



ARE SWARMS OF BUGS KEEPING YOU INSIDE?

Aquatic midge flies are non-biting insects found in wetlands throughout Florida and are known by many common names including blind mosquito and fuzzy bill. Part of the family Chironomidae, midge flies have existed since the Triassic period, before the dinosaurs, and even survived the extinction event that wiped them out. They do not bite, suck blood, or carry disease like true mosquitoes do, so they are more of a nuisance than anything.

Midge fly populations grow exponentially in areas high in moisture and low in predators, conditions which may be common around artificially constructed spaces. Despite this, there are a few strategies you can follow to reduce activity around the home and community spaces:

PREVENTION

Midge flies use standing water or high moisture areas to breed and are attracted to lights. By removing sources of water & light, midges will be less likely to breed directly next to your home reducing midge activity.

- Get rid of any standing water and fix any moisture issues around the home. Empty birdbaths, buckets, pots, or containers that are filled with stagnant water.
- Your lawn soil should not be too damp. Midge flies are more than capable of breeding in the soil if sufficient moisture is present. You may need to address drainage issues in your yard.
- Use dim lights or remove them from near doors or windows. Yellow sodium-vapor lights are better suited for outdoors, to keep the midges away from your home.
- Relocate lighting away from areas of high activity. Tinted pink or orange lights are also helpful to prevent attracting midge flies.

EVASION

Understanding what attracts midge flies can help you to avoid swarms in certain places or times.

- Avoid wearing all white or all black clothing. Midges are attracted to these colors.
- Midges are attracted to areas of warmth and shade depending on the ambient temperature. Avoid warm machinery during cool mornings and evenings, and shade during the middle of the day.
- Midges are most active at dawn & dusk. Try to reduce activity during these times.
- During the middle of the day, to avoid the intensity of high sunlight or high winds, midges will settle into the grass. It may be better to plan activities during this part of the day.

AVERSION

By creating an environment harmful to midge flies, you can actively reduce the numbers around your homes and community spaces.

- Using an electric fan to generate wind currents or a burning mosquito coil will reduce numbers on a localized area.
- The installation of bat boxes and bird houses can invite predators to feed on the adult midge flies.
- A mixture of apple cider vinegar into a bowl with a few drops of washing up liquid can be deadly to Midge flies. This mixture will lure midges in and drown them.
- Apply insect repellent to drive them away.

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