



## NEWS RELEASE

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### **MOSQUITOES INFECTED WITH WEST NILE VIRUS FOUND ON BETHEL ISLAND – ANOTHER BIRD FOUND IN BRENTWOOD**

*-- Mosquito control district continues to enhance control and outreach efforts --*

**CONCORD, CALIFORNIA** - - Mosquitoes collected Wednesday in the Northeast area of Bethel Island tested positive for West Nile virus late Friday at the Contra Costa Mosquito and Vector Control District (District) marking the second documented case of mosquitoes infected with WNV in Contra Costa County to date. A Scrub Jay collected in Brentwood also tested positive Friday for the virus. That bird, the ninth this year in the county, was found Thursday near Lone Tree Way and Fairview Avenue. There have been no human or horse cases in Contra Costa County to date.

“Our extra surveillance and control efforts are paying off,” said Carlos Sanabria, lead vector control inspector for the District. “Both of the infected mosquito samples we have are from *extra* traps we set around the county to help us determine where the virus might be so we can intensify our control efforts and protect public health”.

Contra Costa Mosquito and Vector Control District technicians are setting out extra traps today to understand the extent of the adult mosquito populations as well as checking and treating known mosquito sources and scouring the area for new ones. Technicians will also be visiting homeowners in the area to discuss possible breeding sources and handing out literature.

West Nile virus is one of a group of disease-causing viruses spread by mosquitoes. It first appeared in the United States in 1999. The virus is transmitted to humans and animals through the bite of an infected mosquito. Mosquitoes become infected with WNV when they feed on infected birds.

According to the California Department of Health Services, 56 people in California, including two who have died, have been infected with West Nile virus in 2005. Forty-eight horses have tested positive throughout the state of which 24 have died or been euthanized.

Most people who are bitten by a mosquito with WNV will not get sick; however, up to 20 percent of the population infected with WNV will get West Nile fever. West Nile fever causes people to experience mild to severe flu-like symptoms such as fever, headache, body ache and possible paralysis. Less than one percent of infected individuals will require hospitalization. The elderly and those with compromised immune systems are most susceptible to illness and death caused by WNV.

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ANOTHER BIRD FOUND IN BRENTWOOD

Residents are urged to take the following precautions:

- DEFEND yourself against mosquitoes by using a repellent with an effective active ingredient such as DEET, Picaridin or Oil of Lemon Eucalyptus. Make sure to follow label directions.
- DRAIN all sources of standing water that may support mosquito-breeding habitats. Residential sources are the biggest breeder of mosquitoes in Contra Costa County.
- DOOR and window screens should fit tight and be in good repair. This will prevent mosquitoes from entering your home.
- DAWN and DUSK are times to avoid since this is when mosquitoes are most active.
- DRESS appropriately by wearing long sleeves and pants when outdoors and mosquitoes are present.
- DEAD birds should be reported to 877-WNV-BIRD (877-968-2473). Not all birds will be picked up and tested, but reporting dead birds provides important information for mosquito control efforts.
- DO vaccinate your horses. Horses are highly susceptible to West Nile virus – approximately half of the horses that get WNV die or are euthanized.

Contra Costa Mosquito & Vector Control District is located at 155 Mason Circle in Concord. Call the District to report mosquito problems at (925) 685-9301, or visit our office between 8:00 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. to get mosquitofish. Visit our website [www.ccmvcd.dst.ca.us](http://www.ccmvcd.dst.ca.us) for more information or to learn about possible mosquito spraying in your area.

For information concerning West Nile virus symptoms, prevention, or testing, please call the Contra Costa Health Services department at (888) 959-9911 or visit their website at [www.ccpublichealth.org](http://www.ccpublichealth.org)