

# *Culex pipiens* Linnaeus

**OVERWINTERING STAGE:** Adult female.      **PHENOLOGY:** Multivoltine.

Adult females overwinter in caves, animal burrows, hollow trees, root cellars, bank barns, abandoned buildings, tunnels, spring houses and other protected places. They prefer cool, dark areas with high humidity.

## **LARVAL HABITAT:**

Larvae can be found in sewage treatment plants, artificial containers, catch basins and other habitats associated with human activity. They are particularly tolerant of polluted water.

## **HOST PREFERENCES:**

Females are primarily bird feeders, but they will feed on mammals, snakes and turtles at times. They will feed on humans in populated areas, especially when their primary hosts are not abundant, sometimes entering houses to feed. Some studies show a switch from avian to mammalian feeding later in the season.

## **VIRUS TESTING RESULTS:**

Virus	# specimens tested	# pools tested	# positive pools	MIR
WNV	593,599*	40,358	1,468	2.47
EEE	7,945	407	0	0
La Crosse	844	32	0	0

\* 67% from gravid traps, 27% from host-seeking traps, 6% from overwintering/resting sites

## **COMMENTS:**

This species is an important enzootic vector of West Nile virus in the Northeastern states as demonstrated by its preference for feeding on birds coupled with the large number of pools that have tested positive. It is also generally accepted that *Cx. pipiens* is the primary vector of WNV to the human population. In Pennsylvania, *Cx. pipiens* has the highest infection rates of any species. Additionally, three pools have tested positive for WNV from winter collections, suggesting females serve as important overwintering reservoirs for the virus in Pennsylvania.

