

The SKEETER

THE OFFICAL NEWSLETTER OF THE
VIRGINIA MOSQUITO CONTROL ASSOCIATION



VOLUME 84
SUMMER 2024
NUMBER II

President's Address

Summertime Greetings, VMCA!

I hope everyone is enjoying the summer and the busiest time of the year for most of us. At least it makes those hours fly by! Since my last address, the VMCA board and several committees have been **busy** doing all sorts of things to benefit membership.

Plans are underway for the **2025 Joint Conference with MAMCA which will be held February 4-6, 2025 at the Marriott City Center in Newport News, Virginia**. The program is expected to fill quickly so now is a great time to start thinking about presentation submissions. **Thanks to Representative Tim DuBois** for keeping the VMCA in communication with the MAMCA board. More information will be shared as we receive it. Please stay tuned to your member emails for announcements or check in to the [2025 conference page](#) on the website.

Our Education Committee put on another excellent Adult Mosquito Identification Course in May. **Thank you to all the attending students, teachers, and helpers who made this event a success.** Check out their article in this issue.

Thanks to the Public Relations Committee, VMCA was granted the Governor's Proclamation for Mosquito Control Awareness Week in Virginia, June 16-22, 2024. I hope everyone was able to participate in outreach events and spread the message of the important work we all do protecting public health. The Information Committee featured an awesome mini-series, "Mosquito Myths vs. Facts" that you can view on [Facebook](#) or Instagram. If you did something for MCA Week, please consider sharing your efforts in an article for this newsletter.

The Curations and Preservation Committee has been hard at work putting together a [new page](#) on the website showcasing all the specimens in the VMCA collection. Please check out the list and see if you are able to contribute any missing species, either adult or larval. Reach out to [C&P Chair Wes Robertson](#) with any questions.

Our Student Competition Committee is gearing up for their 6th Annual Tour de Skeeter. Please consider participating in this event, as it is a major contributor to the funding for the annual Student Poster Competition, plus it's a great chance to get outside with your fellow mosquito folks and you get a one-of-a-kind mosquito t-shirt! Check out [their page](#) on the website for more information. SCC is also making plans for their 9th Annual Student Poster Competition which will be held in conjunction with the 2025 Joint Conference and will be welcoming student submissions from all MAMCA states in addition to Virginia and its neighboring states. Check out their article in this issue and look out for more information on the [website](#) as it comes available.

I think everyone enjoyed VMCA's Inaugural Photo Contest and the 2nd annual event is in the works! New categories are being considered and the **Photo Contest Committee would like your input**. Please send any contest ideas to [Photo Contest Chair Wes Robertson](#).

I know it seems early, but please **think about nominating one of your peers for an award this year**. There are several categories to choose from, all are listed in detail on our [website](#).

Lastly but certainly not least, **many thanks go to our Information Committee** who puts this newsletter together and manages our social accounts. It cannot be overstated how much work goes into creating all this content to keep membership informed and engaged. Please show them your thanks by following VMCA on Facebook and Instagram, as well as sharing your experiences in *The Skeeter*.



Wishing you all a successful summer battling the Culicidae!

Karen Akaratovic
2024 VMCA President

Announcements

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Upcoming Events

TOUR DE SKEETER - OCTOBER 19

NCMVCA - NOVEMBER 18-20, 2024

VMCA/MAMCA CONFERENCE - FEB 4-8, 2025

What's That?



What's on the Cover?

Female *Aedes canadensis*, photo taken by Ben Burgunder from Fritz Lab, University of Maryland



Entomology Etymology

Dive into the words that buzz around mosquito control. See Page 9 to find out where the name of your favorite genus originated from.

Did You Know?

You can check our [news page](#) for more updates and renew your membership anytime [online](#)!

Mosquito Control Awareness Week



CERTIFICATE of RECOGNITION

By virtue of the authority vested by the Constitution in the Governor of the Commonwealth of Virginia, there is hereby officially recognized:

MOSQUITO CONTROL AWARENESS WEEK

WHEREAS, mosquito borne diseases, including malaria, yellow fever, West Nile virus, Zika virus, and other forms of arboviral encephalitis have historically been a source of human and animal suffering, illness, and death in the United States and worldwide; and

WHEREAS, an excess number of mosquitoes diminishes our enjoyment of the outdoors, hinders outdoor work, decreases livestock productivity, and reduces property values; and

WHEREAS, the American Mosquito Control Association was established on June 26, 1935, to provide a nationally organized network to help mosquito control professionals develop and encourage effective and environmentally safe mosquito control activities; and

WHEREAS, the Virginia Mosquito Control Association serves to facilitate communication and education among Virginia's mosquito control professionals to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of mosquito control operations in Virginia; and

WHEREAS, the Virginia Department of Health partners with multiple state agencies and government organizations in a public awareness campaign to prevent the spread of the West Nile virus, Zika virus, and other mosquito-borne viruses and encourage the elimination of mosquito breeding habitats around the home; and

WHEREAS, it is important for individuals and organizations to work with the Virginia Department of Health and local mosquito control organizations to help decrease the effects of mosquito-borne illnesses;

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Glenn Youngkin, do hereby recognize June 16-22, 2024, as **MOSQUITO CONTROL AWARENESS WEEK** in the COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA, and I call this observance to the attention of all our citizens.



