

# Living with Mosquitoes

## REDUCING MOSQUITOES IN YOUR BACKYARD

If you live close to wetland areas, there will be mosquito activity during the warmer months and many mosquitoes travel from wetlands into residential areas. There are actions that you can take in your backyard to reduce bites from these mosquitoes:

- § Follow the personal protection advice provided in the “Living With Mosquitoes Fact Sheet: Reducing Mosquito Bites In The Local Area” including avoiding outdoor areas at dusk and dawn, wearing long sleeved shirts and long pants and applying a DEET or Picaridin based repellent to exposed skin.
- § The use of residual surface spray insecticides may offer some protection but care should be taken that the instructions for use are followed. Some products will kill harmless insects.
- § There are a range of mosquito traps available. While some units will catch mosquitoes (the best traps use carbon dioxide as their main attractant) they may not provide complete protection from biting mosquitoes close to wetlands. Traps that use light to attract mosquitoes will catch and kill many harmless insects such as moths and small non-biting flies.

To help control mosquitoes around your home you need to eliminate possible backyard breeding sites. The following checklist will help to reduce mosquitoes around your home and within your local community:

- § Check your property regularly for any water holding containers or areas of pooling water.
- § Dispose of all objects including cans, bottles, tins, tyres, and other receptacles which may hold water after rain.
- § Keep swimming pools chlorinated or salted, or empty them completely when not in use for long periods. Empty or upturn children’s pools, sandpits or other play equipment that may hold water.
- § Empty all pot plant saucers of excess water or fill with sand to prevent mosquito production.
- § Frog and ornamental ponds can be stocked with native fish that will feed on the mosquito eggs and larvae. Mosquitofish (*Gambusia holbrooki*) and other exotic species should not be used.
- § Boats and trailers should be overturned or covered to prevent the accumulation of rainwater and tarpaulins covering these objects should be emptied after rain.
- § Install roof guttering guards or ensure leaves and debris are cleaned from guttering to prevent blockages.
- § Screen all openings to tanks, wells or other large water containers with wire gauze not coarser than 1mm aperture mesh.
- § Flush out bird baths, small water features and bromeliads with a hose on a weekly basis.