

West Nile Virus confirmed in Butte County

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Butte County health officials have confirmed the first West Nile Virus detection of the season and say all signs point to the virus being very active across the state this summer.

The virus was found in mosquitoes collected in Honcut, and a hawk found in southwest Chico. The virus is usually prevalent from May through October. Mosquitoes contract the virus when they feed on infected birds, then spread the virus when the mosquitoes seek other hosts to bite.

With increasing mosquito populations and the detection of West Nile within Butte County, the Butte County Mosquito and Vector Control District urges residents to take all precautions necessary to drain any and all un-needed standing water, report any suspected mosquito-breeding sites to the District, and to protect themselves from the bites of mosquitoes.

The county has provided the following tips to help people avoid West Nile:

- Avoid spending time outside when mosquitoes are active, especially at dusk and dawn
- If you must be outdoors when mosquitoes are active, wear long pants, and long-sleeved shirts, socks and shoes
- Before going outdoors, apply insect repellent containing DEET, Picaridin, IR3535 or oil of lemon eucalyptus according to label instructions
- Make sure that doors and windows have tight fitting screens. Repair or replace screens that have tears or holes
- Eliminate all standing water on your property that can support mosquito-breeding
- Report standing water to Butte County Mosquito and Vector Control District
- Contact Butte County Mosquito and Vector Control District if there is a significant mosquito problem where you live, work, and/or play