NEW ZEALAND BIOSECURE
Entomology Laboratory

A DIVISION OF SMS SOUTHERN MONITORING SERVICES LIMITED

Verrallina funerea (Theobald)

NZ Status: Not Present – NSP Watchlist

Vector and Pest Status

Verrallina funerea can be a pest species close to its habitat (Russell, 1993). This species is a vector of Ross River virus, and is known to transmit Barmah Forest virus. It is a potential vector of other arboviruses such as Getah, Murray Valley encephalitis, Kunjin, Sepik, Corriparta and Wongorr viruses (Lee *et al*., 1987).

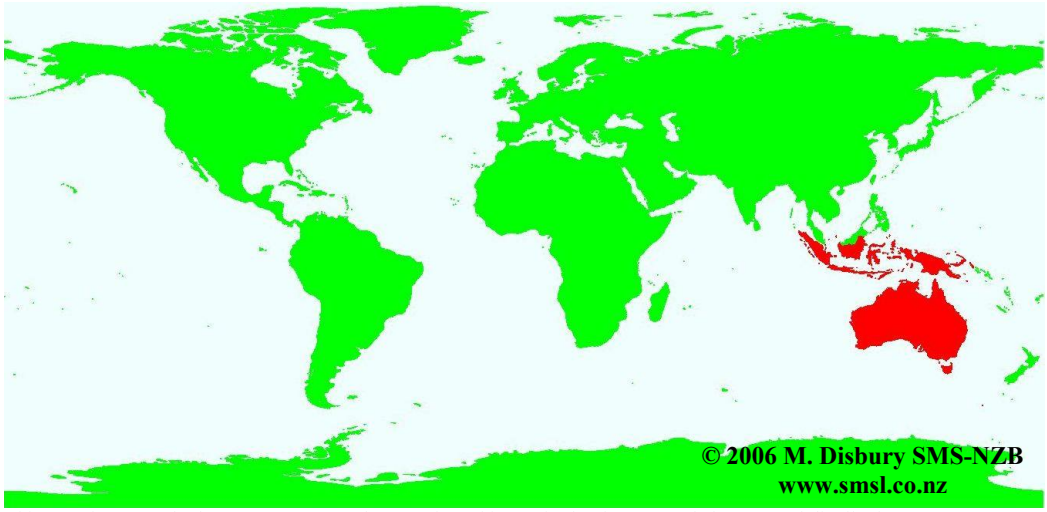
This species travels very little distance from its breeding ground and is thus not considered a major pest for areas not adjacent or in close proximity to their coastal breeding areas.

Geographic Distribution

This species is present in Australia (northeastern coastal regions), Papua New Guinea (Lee *et al*., 1987) and Indonesia (www.wrbu.org).

Incursions and Interceptions

This species has not been intercepted in New Zealand.



This map denotes only the country or general areas where this species has been recorded, not actual distribution.

Taxonomy

Previously known as *Aedes (Verrallina) funereus* until the subgenus was elevated to genus level by Reinert *et al*. (2004).

Habits and Habitat

Verrallina funerea breeds in slightly brackish to fresh water pools, particularly in intertidal areas where springs or creeks feed into brackish water habitats, and which are usually well shaded in swamps of tea tree and sedges (Lee *et al*., 1987). Eggs are laid around the drying margins of pools and may remain dormant for many months awaiting hatching stimuli.

Adults of *Ve. funerea* are generally restricted to the cover of mangroves and other coastal vegetation, they do not disperse very far (Russell, 1993). They may be encountered throughout the year, but mostly between mid-summer to early winter.

This species is considered a very aggressive and painful biter. Females will bite most vigorously at dusk, during the day, particularly in shaded areas, but also at night (Lee *et al*., 1987). They attack mostly humans and birds, but have been recorded feeding on horses and cattle (Lee *et al*., 1987).

References

Lee, D.J., Hicks, M.M., Griffiths, M., Debenham, M.L., Bryan, J.H., Russell, R.C., Geary, M. and Marks, E.N. 1988. *The Culicidae of the Australasian region*. Volume 4. Canberra, Australian Government Publishing Service.

Reinert, J. F., R. E. Harbach, and Kitching, I.J. 2004. Phylogeny and classification of Aedini (Diptera: Culicidae), based on morphological characters of all life stages. *Zoological Journal of the Linnean Society* 142: 289-368.

Russell, R.C. 1993. *Mosquitoes and mosquito-borne disease in southeastern Australia: A guide to the biology, relation to disease, surveillance, control and the identification of mosquitoes in southeastern Australia.* Sydney, University of Sydney.