Glenn Youngkin
Governor

Kerry Lee
Secretary of the Commonwealth

Acquired and Submitted by Public Relations
Committee Chair, Katherine Reutt

Adult Mosquito ID Course

The start of the adult mosquito surveillance season typically brings new faces to the regional mosquito control jurisdictions. Therefore, the VMCA Education Committee holds their annual Adult Mosquito Identification Course to ensure that all staff is ready for identifying mosquito specimens. This year, the course was held on Monday, May 6th, 2024 at Chesapeake Mosquito Control Commission. There were 15 students registered for the 2024 course. Those students represented various mosquito control jurisdictions, including Chesapeake, Henrico, Norfolk, Portsmouth, Suffolk, Virginia Beach, and York County.



The Education Committee organizes the structure and agenda of the course.



Local mosquito control professionals volunteer to cover the course topics. The presenters included Karen Akaratovic (Suffolk), Jay Kiser (Suffolk), Kaitlyn Price (Virginia Beach), Janice Pulver (York County), Katherine Reutt (Chesapeake), Penelope Smelser (Norfolk), and Addie Weddle (Portsmouth). All presenters also serve as course instructors, by assisting students during the portion dedicated to mosquito specimen identification via the use of microscopes. Additional instructors included Carla Caulkins (Chesapeake) and Chelsea Putnick (Portsmouth). The course relies on mosquito experts sharing their knowledge each year. We greatly appreciate the efforts made by all presenters and instructors.

If you would like to learn more about the VMCA Adult Mosquito Identification Course, or any trainings under the Education Committee, you can visit <https://mosquito-va.org/> under the “Training” tab.

Thank you for the continued support!

Submitted by:

Katherine Reutt

Education Committee Chair

2024 Tour de Skeeter

October 19

This year will be epic!



2021

\$35 Registration
includes food, drinks, and the
new Tour de Skeeter T-shirt.

**Registration and more details
will be available later this
summer.**



2023

**Come join us on the Capital
Trail for food, friends, and a
great time**

2022



Thank you to the sponsors of the 2023 TdS



Submitted by:
Jay Kiser
Student Competition Chair

Chicken Roundup

Our annual “Sentinel Chicken Roundup” took place on May 13th. This year, we continued our collaboration with Fresh Start Farm in Gloucester, VA, marking the third consecutive year of this successful partnership.

48 golden comet chickens were collected by Virginia Beach and Chesapeake Mosquito Controls to use as part of their mosquito surveillance program.

The chickens will be placed in strategic locations across the two cities from May until October, providing continuous data throughout the mosquito season.

Throughout this period, they will undergo weekly blood testing for Eastern

Equine Encephalitis (EEE) and West Nile Virus (WNV). **The data collected from these tests is invaluable,** providing early detection of these viruses and allowing the programs to respond swiftly to potential outbreaks. Blood samples are tested by the Department of Consolidated Laboratory Services (DCLS) in Richmond. The samples undergo testing to identify the presence of WNV or EEE antibodies. In the event that a chicken tests positive for the antibodies, they are quickly removed from their location and another



Virginia Beach Mosquito Control prepares the chicken's cages for transport.



Chesapeake Mosquito Control takes a blood sample from a chicken.

chicken replaces it. This allows for uninterrupted disease monitoring in that area.

Chickens that have the antibodies are not affected by WNV or EEE nor is their health compromised.

Utilizing sentinel chickens allows these programs to conduct surveillance in areas where traditional CDC light traps or gravid traps might not be effective or practical.

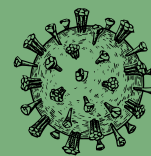
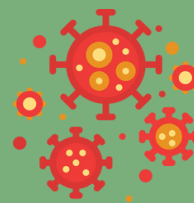
At the end of their watch, all of the chickens are given to local homeowners where they will continue to lead healthy and peaceful lives free from the duties of mosquito control.

Chesapeake Mosquito Control Commission and Virginia Beach Mosquito Control Bureau are grateful to Fresh Start Farm for their continued support and look forward to another productive season.

