ARE YOU RAISING MOSQUITOES?

Mosquitoes complete their lifecycle in standing water. During summer months, they can mature from egg to adult in just five days! Mosquitoes may be breeding in your own backyard. Wine barrels, backyard ponds, animal watering troughs and non-maintained or neglected swimming pools are all perfect breeding areas for mosquitoes.

Check these sources for mosquito breeding
If you see tiny worm-like creatures wiggling at the surface of the water, take a closer look to see if they are mosquito larvae. If they are, call the District. We may need to stock the mosquito source with mosquitofish. You should not find mosquito larvae in swimming pools that are regularly filtered and chlorinated.

San Joaquin County Mosquito & Vector Control District
Protection Through Prevention since 1945

San Joaquin County Mosquito and Vector Control District is an independent special district governed by a board of trustees.

The District covers over 1,400 square miles including seven cities and all unincorporated areas. District operations are based on a concept that utilizes several different approaches to vector control. The District uses state-of-the-art, environmentally sound techniques as a sustainable approach to managing public health pests and vectors, by combining biological, chemical, legal, natural and physical control tactics in a way that minimizes economic, health and environmental risks.

San Joaquin County Mosquito and Vector Control District continues to protect public health through preventive techniques, as well as providing surveillance for potentially new invasive mosquitoes and exotic diseases they may carry.

SERVICES PROVIDED

for San Joaquin County Residents (cities and rural areas)

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209.982.4675
1.800.300.4675
7759 S. Airport Way
Stockton, CA 95206

District Hours
Monday-Friday
7 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.
www.sjmosquito.org
WHAT ARE MOSQUITOFISH

**Gambusia affinis**

Mosquitofish, *Gambusia affinis*, are native to the southern and eastern parts of the United States. They were introduced into California in the early 1920's for the control of mosquito larvae. Mosquitofish continue to be an important component of the San Joaquin County Mosquito and Vector Control District's Integrated Pest Management program. Their voracious appetite for mosquito larvae and pupae make these fish an excellent control method for mosquitoes in backyard ponds, neglected swimming pools, animal water troughs and other man-made water features.

For more information on obtaining these fish, call our office at 209.982.4675 or 1.800.300.4675 or online at [www.sjmosquito.org](http://www.sjmosquito.org).

**Biology**

Mosquitofish are members of the family *Poeciliidae*. They do not lay eggs, but rather give birth to live, well developed, and very active young. Mosquitofish breed from mid-spring to fall in San Joaquin County with new broods of up to 50 young produced at intervals of about six weeks. Young mosquitofish are approximately ¼ inch in length and grow to nearly three inches long. Mosquitofish have insatiable appetites and are capable of consuming up to three times their body weight, or 100-500 larvae, per day. The average life span for a mosquitofish is two to three years.

MOSQUITOFISH CARE

For newly established ponds, you must treat your pond water to remove chloramine, a combination of chlorine and ammonia often added to drinking water. You can purchase chloramine treatment kits at aquarium or pet supply stores. New concrete ponds leach lime so they should be properly seasoned, filled, allowed to stand several days, drained and refilled. Rocks in one end of the pond will protect young fry. Mosquitofish do not thrive well, nor consume mosquito larvae in ponds with substantial shade; consider this when deciding where to place a new pond. Avoid getting garden sprays into the ponds.

**Placement**

When you get the fish home you will need to acclimate the fish to their new pond (or other site). Place the container with the fish directly into the water for 20 minutes to one hour or until the pond’s water and the container’s water are nearly the same temperature–then release the fish.

**Feeding**

Mosquitofish are opportunistic feeders; they will eat just about anything. During warmer months they usually do not need supplemental feeding; however, if there is no natural food (a new pond or in the winter months) you should feed them a small amount of fish flake food.

**Temperature**

Mosquitofish can survive water temperatures between 50 degrees F and 95 degrees F, but they prefer temperatures between 77 degrees F and 86 degrees F. They are often found at the shallow, unshaded region of a pond. Algae in limited amounts will not harm the fish, but may become unsightly. Most pet stores can supply a preparation with directions for use in fish ponds to control algae. These hardy fish should survive throughout several seasons and reproduce to provide continuous biological control of mosquitoes.

**HOW TO GET FREE MOSQUITOFISH**

San Joaquin County Mosquito and Vector Control District provides FREE mosquitofish to San Joaquin County residents for placement on their property only.

Fish can be picked up at the District's office at 7759 S. Airport Way in Stockton, Monday through Friday (except holidays) from 7 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. Containers are provided. Mosquitofish can also be delivered to property by calling the District at 209.982.4675 or 1.800.300.4675 or online at [www.sjmosquito.org](http://www.sjmosquito.org).

**Compatible and Non-Compatible Issues**

Mosquitofish may not be compatible with goldfish or koi as mosquitofish tend to nibble on fins and tails. Owners place mosquitofish with other fish at their own risk. Game fish such as bass, bluegill and trout feed on mosquitofish. Other enemies include raccoons, wading birds, frogs and snakes.

By law, only District employees may place fish in water sources other than those located on private property.