



## The Tiger Mosquito

**What is it?** Particularly active in the cooler evening and early morning hours, tiger mosquitoes can be recognized by their dark, almost black body with white stripes. Its Latin name is *Aedes albopictus*.



**How do I recognize it?** It is slightly smaller than the average mosquito, but is more aggressive and typically leaves a series of bites. Its bite is particularly bothersome and may cause swelling and redness.



**How does it multiply?** A tiger mosquito can take advantage of the smallest bit of standing water; a female lays its eggs slightly above water level and when more water is introduced (typically by rain or plant-watering) the larvae hatch. Within seven days the larvae mature into flying adult mosquitoes.



**What is being done about it?** The City of Rome has an ongoing campaign to combat the tiger mosquito, including the spraying of public parks, schools, buildings and streets, as well as a push to educate the public. Local government has also arranged to have prices lowered for insecticide and repellent products. Individual condominium complexes are spraying their surrounding property, and all are asked to be vigilant about eliminating standing water.



**What can I do myself?** Check your balcony or terrace – is there any standing water there? Any container which could collect water should be covered or turned upside down to prevent water from collecting. Should you have plants, remove any water standing underneath.



**How can I keep from being bitten?** Avoid strongly scented soaps, shampoos, etc. Loose clothing provides a barrier of air between your skin and clothing – these mosquitoes *can* bite you through something snug! Purchase a mosquito repellent product at your local pharmacy and remember to keep applying it! *Mother Earth News* suggests monitoring a repellent's waning effectiveness by noting when mosquitoes light on your skin but don't yet bite – that's when you should reapply the product. Repellents for rooms in your apartment can also be purchased at the pharmacy, as well as at your local hardware store (*ferramenta*) and grocery store. Typical products are plug-in electrical devices, coils and citronella candles.



**What if I have already been bitten?** Ouch! These bites are ugly and even painful, but there should be no danger to you. According to Dr. James Duke (*The Green Pharmacy*), pain relievers, ice packs and meat tenderizers can all be used to treat the swelling and pain; according to the doctor, meat tenderizers, if used promptly and directly on the bite, can neutralize the allergen. You can also ask your local pharmacist to recommend an over-the-counter product.

Sources: [www.motherearthnews.com](http://www.motherearthnews.com) and [www.comune.roma.it/ambiente/zanzara](http://www.comune.roma.it/ambiente/zanzara)