Submitted by:
Kaitlyn Price
Virginia Beach Mosquito Control



VIRGINIA MOSQUITO
CONTROL ASSOCIATION'S



9th Annual Student Poster Competition

In Vector Borne Sciences

POSTERS WILL BE DISPLAYED AT VMCA/MAMCA
ANNUAL CONFERENCE, FEBRUARY 4-6, 2025 AT
THE NEWPORT NEWS MARRIOTT CITY CENTER

Monetary Prizes

1st place \$500

2nd place \$300

3rd place \$200

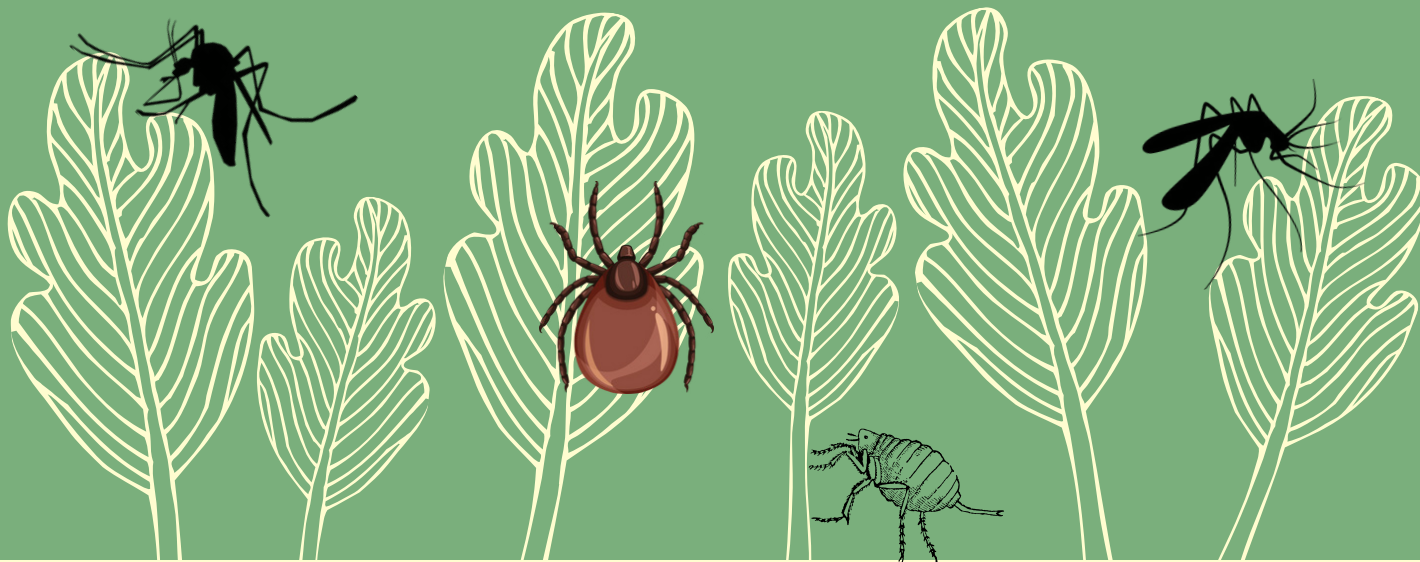
University students
from the Mid-Atlantic
region are invited to
participate:

VA, DE, GA, KY, MD, NC,
PA, SC, TN, DC, and WV

Submission
deadline is

December 4, 2024

Posters must
display original
research



Entomology Etymology

Culex, Aedes, Anopheles... where do these names we say every day come from?

102, CULEX. *Mouth* with a single-valved exerted flexile sheath inclosing 5 bristles; *feelers* 2, of 3 articulations: *antennæ* approximate, filiform. *Gnat.*

These like the former insects, live by sucking out the blood and juices of the larger animals, and are eagerly sought after by poultry and sparrows: the *larva* resides in stagnant waters and has a small cylindrical respiratory tube near the tail, the head is armed with hooks to seize on the aquatic insects upon which it feeds: the *pupa* is incurved and ovate with respiratory tubes near the head.

The original description of mosquitoes, from the 1802 English translation of *Systema Naturae*.

Culex is the original, named by Carl Linnaeus himself back in 1758 in his original book on taxonomy. It means, basically, “gnat” “mosquito”. He was creating the entire naming system from scratch, and so he generally kept the Latin borrowings simple—which is why in addition to *Culex pipiens* (“shrill mosquito”) he gave us such binomials as *Canis familiaris* (“family dog”), *Musca domestica* (“house fly”) and *Homo sapiens* (“smart human”).

Carl called all mosquitoes *Culex*, but as the next century rolled around and

entomologists began splitting them into new genera they were forced to get more creative. The prolific German dipterist Johann Meigen preferred to keep things punchy, turning to Greek for his 1818 descriptions of *Aedes* and *Anopheles*, which mean “unpleasant” and “harmful” (or more literally, “useless”) respectively. A decade later the Frenchman Jean-Baptiste Robineau-Desvoidy also dipped into Greek to coin *Psorophora*, which is a bit more creative, if no less disdainful: that one literally means “itch-bringer.” (You’d think dipterists would be a little more enthusiastic about their subjects, but it’s hard to argue these names aren’t apt!)

The names assigned to genera described later in the 19th century and into the 20th tend to be less emotive and more morphologically descriptive. English mosquito devotee Frederick Theobald didn’t leave an etymology for his *Toxorhynchites*, but since *tox-* is Greek for “curved” and *rhynchus* means “nose”, it’s easy to see what he was referring to. Though the Argentinian polymath Enrique Lynch Arribalzaga was similarly reticent about the intent behind his names, it can also be guessed at: *Ochlerotatus* seems like it might mean something like “yellow marks” (or “ochre tattoo”)—referring, probably, to the pattern on the *scapularis* (“shoulder”) of the type species. He also described *Uranotaenia sapphirina*, which bears maybe the most poetic name of all: most sources gloss it as “heavenly ribbon of sapphire,” a description which anyone who’s been lucky enough to look at one under the microscope will agree is very much deserved.

Ever wondered where the words we use in mosquito control come from? So do we! If you’ve got a word you’d like more info about, send us an email, and we’ll consider making it the subject of the Etymology Corner. (Sure, you could search for it online yourself—but where’s the fun in that?)

Submitted by:
Alex Riley
Suffolk Mosquito Control

What’s That? Answer

This is a female blacklegged tick (*Ixodes scapularis*), commonly known as a deer tick. This arachnid is a primary vector for Lyme disease in the eastern United States, including Virginia. Found in wooded and brushy areas, especially where deer and rodents are present, the blacklegged tick is most active in the spring and fall. As these ticks can transmit pathogens like *Borrelia burgdorferi*, it’s crucial to perform thorough tick checks after outdoor activities in these habitats.

