

Virus-transmitting 'yellow fever' mosquitoes discovered in L.A. County

October 16 2014, by Veronica Rocha, Los Angeles Times

A new aggressive daytime-biting mosquito capable of transmitting debilitating and possibly deadly viruses has been found in the Los Angeles region, officials announced Wednesday.

Known as yellow fever mosquitoes, the insects were found Oct. 7 and 8 in Commerce and Pico Rivera, respectively, according to the Greater Los Angeles County Vector Control District.

The *Aedes aegypti* species, which has black and white stripes and grows to about a quarter-inch in size, can transmit dengue, chikungunya and yellow fever - [viruses](#) that can cause painful symptoms including headaches and high fever, officials said.

"While these debilitating viruses, so far, aren't locally transmitted in L.A. County, the mosquitoes that can transmit them are now here," Susanne Kluh, the district's director of scientific-technical services, said in a statement. "Infected travelers can bring these viruses to Los Angeles County."

The mosquito is the third species of the *Aedes* genus found in Los Angeles County in the past three years, said district spokesman Levy Sun.

In September 2011, officials found Asian tiger mosquitoes, which come from Southeast Asia, in South El Monte and El Monte. The mosquito population has since grown and spread into 10 neighboring communities,

officials said.

Then this summer, authorities found Australian backyard mosquitoes in Montebello and Monterey Park.

The [yellow fever](#) mosquito - which was first found in California, including in the Central Valley, in 2013 - is an aggressive daytime biter that thrives in urban environments, preferring small, man-made containers to lay eggs.

"We're aggressively attacking the populations wherever we find them," said Jason Farned, spokesman for the San Gabriel Valley Vector Control District.

Determining how the Aedes species were introduced to California has been difficult, but officials say imported tires and plants are typically to blame. They can also travel via planes, ships and other vehicles.

Officials urged residents to report any daytime-biting [mosquitoes](#) with black and white stripes.

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