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# AN UNUSUAL LARVAL HABITAT FOR *CULISETA MELANURA*

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*Culiseta melanura* (Coquillett) has been the subject of intensive investigations since Chamberlain et al. (1951) first isolated eastern encephalitis (EE) virus from field-collected specimens. Subsequent isolations have emphasized that this species is important in the natural history of the virus in the maintenance of the enzootic cycle (Joseph and Bickley, 1969). Siverly and Schoof (1962) found that laboratory-reared females would not attack human beings, although two field-collected females fed on man in the laboratory, which indicates that the species is probably not involved to any appreciable extent in animal-to-man transmission of EE virus. Only sporadic human cases are likely to be transmitted by *Cs. melanura*. An instance of the species attacking man in nature was reported by Hayes and Doane (1958).

According to Hayes (1962), the larvae normally develop in permanent freshwater swamps and bogs and in holes protected by tree roots, stumps, rock ledges and aquatic plants. During the course of vector surveillance studies in and around international entry points on the Gulf Coast, a *Cs. melanura* larva was recovered from an unusual habitat. On February 26, 1967, single specimens of fourth instar *Aedes aegypti, Culex quinquefasciatus and Cs. melanura,* were dipped by Edward Fink from a tire in a shaded area on the outskirts of Panama City, Florida. The used automobile tire held approximately a gallon of water that was rich in organic matter and had evidently not been disturbed for several months. No information is available as to the number of *Cs. melanura* in the tire, since only a sample of larvae was collected for specific determinations.

This finding indicates that, at least under certain conditions, *Cs. melanura* females will oviposit in artificial containers. Of special interest is the fact that this recovery adds another species to the long list of mosquitoes of medical importance found breeding in the water held in used tires. Used tires offer optimum breeding conditions for mosquitoes of several genera, and the problem is intensified by the prevalence of these tires in such places as backyards, vacant lots and junk yards. Haverfield and Hoffman (1966) reported that over 45% of the *Ae. aegypti* larval recoveries in Texas *Ae. aegypti* studies in 1964–65 were from this type of container. Used tires moved in both domestic and international commerce are frequently incriminated in the introduction of this species from infested to uninfested areas.

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The word is that plans are shaping up beautifully for the joint AMCA-LMCA meetings in New Orleans on March 27–30, 1977. Plan to be there.