

Bromeliads and Mosquitoes



Mosquito larvae grow in the water-holding leaves of bromeliad plants. There are several types of mosquitoes that can be found in bromeliads in Florida. Their scientific names are *Aedes*, *Culex*, and *Wyeomyia*. The *Aedes* and the *Culex* are medically important because they can transmit viruses that cause Chikungunya, Dengue, West Nile, and Zika.

Take a look!

You can use a turkey baster to remove some of the water from the plants to look for larvae. Squirt the water into a container and look for small worm-like critters that are wiggling.



Water-holding leaves of bromeliads



Mosquito larvae



What can you do to prevent these mosquitoes from inhabiting your bromeliad plants?

There are several options:

- Remove the plants (preferred); or
- Apply *Mosquito Bits*® (a bacteria that is specific for killing mosquito larvae) every 7 days to the water-holding leaves of the plants. Follow the instructions on the package for the correct amount to apply; or
- Apply *Altosid Pro-G* (methoprene, an insect growth regulator) every 30 days to the water-holding leaves of the plants. Follow the instructions on the package for the correct amount to apply; or
- Use water to flush out the mosquitoes that may be living in the water-holding leaves. This must be done every 3—7 days to be effective. Make sure that the aquatic mosquitoes land in a dry area and that you are not just moving them from plant to plant. Removal of mosquito eggs from the plant leaves will require directed water pressure to dislodge and move them out of the plant into a dry area.

If left alone, the aquatic phase of the mosquito will end up as an adult mosquito that will be looking to feed on blood!



Adult female *Aedes aegypti*, mosquito associated with Zika, Dengue, and Chikungunya illnesses