

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

MOSQUITO CONTROL WITH *GAMBUSIA AFFINIS*

“Forum” articles provide us with the opportunity to read and possibly participate in discussing controversial issues affecting vector control. The Forum article, “Adverse Assessments of *Gambusia affinis*” (J. Am. Mosq. Control Assoc. 12(2):155–166, 1996) is mostly, but not totally, a collection of adverse opinions gleaned from a variety of published and unpublished sources. Many were anecdotal comments and others were taken out of context. Critical review of the referenced articles was missing and the reader was provided with only an indirect reference for articles that are described as providing “evidence” of unsuccessful mosquito control by *G. affinis* (mosquitofish). However, the occasional adverse effects on other fish are acknowledged, and these situations should be taken very seriously.

In California, studies have shown mosquitofish to be highly effective in the control of mosquitoes in some sources and moderately effective or inef-

fective in others. The most important use of mosquitofish in California is in semipermanent aquatic habitats; e.g., rice fields are kept flooded continuously during the 4–5 summer months. Planting of mosquitofish early in the season reduces or eliminates the need for chemical pesticides in most of those fields during most of the season.

As with any mosquito control method, the need and potential benefit must be weighed against potential adverse impacts. The editorial board is urged to provide clear ground rules for articles accepted for forum discussions and for selecting individuals to respond to those articles. Unfortunately, the discussion that was included lacked the balance and objectivity required to fully understand the major issue at hand.

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