

Mosquito-like Insects found? – A guide for interceptions



Still alive?

- Try to catch it with an aspirator or a cup, try not to damage it by swatting.
- Kill it by freezing (approx. 2hrs).
- **Do not apply alcohol or any other liquid to kill or to preserve it.**
(It washes away important ID features without which the ID is impossible.)

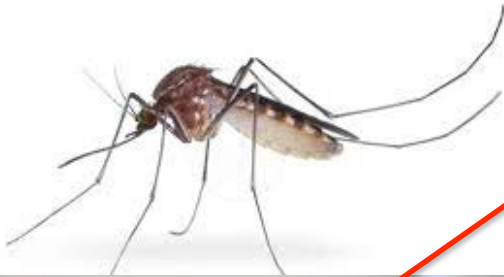
Dead?

- Place it carefully in a small container

Check if it is really a mosquito or another insect by using the descriptions below!

- Intercepted mosquitoes need to be sent to the NZ BioSecure Entomology Lab in Lower Hutt by HPOs via urgent courier after notifying the on call entomologist.
- For all other insects MPI is responsible.
- If still unsure the local HPO should contact NZ Biosecure and send photographs via email.

Check for Mosquito-characters



- **Always look for the proboscis** - elongated trunk-like mouthparts, which is the biting and sucking apparatus
- **Long wings** - longer than its body, "fringed" - a border on the wing's edge
- **"Humpback" appearance**
- **Long antennae** (bushy in males)
- **Long legs** – sometimes hindlegs curved upwards in live specimens

Insects Commonly Mistaken for Mosquitoes



Crane Flies (Tipulidae) and Winter Crane Flies (Trichoceridae)

- **Very long legs** - slender in comparison to its body length
- **No proboscis** - cannot bite (snout-like mouthparts)
- **Smooth-edged wings** - like midges, lack the fringed wings that are characteristic of mosquitoes
- **Straight appearance** - rests with its body straight, not in the humpback manner of mosquitoes

Insects Commonly Mistaken for Mosquitoes - continued

male



female



Nonbiting Midges (Chironomidae)

- About the same size as a mosquito
- **No proboscis!**
- Males have a distinct **bushy antennae**
- Forlegs often **stretched over head**
- **Short wings** - do not extend beyond the end of its body
- **Smooth-edged wings** - not covered in scales, no visible "fringe" along the edge of each wing.
- **Straight appearance** - at rest, the body will be straight, with its thorax low to the substrate on which it rests.
- Known to **swarm**

Insects Commonly Mistaken for Mosquitoes - continued



Biting Midges (Ceratomyza)

- Smaller than a mosquito, stocky
- **Small mouthparts**, no long proboscis
- Painful itchy bite
- Breeds in flowing streams and rivers
- A problem in spring and summer



Black Fly (NZ Sandfly) Simuliidae

- Smaller than a mosquito, stocky
- **Small mouthparts**, no long proboscis
- **Short legs**
- Bull-like antennae
- **Big but short wings**
- Painful itchy bite
- Breeds in flowing streams and rivers
- A problem in spring and summer

Insects Commonly Mistaken for Mosquitoes - continued



Fungus Gnats (Mycetophilidae) and Black Fungus Gnats (Sciaridae)

- Can be the same size as mosquitoes
- **no proboscis!** - cannot bite
- **“Humpback”**
- large round wings
- Very long antennae
- Spikes on legs (at least one on knee)
- develops in fungus/ plant pots
- a problem from winter to spring
- known to swarm



Insects Commonly Mistaken for Mosquitoes - continued



Window Gnats (Anisopodidae)

- Similar size to mosquitoes or bigger
- **No proboscis!**
- **Dark patched wings**
- **Small head** compared to body



Owl Midges (Psychodidae)

- Smaller than mosquitoes
- **No proboscis!**
- **Hairy wings**
- Tumbling walking
- Often in bathrooms

Chironomid, Non biting Midge



Fungus Gnat



Black Fungus Gnat



Biting Midge

Mosquito



proboscis



Crane Fly



"Sandfly", Blackfly



Owl Midge



Window Gnat