

# MOSQUITOES

By Oliver Cameron  
with Ole Wik

## How do you deal with mosquitoes?<sup>1</sup>

I keep clothes on so they don't bite through, and have a good head net. They're swarming around in front of your face all the time, but you get used to that. It's not a very big problem.

I don't like to use any more "jungle juice"<sup>2</sup> than I have to. I usually buy a supply, and the dog gets most of it.

## How do you apply to a dog?

Dogs don't like jungle juice. I have to keep them under discipline until I get it on there. I put it on their forehead and rub it around their ears. Then I work it down along the face, keeping it away from the eyes and lips as much as I can. I work it into the fur right behind the head, and in the lower mouth area.

Where there's plenty of fur, I don't usually bother, but sometimes on the belly they don't have much, so I put a little bit on my hand and rub it in that area too. It helps. I usually put some around their tail too, and a little bit on each foot. I try to keep them from licking it. It lasts quite a while.

## What do you do about mosquitoes indoors?

I have a mosquito net that hangs over the door, outside. I can pull it inside. I can pull it a little around the door that I'm going to shut, and that seals it up real tight. It's quite long, so that there's a fold or two of it on the floor. I have a stick of wood there.

## What about mosquitoes that manage to get indoors?

It's almost impossible to keep all of the mosquitoes out. A lot of them come in, and after they're in a little bit, they go looking for a light or a way to get out. They accumulate in the windows. Once in awhile I'll take a stick I have with a piece of rubber on it, and eliminate those that are caught in the window. I have a bed net that I use at night, or any time.

## Do you burn any mosquito powder?

I don't use any smoke. It bothers me, as well as the mosquitoes.

Mosquitoes are not a big problem for me. I've been putting up with them for so long, I do what I need to do. I don't go out in the brush unless I have to. You've got some

clearing around the house, and the mosquitoes aren't going to hang around the clearing too much, if you're not out there.

We used to burn Buhach powder or pyrethrin coils. Sometimes bracket fungus.

How do you avoid mosquitoes when you're outside?

I put on a head net and a pair of gloves, and just ignore them.

A lot of small, skimpy head nets are made. I prefer a large one. I have a large-brimmed hat, and I make a net that's a foot long anyway, and big enough to fit around the brim. There's a drawstring in the top of the net, and I draw it up around the hat to hang it there.

I usually make them with a piece of cloth on the bottom. On the front side, about where your chest pocket would be, there's a short string fastened with a little hook on it, made from any kind of wire. On the opposite side there's a longer string with some knots in the loose end. You pull the longer string around your back and under your armpits, and hook it into whichever knot will pull it up snug.



Oliver with headnet. Image: ?

If there's good reason to go into the brush, I put my head net and gloves on, and go. As soon as I come out of the brush, I start whisking myself with a branch. If you're traveling in a boat, that will thin them out a lot.

They used to swarm us as we passed through the willow band to our beach. We'd get into the boat and I'd speed away from shore. That would ditch most of them. After about half a minute, I'd cut the engine and coast to a stop. The ones that had settled down on our clothes would then rise up, and I'd speed off again, leaving them behind as well. That usually did it.

They are a little problem. Unless they're in the slipstream where the wind is going by, they won't be affected. Just wave your hand around to get them flying, and you'll lose them pretty quick.

One time I was going down to Howie's by boat. I had a young couple with me. The lady needed to relieve herself, so I pulled over to where the river had made a bend and there was a wide sandy strip stretching all the way up to the willows. I warned her, "Don't be prudish—just pee here, and we'll go on."

But she couldn't understand or whatever, and made a bee-line for the willows. She came out rubbing her butt, and made a little comment. She also brought a cloud of mosquitoes with her, so we hurried off and left most of them behind.

**Did you ever use smudges?**

Sometimes. I usually have a No. 10 can. I prefer a bigger pan, a cake pan for instance. I build a smudge on that, and move it around to wherever it's most effective.

**What did you use for fuel?**

Whatever was handy. I'd start a fire with good wood and then put weeds on it. Some plants make smoke that is a little more effective than others, but I don't trouble myself about getting just the best.

Some components of Vitamin B seem to help. If the mosquitoes aren't too bad, wearing a white shirt and white gloves might help.

I always wore a cotton turtleneck over my undershirt. That way I only had to put a little bit of jungle juice on my wrists and face.

One summer, when I was building my boat, I'd be outside for long periods of time in the heat of the day. The mosquitoes were fierce, so I couldn't do without the turtleneck. When I got too hot, I'd dip it in the in rain barrel and put it back on. That would cool me. When it dried out, I'd dip it again.

If you haven't learned to cuss, why, that's a good time.

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1) This essay stems from a series of telephone conversations that Ole Wik had with Oliver between December 2007 and February 2008. Highlighted text indicates remarks made by Ole.

2) **DEET.** From <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Deet>:

DEET is a slightly yellow oil. It is the most common active ingredient in insect repellents. It is intended to be applied to the skin or to clothing, and provides protection against mosquito bites, tick bites, flea bites, chiggers, and many other biting insects.