Submitted by:
Ben Burgunder
Fritz Lab, University of Maryland



HISTORICAL FLASHBACK

EIGHT DECADES OF THE SKEETER PART II

*presented by the
Historical Committee*

It's the middle of summer, and it's hot. Virginia's metro regions are undergoing a population and development boom, and with it comes new commercial districts, new housing projects, and an expansion of Interstate 64. But the rapid growth threatens to outpace the capabilities of the state's beleaguered mosquito control community, as poorly drained construction sites turn into larval hatcheries.

The month is July, and the year is 1964.

History might not repeat itself, as Mark Twain apocryphally said, but it does often rhyme. (Or maybe it's just a law of History that 1-64 is always under construction.)

Another constant of that eternal return: summer is peak mosquito season, which means Skeeter projects tend to fall by the wayside. This beleaguered mosquito worker & Skeeter correspondent certainly found less time than she would have liked to do research and gather background information for this entry in our year long retrospective - so if there are any mistakes, please let her know!

- Alex Riley, Historical Committee

THE SIXTIES & THE SEVENTIES

1964 fell in the middle of a decade of rapid change across the entire all axes of American life. The New Deal social programs, the mass mobilization of the second world war and the post-war economic boom had laid the foundation for increased social mobility and made the iniquities inherent to prewar society - from class to gender to race - increasingly untenable.

By July of '64 the civil rights movement was well underway: the Civil Rights Act itself had been signed into law in that very month. Though this ended legal segregation, desegregation would continue throughout the rest of the 60s and, in some respects, to this very day. (Virginia acquitted itself particularly poorly during this period, responding to school desegregation with

"massive resistance" as privately-funded "segregation academies" popped up across the state.)

The Civil Rights Act prohibited discrimination based on sex as well as race. This, along with the Equal Pay Act of 1963 and the introduction of the birth control pill in the early 60s, created the material groundwork that would allow for a dramatic increase in women's participation in the labor force. By 1974 the percentage of women in the workforce had nearly doubled, as had the share of those who had a degree.

Technology changed rapidly too during this period. In 1959 Xerox debuted its first copy machine, shifting the Skeeter's publication method from the clunky ink-stained linotype machine to the sleek space-age photocopier.

VOL 8 NO 4: JULY + AUGUST, 1964

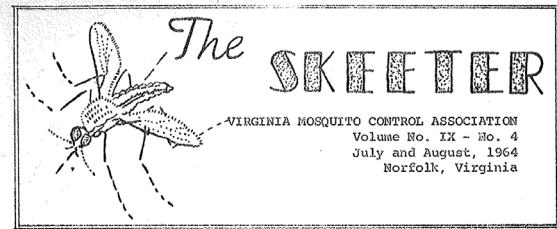
Now a twenty year old publication, the '64 Skeeter kept up the format it had settled into a decade earlier: a bimonthly, 4 page newsletter with a mix of industry news, local updates, amusing anecdotes and human interest bits.

In the eighteen years since the MCWA's dissolution Virginia's mosquito control community had grown rapidly, keeping pace with the overall population boom across the state. Communities large and small were establishing their own mosquito control programs, from the newly created city of Chesapeake (population 75,000) to the tiny Eastern Shore town of Hallwood (population 270). Twenty of these were organized as districts, governed by mosquito commission. Many others were programs not organized as districts, some of them with very limited resources: a piece this issue describes how the "town fathers" of Hallwood opted for a secondhand Jeep with a "plumber's nightmare rig," which cost around 3,000 of today's dollars. York County's mosquito control commission, in contrast, opened full operations that summer with two brand new Ford ¾ ton pickup trucks, fully kitted out for both fogging and larviciding. This issue also marked the establishment of Virginia's 21st mosquito control district, in the city of Hopewell, which is just north of Petersburg on the James River.

This issue talks about mosquito programs in Franklin, Hopewell, and Hallwood—all places which, as far as I can tell, lack a program today. Where did they all go? A project for another time, maybe! —Alex



ABOVE: A thermal fogging truck in 1960. From the Florida Weekly.
TOP RIGHT: The Skeeter Vol 8 No 4. From VMCA archives.



NEW MOSQUITO COMMISSION AT HOPEWELL

The twenty-first mosquito control district in Virginia was organized on July 29, 1964, in the City Manager's office in Hopewell, Virginia. The City Council of Hopewell had passed an ordinance on July 14, 1964, creating the district and appointing H. Douglas Hamner, Jr., as Commissioner. Dr. Mack I. Shanholts, Virginia State Health Commissioner, designated R. E. Dorer as his deputy to act in his place as a member and ex officio Chairman of the Hopewell Mosquito Control Commission. Immediate steps were taken to organize the work to be done.

CUTTING THE CLOTH TO FIT THE JOB

In Accomack County on the Eastern Shore of Virginia, there is a small town of Hallwood, population about 270. It is a neat and prosperous little town, but they have mosquitoes. Being close to the salt marshes, the principal culprit is the "salt marsh" mosquito. The town fathers were interested in doing something, but, of course, their resources were limited. The solution: A secondhand Jeep with a plumber's nightmare rig. Total cost: \$300.

