

Mosquitoes and you

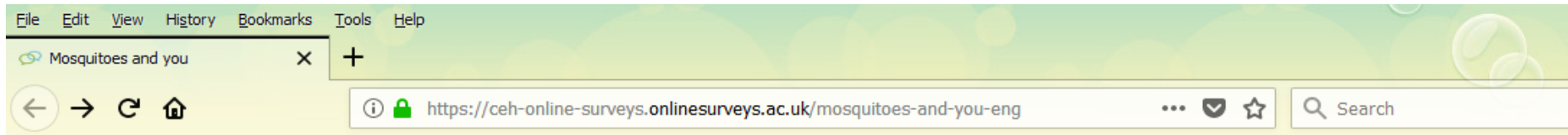
Survey of public perceptions of
mosquitoes & mosquito-borne disease
in Cyprus

Steffi Schäfer & Helen Roy
presenting Beth Purse's analysis



The questionnaire –

please participate now



Mosquitoes and you

0% complete

Page 1: Survey of public perceptions regarding native and invasive mosquitoes and mosquito-borne diseases in Cyprus

<https://ceh-online-surveys.onlinesurveys.ac.uk/mosquitoes-and-you-grk>

<https://ceh-online-surveys.onlinesurveys.ac.uk/mosquitoes-and-you-eng>

The RISKy (Researching Invasive Species in Kypros) project started in April 2017, looking at the impacts of invasive alien species in terrestrial, freshwater and marine habitats on Sovereign Base Areas in Cyprus (SBAs)

RISKy is a collaboration between the Centre for Ecology & Hydrology (www.ceh.ac.uk) in the UK, the Joint Services Health Unit, Cyprus and the University of Cyprus.

Questionnaire highlights

Based on 89 responses

Vast majority report to **experience nuisance** problems from mosquitoes and being bitten while at work, at home or at leisure.

- ~ 40% respondents live or work within 5 km of a wetland
- ~ 15% live or work within 1 km
- ~ 50% of respondents visit a wetland every month

Perceived nuisance

Proportion of respondents that experience nuisance problems from mosquitoes or get bitten by them at work, at home or at leisure:

	Ever get bitten by mosquitoes?		Experience nuisance problems from mosquitoes?	
	Freq	%	Freq	%
Yes	80	90%	76	85%
No	3	3%	11	12%
Blank	6	7%	2	2%

Impact on people's lives

Type of impacts	Frequency of mention
Irritation, pain, swelling, itching, infection, from bites	22
Need to use repellents or tablets	5
Can't enjoy outdoor activities (garden, walks, football, can't open windows)	9
Disturbed sleep	10
Disturbed work	5
Noise	5
Bite children or pets	4
Anxiety/nerves	3
"Bites" mentioned but not elaborated	15
Minor or no impact	10

Protection measures

How do people protect themselves?

- 80% of respondents (68/85) take personal protection measures against mosquitoes (repellents, clothing)

Does their investment in protection measures or mosquito control relate to their perceptions of nuisance impact?

- Yes. Significant association (Fisher's exact test, $p=0.00827$).

Where do people experience most nuisance?

- **Majority** reported biting **both indoors and outdoors**
(50%, or 42 out of 84)
- **Fewer** are bitten **outdoors only** (42.9%, or 36/84)
- **Very few** reported nuisance from mosquitoes **only indoors** (4.8%, 4 out of 84).

Geographic hotspots for mosquito nuisance?

Many diverse locations on the island are highlighted.

- **Akrotiri** mentioned most often (33 times)
- Salt lake or salt marsh (6 times)
- Limassol (6 times)
- Episkopi, Zakaki, Yposonas, Trachoni, Paphos (3-4 times each)

Mosquito-borne disease

- 47% of people (41/88) were worried about mosquito-borne diseases.
- Most concern about Malaria, followed by Yellow Fever, Zika and West Nile Virus.
- If people were **not worried** this was because they perceived that:
 - there were low or no disease cases in Cyprus, or
 - that local mosquitoes could not cause infection
 - or because the **trusted in the health services** and **treatments available**.

Why people are or are not worried about MBD

Reasons why worried (no. of mentions)

Climate change, “do not know when new diseases are coming” (2)

Mosquito-borne diseases in Africa (2), movement of people introducing diseases

Because of spread of known diseases e.g. Malaria (7), Zika (2), WNV (1)

Because diseases may have serious consequences (14)

Because of risk of infecting young children (3)

Because mosquitoes are everywhere(1)

Reasons why not worried (no. of mentions)

Low or no disease cases in Cyprus (15)

No disease risk from Cyprus mosquitoes (3) or only irritation from bites (2)

Don't get bitten enough or not enough mosquitoes (5)

Long history of getting bitten without health problems (2)

Trust in JHSU, treatments available (4)

Did not realise risk, not thought about it (2)

An island-wide mosquito control?

- 59.8% of people (52) answered it was necessary
- 25.3% (22) said maybe
- 5.7% (5) said it was not
- 9.2% (8) didn't know

Reasons is necessary (no. of mentions/52)

Disease preparedness (7)

Nuisance impacts from bites (7)

Because mosquitoes disperse everywhere (4)

Because mosquitoes have increased in abundance or distribution (7)

Because control efforts could be more efficient or better targeted (8)

Reasons why is not necessary or maybe

Mosquitoes are not an island wide problem (e.g. not in drier inland areas) so focus control around wetlands (5)

Concerns about non-target species (2) or that mosquitoes play a role in ecosystem and should not be eradicated (1)

Not enough information for respondent to know if needed (3)

Not a big problem (2)

What are your thoughts?

