

The Asian Tiger Mosquito Profile

SCIENTIFIC NAME: *Aedes albopictus*

APPEARANCE: Black mosquito with striking white markings on the body and legs.

PERSONALITY: Very aggressive.
Bites during the day.

HER FAVORITE MEAL: Human blood — though she will feed on other mammals and birds.

PREFERRED BREEDING SITES: Artificial containers that hold water for seven days or more. These can be as big as an abandoned swimming pool or as small as a bottle cap. Other places she may lay her eggs include: tires, discarded paper cups, flowerpots and black corrugated drain pipes.

DAYTIME HANGOUT: Anywhere cool and shady. Ivy, azaleas and bushes are among her favorite resting places.

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS: Asian tiger mosquitoes are not strong flyers and typically will not travel far from their breeding habitats. However, females searching for a blood meal will fly from house to house within a neighborhood. Asian tiger mosquitoes do not respect property borders or garden fences.



Maryland Department of Agriculture
50 Harry S. Truman Parkway
Annapolis, MD 21401
(410) 841-5870
www.mda.maryland.gov
[@MdAgDept](https://www.facebook.com/MdAgDept)
www.facebook.com/MdAgDept

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The Asian Tiger Mosquito



Courtesy of Fairfax County Health Department

THREE EASY STEPS TO A MOSQUITO FREE HOME

1. Eliminate Mosquito Breeding Sites

- Female Asian tiger mosquitoes lay their eggs in artificial containers.
- Empty water out of containers at least once a week. Look for containers in hidden places such as under decks and behind sheds. Also check tarps for standing water and clean gutters as needed.
- Treat containers that cannot be emptied (such as rain barrels or abandoned pools) with an insecticide that specifically targets mosquito larvae. Look for products such as Mosquito Dunks® or Mosquito Torpedoes, sold in garden centers and hardware stores.
- Ensure that corrugated drain pipes are placed correctly so that they do not retain water. If pipes are above ground, empty them once a week. Attach flexible screening to the open end to prevent mosquitoes from entering.

2. Protect Yourself from Bites

- Avoiding bites will protect you from diseases that can be transmitted by Asian tiger mosquitoes, such as Zika, dengue and chikungunya viruses. Symptoms of these diseases can include fever, rash, aching joints and red eyes. If you develop these symptoms, tell your healthcare provider about your exposure to mosquito bites.
- Wear long, light-colored, and loose-fitting clothing to avoid mosquito bites.
- Apply an insect repellent to exposed skin when outdoors.
- The Maryland Department of Agriculture's Mosquito Control program suggests products containing the active ingredients DEET, picaridin, oil of lemon eucalyptus or IR3535 based on information from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.
- Make sure that you choose — and use — the repellent that works best for you.
- Do not allow young children to apply insect repellent to themselves. Always have an adult help them.
- Remember to read and follow the label instructions when using insect repellents.

3. Defend Your Garden

- A permethrin (or similar product) barrier spray to your yard will provide temporary relief from biting adult mosquitoes.
- Permethrin is an insecticide that both repels and kills mosquitoes. It has low human toxicity and is readily available in garden centers and hardware stores. When looking for permethrin products, make sure to check the labeling — permethrin is the name of the active ingredient, not the product brand name.
- Permethrin products that come with a manual pump spray or a hose attachment are the easiest to apply.
- Apply permethrin to ivy, shrubs, trees, ornamental grasses, and to any other plants where Asian tiger mosquitoes are resting. Permethrin will not harm your garden plants when used as directed.
- Reapply as needed depending on mosquito presence and rainfall.
- Remember to always read and follow the label instructions.