PROGRESS BRINGS PROBLEMS

Most everyone favors progress. In today's population explosion, new housing developments, shopping centers, and highways are constantly being constructed. During these constructions, the mosquito control commissions have their hands full attending to the mosquito breeding problems that have been temporarily created. Interstate Highway Route 64, which is now under construction from Virginia Beach Boulevard to Tidewater Drive, is a prime example of the problems which now confront the Tanners Creek and Norfolk City Mosquito Control Commissions. Land excavations form temporary rain pools; drainage ditches are at times completely disrupted; and silt clogs the drainage systems. The construction of the interchange at Tidewater Drive has completely blocked an extensive salt marsh and upland drainage system resulting in the creation of a temporary lake. The water impounded has covered normally high quitoes. The problem of insecticide penetration is now added to the heavy Culex breeding. After completion, Interstate 64 will have eliminated several acres of salt marsh and improved the overall drainage, but it is hard to visualize the advantages of progress when confronted with its construction problems.

POWERFUL STUFF

ULV fogging wouldn't be invented until the latter half of the decade, so the mosquito foggers of this era used a thermal system developed following the second world war. These fog machines put out huge amounts of material—so much that it was the subject of two separate stories this issue. One of them reports that clear flashing lights are better than red ones for penetrating the fog generated by the adulticide trucks—which is good, since Virginia statute didn't allow mosquito trucks to use the red ones. The other comes in the form of an amusing anecdote:

In some sections several street lights are turned on and off by a single electric eye or some sort of device. It has been noted that when fogging past such an installation, the fog, apparently reflecting light from the street light, causes the whole block of lights to be turned off. A fellow says, "What kind of stuff are you using in that there machine? When you go by all the street lights go out."

VOL 18 NO 4: JULY + AUGUST, 1974

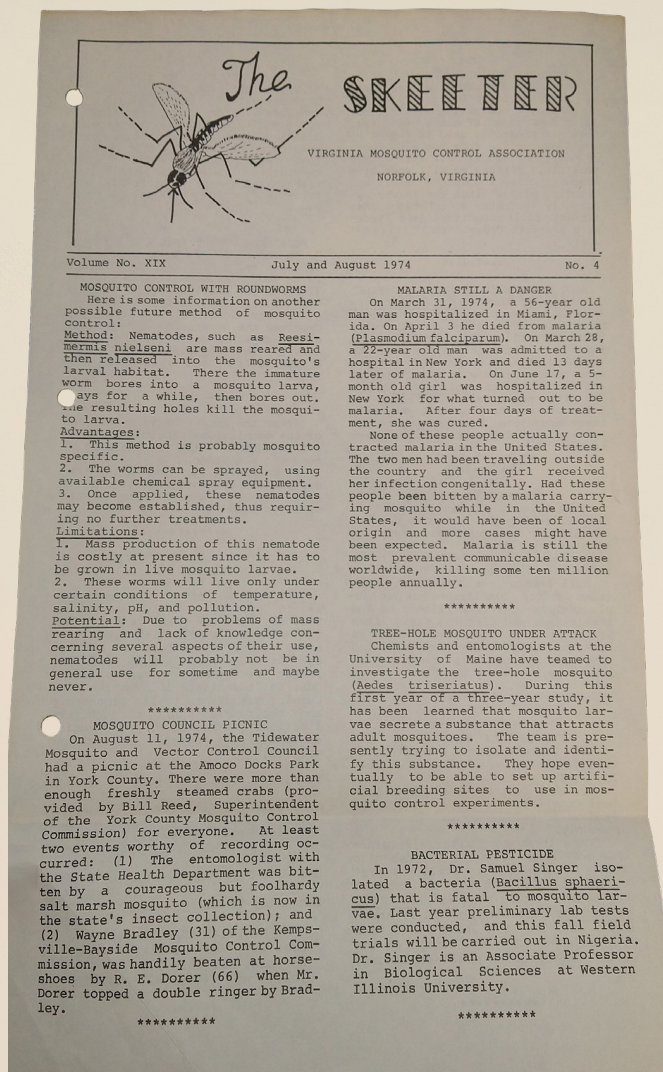
By 1974 the Skeeter had slimmed to a lean two page publication, presented on both sides of a single sheet of 14-inch legal paper. Though now more resembling a flyer than a newspaper, the now 30-year-old newsletter kept up the format of the last two decades.

Thirty years on, most of the names appearing in the Skeeter are new, though one is still familiar: R. E. Dorer, now in his mid sixties, was the VMCA's Secretary-Treasurer – and still a contender in the VMCA's intermural activities. On August 11th, he "handily" beat the much younger Wayne Bradley in horse-shoes at a TMVCC picnic.

The July & August of '74 issue is short, but still managed to pack in plenty of information. **MALARIA STILL A DANGER**, warns one piece about the possibility of contracting malaria abroad, citing two deaths that spring in Florida and New York. A few columns deal with local issues: tips on ULV sprayer maintenance, mapping and an *Aedes sollicitans* bloom in Chesapeake, and Equal Employment decisions in Portsmouth. Despite the issues's brevity, the editor(s) managed to include a cute anecdote: after a recent rainstorm, a little girl had called one of the commissions eight times at her mother's direction. There was even a sort of "Historical Flashback" – a piece titled **TWENTY YEARS AGO FROM "THE SKEETER"** looked back at Virginia Beach's struggles with *Mansonia perturbans*, an issue that the writer noted "still continues."

OUT WITH THE OLD...

