

Mosquito Look-Alikes

There are many flying insects that look similar to mosquitoes and may be mistaken for mosquitoes. These insects can be annoying at certain times of year but unlike mosquitoes, they do not bite and cannot transmit disease. The District does not usually control these insects because they are not a threat to public health.

Crane Flies

Crane flies look like very large mosquitoes. Some common names for crane flies are 'mosquito hawk', 'mosquito eater', 'gollywopper' and 'daddy-long-legs'. However, crane flies are not mosquitoes, don't bite, and they don't eat mosquitoes. In fact, most species of crane flies don't eat at all as adults. They live only a few days, and die soon after reproducing. Crane flies found indoors can be swatted or captured and released outside.



Fungus Gnats

Fungus gnats live in dark places where they can feed on decaying vegetation and fungi. They sometimes emerge from the soil in houseplants, terrariums, or greenhouses. If they become a nuisance, you can control them using adhesive traps (available at most home improvement and garden stores). You can prevent fungus gnats by allowing the soil in houseplants to dry out between watering.



Midges

Midges resemble mosquitoes, but do not bite. However, they may be annoying when they are present in large numbers or come inside homes. Midges are most common in San Mateo County in spring and summer, and may be seen in large swarms with many individuals. They are attracted to light and may come indoors.



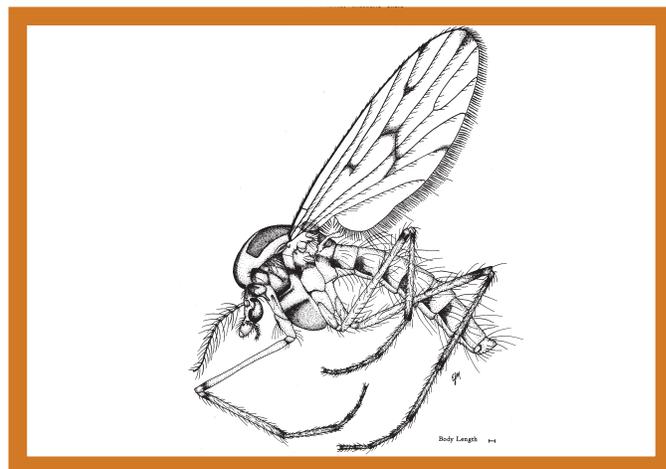
Drain Flies

Drain flies (sometimes called moth flies, sewage flies, or filter flies) are small flies with fuzzy wings. They often emerge from drains in sinks, tubs, showers, and floors, where they lay their eggs in the organic residue on the inside of drainpipes. Adult drain flies can be seen resting on walls or surfaces near drains, or hovering near drains. The best way to control drain flies is to clean the infested drain with a brush or drain cleaner.



Chaoborid Gnats

Sometimes called 'phantom midges', Chaoborid gnats are very small flies that appear translucent. Their larvae live in water and are completely transparent. Adult dance flies can be seen in large swarms over lakes in the summer. They do not bite, but can become annoying when present in large numbers.



Dance Flies

Dance flies get their name from their erratic flight patterns in mating swarms. They are commonly found in swarms, sometimes above stationary objects such as shrubs or fence posts. Dance flies may be annoying outdoors, but do not usually come indoors.

Not Sure What's Bugging You?

If you're not sure what kind of insect is causing your problem, the District laboratory can help. Bring a live or dead specimen to the office anytime we're open. It's best if the insect is intact - not squashed or crushed! Put the insect in a plastic bag or other small container. Our entomologists can identify the insect and provide information on whether it's harmful or not, and if so, how to control it.

San Mateo County Mosquito and Vector Control District

(650) 344 - 8592
1351 Rollins Road
Burlingame, CA 94010

Monday-Friday
8a.m. to 4:30p.m.

www.smcmvcd.org

