,616,434 square feet. It required 24,676 gallons of diluted larvicide to treat 3,756 breeding places. Due to unfavorable conditions and labor shortage, many areas were not inspected during the season. Cleaning and ditching totaled 604,490 linear feet.

The Gordon Lake region was considerably improved by the work of the Department and showed quite a reduction in breeding. During the 1941 season a total of 32,694,772 square feet of breeding was found in the area. Even though the summer of 1942 was more favorable for mosquitoes, a total of only 915,910 square feet of breeding was located. Conditions were so much improved that scarcely any spraying was required.

In addition to regular maintenance operations, the Highway Department supervised a \$36,095.00 WPA project for mosquito control work inside and near two military reservations in Sussex County. This work was active through most of the year. In connection with the project 592,958 linear feet of new and old ditch was cleaned, twelve construction projects totaling \$6,078.84 were completed and other phases of work pertaining directly to control work were carried out. The results of this activity were favorable for mosquito reduction at the points where the work was done, but the surrounding unmaintained areas accounted for considerable mosquito annoyance. An additional sum of \$52,095 was requested to complete some work near the Fort Miles boundary but this was not approved previous to the abandonment of the WPA work in December. It is hoped that some other agency may finance the continuation of this work near the military posts.

A second W. P. A. project in mosquito control was active in the vicinity of Fort du Pont in New Castle County from May, 1941 until June 30, 1942, at which time the work allotment was cut off. The original project called for an expenditure of \$62,693.00 of which about \$42,000.00 was used previous to the time the work was discontinued. Approximately 40 per cent of the control work needed within a radius of five miles from the Fort was completed under this project. The work had consisted mainly of ditching, tide gate installations, and clearing of brush.

Two large marshes near Fort du Pont, which are heavy breeders of Anopheles, are as yet untouched. These two areas, Dragon Run and St. Georges Basin, must be controlled before there will be a marked reduction in mosquito populations at the Fort.

The Department of Entomology of the Delaware Agricultural Experiment Station has assisted in the above control projects by furnishing the technical supervision on certain phases of the work. Data on the prevalence in the State of the various species of mosquitoes have been accumulated through the operation of fourteen mosquito traps located at various points.