The thirty years since the Skeeter's founding had seen near constant change in the technology, materials and methodology of mosquito control. The arsenic and diesel oil larviciding of the 40s gave way to the postwar rise of synthetic pesticides, led by DDT, which was approved for sale two months after the war's end. Throughout the 40s and 50s DDT was used for everything from outdoor fogging to larviciding to residual applications indoors,



and played a role in the final elimination of malaria and other tropical mosquito-borne diseases across the global North.

From even before its debut, though, DDT's widespread use was controversial. A persistent organic chemical, it breaks down slowly, accumulating in fatty tissues, lingering in the soil and traveling long distances through the upper atmosphere. Its long term effects on humans and other non-target species were not well understood, and skepticism built throughout the fifties and sixties over the scope of its use, especially as excess application led to increased insect resistance. Rachel Carson's 1962 book *Silent Spring* brought these concerns to the forefront of the public consciousness, starting – according to tradition, anyway – the environmental movement. By 1972 the newly founded EPA had banned DDT entirely.

TOP: The Skeeter Vol 18 No 4. From VMCA archives.

BELOW: Hampton Roads in 1964. From VDOT Maps collection.

...IN WITH THE NEW

As the industry moved on from DDT, researchers & mosquito workers alike were dreaming of newer, more environmentally friendly methods of mosquito detection and elimination.

There's a piece about an ongoing study on oviposition attractants emitted by *Aedes triseriatus* larvae, which draw adults to their breeding pools, and another on a project in Michigan training dogs to sniff out invasive spongy months. The writer naturally asks: why not mosquitoes?

Dogs are presently used to locate by smell everything from bombs to "pot" so why not bugs? If this proves feasible, perhaps we will soon have mosquito control dogs to smell out breeding places since the larvae apparently secrete a substance that attracts adult mosquitoes (see "Tree-Hole Mosquito Under Attack" this issue).

Sadly, this vision of mosquito dogs doesn't seem to have ever come to fruition. (Though the dream may still be alive elsewhere in the world: in 2021 Sri Lanka's police spokesman announced that two dogs had been successfully trained as larval sniffers & enlisted in the fight against dengue.)

Dog-detected larvae would still need to be killed, and another article discusses the potential for future nematode-based pesticides. Though lethal to individual larvae, the

piece notes that the worms are hard to mass produce, and die easily, making it unlikely they'll be widely used anytime soon, if ever. (This would prove correct: though it seems like researchers return to the nematode well every decade or so, nothing has ever really come of it.)

Maybe the single biggest development of the decade received only a small blurb: in the fall, field trials would begin for a new bacterial control method that would eventually become a cornerstone of the industry:

BACTERIAL PESTICIDE

In 1972, Dr. Samuel Singer isolated a bacteria (*Bacillus sphaericus*) that is fatal to mosquito larvae. Last year preliminary lab tests were conducted, and this fall field trials will be carried out in Nigeria. Dr. Singer is an Associate Professor in Biological Sciences at Western Illinois University.

ALL TOGETHER NOW

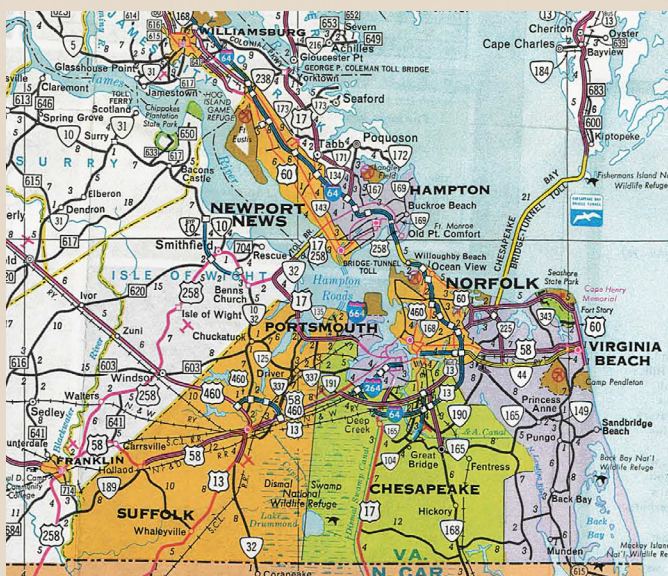
In 1952 Hampton Roads was surrounded by about a dozen different cities and counties. The rapid growth of the 1950s and 60s led to a period of consolidation, as these communities all jockeyed for territory and tax base.

On the Peninsula, sparring between Hampton and Newport News eventually lead to their absorption of the surrounding counties and towns. In the south, Norfolk's expansion into both Princess Ann and Norfolk counties alarmed its neighboring communities, and so South Norfolk merged with Norfolk County to form the city of Chesapeake while the Princess Ann County was folded into the relatively new city of Virginia Beach.

The final city-county merger occurred in 1974, when the former county of Nansemond merged into the city of Suffolk. Poquoson would break away from York County into an independent city the following year, but the summer sun of '74 fell on a region that looked on a map more or less like it does today.

Phew—those old Skeeters were short, but really managed to cram a lot in.

Up next: 1984 & 1994! —Alex



Coast Quester

City of Suffolk Mosquito Control found its first Gulf Coast tick, *Amblyomma maculatum*, on July 23, 2024 in the northeast zone of our city.



Amblyomma maculatum female collected 7/23/2024 in Suffolk, Virginia, dorsal (L), ventral (R)

Biology Assistant William Lexcen scratched his neck and made the surprise discovery after setting a trap route in the area so the exact location is unknown. Small numbers of this tick species have been collected since 2020 in Suffolk by the ODU Tick Team but this is the first time a City of Suffolk employee has found one and it was simultaneously exciting and scary!

