

How to Kill Mosquitoes

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Mosquitoes are not protected by the ‘wildlife protection act’. Since it is not illegal to kill them, we presume it is perfectly legal to kill them. This should reassure those who want to engage in this sport, but are afraid to do so thinking of its legal consequences. There are some who are not particularly keen to kill them. We strongly feel that every able bodied person should engage in this activity, considering it as combining business and pleasure. The reason is quite simple. Mosquitoes bite people, suck blood and spread diseases. So one should kill them before they can harm one. Even if some people are shunned by mosquitoes and are immune to their bites, they should kill them too, because even if the mosquitoes spare them, they don’t spare their loved ones, friends, and neighbors.

Now that we all have agreed that we should kill mosquitoes, let us see how. Those of you who have tried it before must have realized that it is not an easy job. Mosquitoes have a strong survival instinct, and can maneuver themselves out of harm’s way most of the times. Only a rare mosquito too heavy with sucked blood, or one who is starved and too weak to move fast can be killed easily. It is our aim to train potential mosquito-slayers, so that one day we can say that an average mosquito does not reach old age.

The best time to kill a mosquito is morning. At this time it is tired after a night’s hunting for food and other activities. It usually finds a dark corner and settles down to sleep. It should be disturbed and killed before it can fly off to the sanctuary of another dark corner.

A mosquito in flight is quite difficult to kill. A mosquito sitting down, unless asleep, is also difficult to kill, because it takes off at the first sign of a threat. But if it is in the process of landing on its prey, it takes some time to reverse the process and take off. It can be killed more easily at such a time.

A male and a female mosquito having a good time flying together are less alert than when alone, and can be killed together. However such times are rare. We have been able to do so only once in our career.

A mosquito in the process of feeding, with its proboscis sunk into its prey cannot take off when threatened because pulling the proboscis off takes some time, and it cannot leave it behind even for saving its own life. Such a mosquito can be killed on the spot, provided one can spot it in the act. We agree that it is a little late, considering the fact that it has already bitten one. But the saying ‘better late than never’ applies to this case too. If we let it go, it lives to bite again, and again.

At dusk, just before one puts on the lights, and at dawn, when the light is just enough to let one make out shapes, mosquitoes tend to have a get-together. They fly in close formation in a dark corner, usually near a mosquito net, with their prey inside. An attack on these mosquitoes can kill at least a few of them without exercising too much skill. They are unsuspecting at such times, thinking that the humans are asleep (morning), or away (evening) the lights being off. We must make it clear that one has to attack them at these times without putting on the lights. Switching on a single light also can frighten them away.

Mass killing of mosquitoes is expensive, but effective. Municipal corporations and similar civic bodies employ methods like insecticide smoke and sprays. These weapons of mass destruction are beyond the means of an average mosquito-slayer. Hand held insecticide spray pumps and pressurized spray cans are available, and can

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be used by individuals in their homes. The insecticides can be sprayed in dark corners, killing the mosquitoes there, if any. But that is war, not mosquito-hunting. For fun, one may spray an individual mosquito in the face. That is effective, but wasteful. Anyway we do not recommend insecticides because they are not eco-friendly. People can get poisoned by them slowly through contamination, or quickly by their ingestion for suicidal purposes. Such troubles are best avoided by not having any insecticides around.

An average mosquito-slayer tries to kill a mosquito by clapping and sometimes succeeds too. But it hurts him, irrespective whether it hurts the mosquito or not. After a few attempts the palms become red and they smart too. Finally one gives up the efforts and lets the mosquitoes be. That is not the right thing to do. Mosquitoes which have been clapped over become vengeful and bit harder and deeper, we believe. A better method is to use two folded newspapers for clapping. The broad surfaces reduce the risk of the mosquitoes escaping. The dead mosquito remains stuck to the surface of one or both the newspapers, which is far better than it and its contents sticking to one's palms. If one kills a good number of mosquitoes with these newspapers, their weight increases, and they fetch more money when sold for recycling. (That actually does not happen. We have said so just to motivate misers to kill mosquitoes better.) this method kills a number of mosquitoes at a time when used over a swarm of mosquitoes flying in close formation. Even if the method fails, nothing hurts except perhaps one's ego.

A colleague of ours uses a broad sheet of cardboard smeared liberally with oil. He moves it in air sweeping mosquitoes with it. He claims they stick to the oily board. The colleague is reliable and we have no special reason to disbelieve the results. But still we do not recommend this method because oil is expensive, the method is messy, and basically we are hunters, not trappers.

Sometimes one finds a mosquito flying over a wet surface, such as the floor of the toilet or bathroom. One can slap it down towards the floor. With the force of the slap, the mosquito sticks to the wet floor. Then it is a simple matter to stem on it and crush it.

A mosquito flying close to one's skin surface is in the process of finding a suitable place to land. One can kill it by slapping it onto one's own skin. It hurts, but often does kill the mosquito.

Sometimes mosquitoes get trapped against closed glass window panes, trying to go out at daybreak. They can be crushed against the glass. Care must be taken not to break the glass.

As in hunting wild animals, one may use a bait to attract mosquitoes into killing range. Unlike conventional hunting, the bait has to be human. A willing person is asked to sit quietly in a zone frequented by mosquitoes. When they get attracted to the bait, the hunter should kill them between two newspapers. Killing them by slapping them against the bait is not recommended, as that can make the bait unwilling at the least, and hostile and aggressive at the most.

There are some gifted mosquito-slayers. We have known people who can catch a flying mosquito by closing fist over it. We once witnessed a particularly gifted one catch a flying mosquito with the tips of the thumb and index finger. Such feats cannot be achieved by any degree of training. If one has the ability, one should enjoy it. If one doesn't have it, one should not waste time and energy trying to acquire it.

There are vegetarian mosquitoes which prefer fruits and vegetarian cooked food to human beings. We cannot say if they bite human beings at other times, because we have not been able to develop any method of putting tracer tags on them,

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so that they can be studied over a period of time for their dietary habits. Assuming that they are vegetarian at all times, should one kill them? Kind hearted persons may be inclined to let them be. We advise to kill them, because of two reasons. We are not sure that they are not non-vegetarian at other times. The other reason is that even if they are vegetarian, their progeny need not be so.