

Culiseta melanura (Coquillett)

OVERWINTERING STAGE: Larva.

PHENOLOGY: Multivoltine.

LARVAL HABITAT:

Larvae can be found in semi-permanent to permanent acidic swamps, usually those with a pH of 5.0 or lower. Larvae tend to avoid open water and can often only be found in deep crypts in the basal cavities of trees or partially submerged stumps.

HOST PREFERENCES:

Females feed almost exclusively on birds, especially perching birds. They are also known to feed on small mammals and snakes on rare occasions. Females prefer to bite in the evening and they spend a good deal of time in the tree canopy.

VIRUS TESTING RESULTS:

Virus	# specimens tested	# pools tested	# positive pools	MIR
WNV	2,534*	526	2	0.79
EEE	2,240‡	394	1	0.45
La Crosse	20	1	0	0

* 51% from resting boxes, 44% from CO₂-baited traps; 5% from gravid traps

‡ 57% from resting boxes, 39% from CO₂-baited traps; 4% from gravid traps

COMMENTS:

Larvae are fairly difficult to collect because they live in areas that are often not accessible using a standard dipper. The crypts in which they live are often deep enough that the water cannot be seen from the surface. A suction device with a long hose could be used to access the habitats and withdraw the water from the crypts. Adults have been collected rather infrequently in PA compared to other states in the Northeast. Most collections have been from acidic bogs in the Northeastern and Northwestern parts of the state. Resting boxes and CO₂-baited light traps are effective surveillance tools for adults.