At first glance, this female looked pretty similar to an American dog tick, *Dermacentor variabilis*, but there were some things about her that caught my eye. Before even looking at the key, I noticed overall she appeared larger than a dog tick. Also, her mouthparts seemed longer, body shape was more elongated, coloration seemed more coppery-red/brown, scutum markings appeared brighter white, and her legs even seemed longer and with more defined striping than the dog tick.



Dorsal full body, *Amblyomma maculatum* female (L), *Dermacentor variabilis* female (R)

Submitted by:
Karen Akaratovic
Suffolk Mosquito Control

Continued on next page...

Coast Quester, cont'd



Dorsal close-up of head and scutum, *Amblyomma maculatum* female (L), *Dermacentor variabilis* female (R)



Ventral full body, *Amblyomma maculatum* female (L), *Dermacentor variabilis* female (R)

The Gulf Coast tick, while collected rarely in our area, is cause for concern due to its ability to transmit the bacterium, *Rickettsia parkeri* which causes Tidewater spotted fever as well as *Rickettsia rickettsii*, the bacterium that causes Rocky Mountain spotted fever (RMSF). Both of these illnesses are characterized by flu-like symptoms including fever, headache, fatigue, muscle pain and weakness, as well as a rash and at least with *R. parkeri*, a dark scabby sore (eschar) at the site of the bite. RMSF is usually more severe and can be fatal if left untreated. If you think you may have been bitten by one of these ticks and are showing symptoms, seek medical treatment immediately. Administration of antibiotics (most likely doxycycline) within the first few days of symptoms can reduce your chances of severe illness and complications. More information can be found on the [Virginia Department of Health](#) and [Centers for Disease Control](#) websites.

Submitted by:
Karen Akaratovic
Suffolk Mosquito Control

Submissions Wanted!



Summer is here, and it's the perfect time to share the cool things you're encountering in the field. Whether it's a fascinating vector-related find, striking photos, or groundbreaking research, we want to feature your work in *The Skeeter*. We are always accepting submissions!

Please email *The Skeeter* editor, Kaitlyn Price at kcprice@vb.gov or [submit online](#)

Jurisdictions, Organizations, and Resources

Virginia mosquito control jurisdictions

- [Alexandria Health Department](#)
- [Boykins, Town of](#)
- [Chesapeake Mosquito Control Commission](#)
- [Chincoteague Mosquito Control](#)
- [Fairfax County Health Department](#)
- [Gloucester County Mosquito Control](#)
- [Hampton Environmental Sciences](#)
- [Henrico County](#)
- [Joint Base Langley-Eustis](#)
- [Newport News Vector Control](#)
- [Norfolk Vector Control](#)
- [Poquoson Mosquito and Drainage](#)
- [Portsmouth Mosquito Control](#)
- [Prince William County Mosquito & Forest Pest Management](#)
- [Suffolk Mosquito Control](#)
- [Virginia Beach Mosquito Control](#)
- [Williamsburg Public Works](#)
- [York County Mosquito Control](#)

Neighboring, regional, & national mosquito control organizations

- [American Mosquito Control Association](#)
- [Mid-Atlantic Mosquito Control Association](#)
- [Delaware Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Control](#)
- [Maryland Department of Agriculture](#)
- [New Jersey Mosquito Control Association](#)
- [North Carolina Mosquito and Vector Control Association](#)
- [Northeastern Mosquito Control Association](#)
- [South Carolina Mosquito Control Association](#)
- [Georgia Mosquito Control Association](#)
- [Florida Mosquito Control Association](#)

Other resources

- [Virginia Department of Health](#)
- [Centers for Disease Control & Prevention](#)
- [Fairfax County Education and Outreach Materials](#)
- [Northeast Regional Center for Excellence in Vector-borne Diseases](#)
- [VMCA Employment Opportunities](#)
- [AMCA Career Center](#)

Know of another jurisdiction or resource to
add?

Please submit them to the [Editor](#)

2024 Sustaining Members

The VMCA gratefully acknowledges the support of the following sustaining members for 2024. Without their generous contributions, much of what we do would not be possible. Please do not hesitate to contact them. They are here to help you!



