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HOMEMAKERS' CHAT

TUESDAY, January 30, 1940.

(FOR BROADCAST USE ONLY)

Subject: "QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS." Information from the Bureau of Entomology and Plant Quarantine, U. S. Department of Agriculture.

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February is not the month when most people have mosquitoes on their minds.

But the very first question to come out of the mailbag today is: "What happens to mosquitoes in winter?"

The entomologists reply that that depends on the kind of mosquito. If you are interested in the northern or southern mosquito of the house or rain-barrel variety, here's the answer. Some of the females survive the cold weather hidden in protected places like out-buildings, or basements, or unused rooms in houses, even in street drain-traps or storm sewers. In cool places these mosquitoes just survive and that's about all. They aren't active in winter. But in warmer places they may go on breeding.

Now if you are interested in what happens to the yellow-fever mosquito in winter, the answer is somewhat different. You'll be happy to know that the cold weather up North kills off all the yellow-fever mosquitoes that have ranged that far. But, farther South the eggs of this mosquito may survive, or if the mosquito itself finds a protected place in some building, it may survive, too, and worse still, go on breeding the year around. But North or South winter weather slows up the mosquito activities considerably.

If you have any more questions about mosquitoes, here's how to get the answers in black and white. Write to the Department of Agriculture, Washington, D. C., for the new free leaflet on this insect. The leaflet is No. 186 called "Domestic Mosquitoes." It gives facts on the life and habits of the mosquito and

tells how to get rid of mosquitoes. You'll find the leaflet worth reading before spring weather arrives and mosquitoes become lively once more.

By the way, people often ask whether our common mosquitoes carry disease. The new leaflet says: "Domestic mosquitoes can carry certain parasitic worms that attack man. And they may have some part in the transmission of heart worms of dogs." So you see a mosquito bite may endanger your health and also your dog's health. Mosquitoes may cause livestock and poultry a great deal of discomfort if not actual sickness.

As for the yellow-fever mosquito, the name alone shows what a disease-carrier this variety of mosquito is. The yellow-fever mosquito is the principal carrier not only of dreaded yellow fever, but also of dengue or breakbone fever. Fortunately, as long as Government quarantine regulations keep yellow fever out of the country, you aren't in danger of contracting it from the mosquito bite. You see, the mosquito has to bite someone with the fever before it can pass the germ along to you. But when yellow fever once gets a start in a country where it is not native, the resulting sickness, death and economic losses are terrible. Of course, mosquitoes often hitch-hike long distances in trains, boats, automobiles, and airplanes. So with modern rapid transportation, infected yellow-fever mosquitoes from Africa or South America might easily catch a ride into this country and bring the disease along.

Well, once again the name of the new mosquito leaflet is "Domestic Mosquitoes!" Its number is 186, and you can get a copy by sending a postcard to the Department of Agriculture, Washington, D. C.

So far this month no one has asked a question about flies -- house flies, that is. But it won't be long before the house fly questions will be coming in. So let me mention that along with the new leaflet on mosquitoes the Department of Agriculture has published a new leaflet on house flies. If you want the facts on

fighting the fly, write for Leaflet 182 called "Housefly Control." You won't find this leaflet dainty reading, but you'll appreciate its clear helpful advice next summer when you begin to worry about flies.

Speaking of annoying insects reminds me of another letter in this week's mailbag. This letter comes from a housewife who is much surprised to find moths active in her house even in this cold winter weather. She says she had always supposed that moths didn't eat in winter. But she has just opened a drawer full of sweaters and found moths thriving there.

The clothes moth pays no attention to the calendar. It doesn't care whether the date is June or January so long as it has a warm, undisturbed, dark place, and plenty of food in the form of wool, or fur, or feathers. In the old days when bedrooms and clothes closets were cold in winter, housewives didn't have to worry much about moths. But in a modern well-heated house, you have to fight moths the year around. A pile of wool sweaters lying undisturbed in a drawer is a perfect dinner invitation for any clothes moth -- or for any wandering carpet beetle.

That's all the questions today. More next Tuesday.

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