

## How can you tell midges apart from mosquitoes?

### Mosquito



actual size

### Midge Fly



actual size

### Typical Mosquito

1. Uses its proboscis to bite. (needle-like piercing mouth parts)
2. Wings are longer than its body.
3. Always develops in water.
4. May carry diseases.

### Chironomid Midge

1. Cannot bite. (Has no proboscis)
2. Wings are shorter than its body.
3. Develops in mud on the bottom of lakes and ponds.
4. Does not carry diseases.

## Is Vector Control helping?

GLACVCD has a proactive midge control program. A vector ecologist is assigned to routinely survey the known midge breeding sources and provide recommendations for their prevention and or control. German Carp, *Cyprinus carpio*, can be used as a means of biological control in approved areas.

The Los Angeles County Flood Control District cooperates with GLACVCD by letting water percolation basins dry out for 10 days before flooding them again, killing most midge larvae. Under certain circumstances, this is not always possible, so other control methods maybe used. Any control performed by the District is covered by an annual contract with the Flood Control District.

*Control of adult midges is not a practiced approach to reduce populations.*

## Tips to help alleviate nuisance midges:

- Reduce the overall light use during the evening by using less powerful bulbs.
- Use yellow light bulbs in outdoor fixtures; yellow is less attractive to midges.
- Delay turning lights on as long as possible after sunset.
- Keep doors closed and windows tightly screened to prevent midges from entering the home.
- Avoid using zap traps or other electrical traps, which are virtually ineffective.
- Foggers may bring temporary relief for an hour or two if used just before an outdoors function such as a yard party or wedding reception.

## Who do I contact if I have a midge problem?

### Greater Los Angeles County Vector Control District District Headquarters

12545 Florence Ave.  
Santa Fe Springs,  
CA 90670  
(562)-944-9565  
[www.glacvcd.com](http://www.glacvcd.com)

# ARE MIDGES BOTHERING YOU?

## COMMON QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS ON MIDGES



## GREATER LOS ANGELES COUNTY VECTOR CONTROL DISTRICT





## What are midge flies?

Midges are non-biting flies that resemble mosquitoes. They are similar in size and general appearance.

## What do they look like?

They are approximately a half inch in length and light green in color.



Two examples of full grown adult Midge flies.

## Where do midges come from?

- spreading basins
- lakes
- reservoirs
- ponds
- flood control channels

## Where you see them?

They are usually found resting on cars, screen doors, windows, walls, under eaves, porches, entryways and usually on bushes and other vegetation.

## What time of the year are midges most abundant?

Midges are usually a problem from April to September, and survive the winter as larvae in mud at the water bottom.

## What time of day are they a problem?

Swarms usually emerge at sunset.

## Why are they bothersome?

When Midges emerge as adults in enormous numbers, they invade nearby residences, disrupting outdoor/ indoor activities, causing the following problems:

- Nuisance swarms may create stressful conditions for residents.
- They are attracted to outdoor lights located approximately within a quarter mile of their breeding sources and may enter homes.
- Flying adults can become stuck on newly painted surfaces.
- Adults can deface walls, ceilings, curtains, etc.



Nuisance midges on a car's rear view mirror

## Can they cause medical problems?

Swarms can cause discomfort or irritation by entering the eyes, ears, nose and mouth. These insects do not constitute a public health problem because they do not transmit diseases. Several species, however, have been documented as the cause of allergies in people exposed to massive swarms.

## Do they have any economic importance?

In residential areas, they tend to lessen real estate value. In industrial situations they interfere with processing of food, paper products, plastic, and automotive refinishing operations.

## Life Cycle:

Stages of the midge life cycle are: eggs, larvae, pupae and adults.

**Eggs:** Eggs are laid in a jelly-like mass on water or in the mud.

**Larvae:** Newly hatched from eggs, larvae burrow into mud. The larvae are often bright red and live in water or wet soil, where they feed upon the organic matter, particularly algae.

**Pupae:** The pupae rise to the water surface after the final larval stage and soon emerge as winged adults.

**Adults:** Adults will live approximately 7 days depending upon the species and weather conditions. Males form swarms where they capture females for mating.