Azelis

Dan McCombie
(314) 541-1972

daniel.mccombie@azelis.com



Central Life
Sciences

Jeff O'Neill

(302) 312-3950

joneill@central.com



Clarke

Jeff Hottenstein

(703) 498-9362

jhottenstein@clarke.com



Frontier
Precision

Chad Minter
(208) 420-2778

chad@frontierprecision.com

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Summit
Chemical

Zach Cohen
(443) 250-6500

zcohen@summitchemical.com



Target

Steve Molnar
(470) 432-3134

steve.molnar@target-specialty.com



Valent

Jim Andrews
(910) 547-8070

james.andrews@valentbiosciences.com



Veseris

Brock Verworn
(571) 296-6976

Brock.Verworn@veseris.com

2024 VMCA Committees

Committee Name	Chairperson	Current Members
Annual Meeting - Hospitality Room	Carol LaLiberte lalibertec@portsmouthva.gov	
Annual Meeting - Local Arrangements	Charles Abadam cabadam@suffolkva.us	Joshua Snyder, Joshua Smith, Carol LaLiberte, Jay Kiser, Tim DuBois, Katherine Reutt
Annual Meeting - Program	Lauren Lochstampfor lauren.lochstampfor@fairfaxcounty.gov	
Annual Meeting - Vendor Planning	Steve Molnar steve.molnar@target-specialty.com	Addie Weddle
Audit	Penny Smelser penelope.Smelser@norfolk.gov	Amber Rymer, Joshua Snyder
Bylaws	Jay Kiser jkiser@suffolkva.us	Charles Abadam, George Wojcik, Josh Smith
Curations & Preservation	Wes Robertson rob106@henrico.us	Lauren Lochstampfor, Ciro Monaco, Gina Serge
Education	Katherine Reutt kreutt@cityofchesapeake.net	Jennifer Barritt, Janice Pulver, Lisa Wagenbrenner
Elections	Karen Akaratovic kakaratovic@suffolkva.us	Andy Lima, Penny Smelser
Historian	Tim DuBois duboist@portsmouthva.gov	Alex Riley, Carla Caulkins
Information	Kaitlyn Price kcprice@vbgov.com	Tim DuBois, Jay Kiser, Katherine Reutt, Alex Riley, Wes Robertson, Gina Serge, Addie Weddle
Legislative	Randy Buchanan buc06@henrico.us	Katherine Reutt, Stacie Blackwell
Membership	Katherine Reutt	Jay Kiser
Merchandise	Penelope Smelser	
Nominating	Carla Caulkins ccaulkins@cityofchesapeake.net	
Photo Contest	Wes Robertson	Gina Serge, Janice Pulver, Rachel Kempf
Photography	Gina Serge ser089@henrico.us	Melissa Allard, Janice Pulver, TJ Carner, Carla Caulkins
Public Relations	Katherine Reutt	Penny Smelser
Special Awards	Jennifer Barritt jbarritt@vbgov.com	LaToya White
Student Competition	Jay Kiser	Ann Herring, Alex Cumbie, Tim DuBois, Wes Robertson, Ciro Monaco
Technical Support	Charles Abadam	Janice Pulver
Website	Wes Robertson	

THE SKEETER

OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF
THE VIRGINIA MOSQUITO
CONTROL ASSOCIATION

Skeeter Production Team

COMMITTEE CHAIR/
NEWSLETTER CONTACT

Kaitlyn Price

Virginia Beach Mosquito
Control
3556 Dam Neck Road
Virginia Beach, VA, 23453
(757) 385-1465
kcprice@vbgov.com

COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Tim DuBois

Portsmouth Mosquito Control
duboist@portsmouthva.gov

Jay Kiser

Suffolk Mosquito Control
jkiser@suffolkva.com

Katherine Reutt

Chesapeake Mosquito Control
kreutt@cityofchesapeake.net

Alex Riley

Suffolk Mosquito Control
rileysa.suffolk@gmail.com

Wes Robertson

Henrico County Public Works
rob106@henrico.us

Gina Serge

Henrico County Public Works
ser089@henrico.us

Addie Weddle

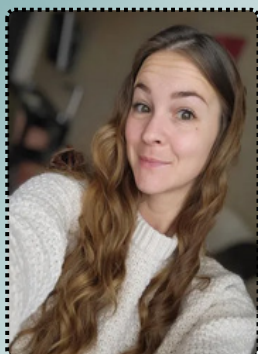
Portsmouth Mosquito Control
weddlea@portsmouthva.gov

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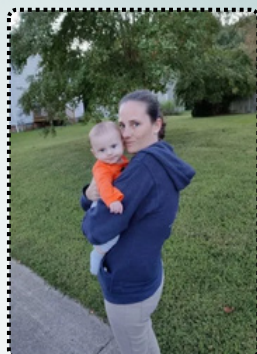
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CAULKINS, KATHERINE REUTT, KAREN
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President

Karen Akaratovic
kakaratovic@suffolkva.us



Past President

Carla Caulkins
ccaulkins@cityofchesapeake.net



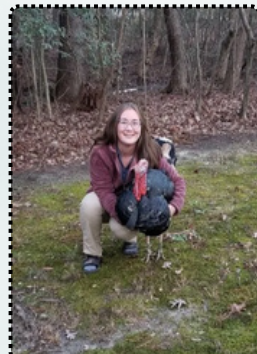
President Elect

Lauren Lochstampfor
lauren.lochstampfor@fairfaxcounty.gov



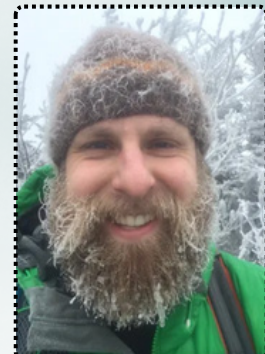
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weddlea@portsmouthva.gov



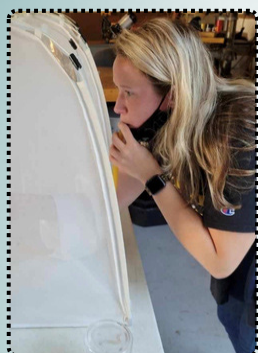
First Vice President

Janice Pulver
Janice.Pulver@yorkcounty.gov



Treasurer

Jay Kiser
jkiser@suffolkva.us



Interim Secretary

Katherine Reutt
kreutt@cityofchesapeake.net



Industry Representative

Steve Molnar
steve.molnar@target-specialty.com



MAMCA Representative

Tim DuBois
duboist@portsmouthva.gov

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