



MOSQUITO and VECTOR MANAGEMENT DISTRICT of SANTA BARBARA COUNTY

DISEASE SURVEILLANCE REPORT

February 2025

Santa Barbara County Vector-borne Disease Surveillance

Six dead birds from Santa Barbara County were reported to the state hotline in February. Samples were collected from three birds, and samples were sent for testing. Two of the birds tested negative, and results are pending for the third. Despite eight dead birds and 186 mosquito samples (4,231 mosquitoes total) submitted, there were no detections of West Nile virus (WNV) in the County in 2024. St. Louis encephalitis virus (SLE) and Western equine encephalitis virus (WEE) have never been documented in the County.

The District did not conduct any mosquito trapping in February as nighttime temperatures are too low for mosquitoes to be active and many species are inactive during the winter months.

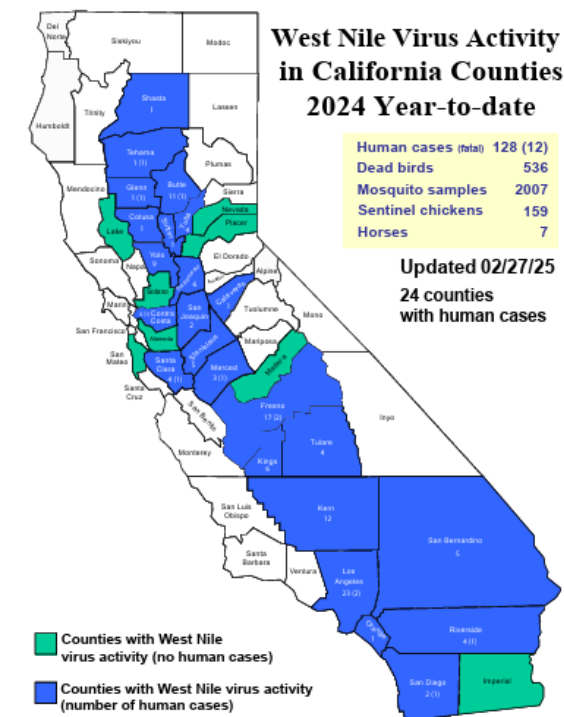
Tick Surveillance

On February 3, 2025, 8 female and 4 male black-legged ticks (*Ixodes pacificus*) were collected on Bella Vista Ranch Trail, Greenwell Preserve, Summerland. This was a follow-up survey conducted in response to a resident who reported their cat had been coming home from that area covered in ticks. Three female and four male black-legged ticks had been collected from this trail on January 24.

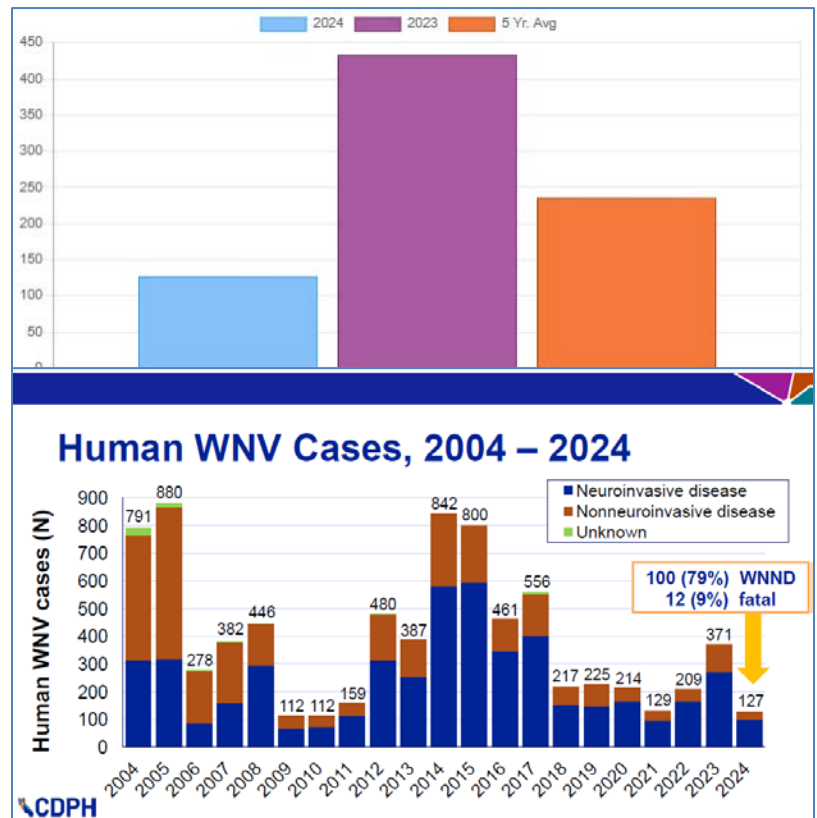
Visit <https://www.mvmdistrict.org/tick-talk> for an explanation of tick flagging and more information about ticks.

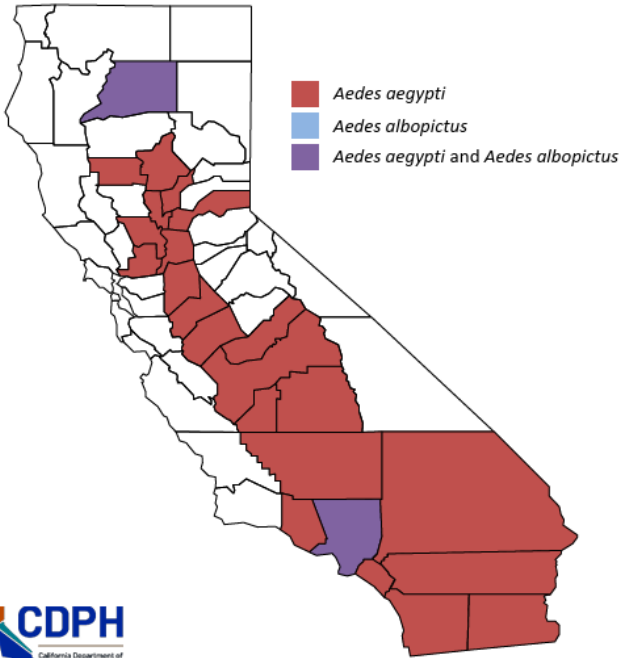
California Vector-borne Disease Surveillance

Weekly arbovirus bulletins from the California Department of Health have not yet started for the 2025 season. Thirty-two counties reported samples positive for West Nile virus in 2024. Of the 124 human cases of WNV, 95 were neuroinvasive, and 12 were fatal. There were an additional 16 asymptomatic blood donors. More than half of the 536 WNV-positive dead birds in California were collected in Santa Clara County. Thirty-four mosquito pools from five counties tested positive for SLE; in 2023, there were 728 positive SLE samples across 15 counties. There were no detections of WEE.



<https://westnile.ca.gov>





Update on Invasive *Aedes* Mosquito in California

No invasive *Aedes* species have been detected in Santa Barbara County since May 2021. *Aedes aegypti* is found in 24 California counties, and *Aedes albopictus* is found in two (reduced from five).

In 2024, there were **18** locally-transmitted cases of dengue virus in California: Los Angeles County (12), San Bernardino County (1), and San Diego County (4). Non-native *Aedes* mosquitoes, capable of vectoring dengue, Zika, chikungunya, and yellow fever are common in the Greater Los Angeles area. As of February 1, 2025, there have been two travel-related human dengue cases in California; there has been one travel-related case of chikungunya virus and zero travel-related cases of Zika virus. There were five cases of travel-related dengue in Santa Barbara County last year. Worldwide, the number of dengue cases more than doubled—6.5 million in 2023 to 14 million in 2024 (10,000 deaths).

West Nile Virus Dead Bird Hotline

<https://westnile.ca.gov/report>

1. Find a Dead Bird	2. Call or Report Online	3. Prep Bird	4. Secure for Pickup
Check the bird for ants, maggots, or any other signs that the bird is rotting. Note the address where you found the bird. Try to figure out how long the dead bird has been in that area.	Call the WNV Call Center at 1-877-WNV-BIRD or file a report online. The WNV Call Center staff will tell you how to prepare the bird for pickup or to safely dispose of it.	Using gloves, place the bird in a plastic bag and label the outside with "Dead Bird".	Place the dead bird in an area away from direct sun and where it can be picked up by your local mosquito control agency.

Though West Nile virus infects mammals “accidentally,” it is a mosquito-borne bird disease. An important surveillance tool for West Nile virus is testing birds that are found dead.



The person that finds the bird follows the above steps. The phone number is active from April to October; in the winter months, reports are taken on the website only.

After the bird is brought to the District office, its throat is swabbed, and the sample is applied to a special card. When the sample is dry, it is mailed to the Davis Arbovirus Research and Training lab (DART) at the University of California, Davis, and tested for the presence of West Nile Virus RNA.