

Thus the repellent "fools" the mosquito into "thinking" that she has flown off track, and she turns. Normally, this would give her a chance to relocate the trail, but in this case she will be "automatically" turned away each time she approaches the source of the repellent vapor.

So do not despair, fellow mosquito fighters; the enemy may assault us in countless bloodthirsty hordes, and rend the night-time silence with their fearful whines. But stand firm, praise the Lord, pass the diethyl toluamide, and watch them turn harmlessly aside. The day is saved!

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BUG REPELLENT

The Inside Dope

I've always been a little skeptical about the safety of insect repellents, especially those with N,N-diethyl-m-toluamide (aka "deet"). It's tough to convince me that a chemical that dissolves plastic is 100% harmless to humans.

The 19 May 1989 issue of the Medical Newsletter on Drugs and Therapeutics has some interesting information on deet which should cause us to think twice before gooping up with the stuff. When you apply deet to your skin it doesn't just evaporate or get washed off with your perspiration, it is absorbed through your skin into your body. And for those of us who are into recycling, you can recover 10% to 15% of it from your urine.

In addition to taking the varnish off your paddle, deet may cause skin eruptions, toxic encephalopathy, grand mal seizures, and anaphylaxis. In the Medical Newsletter article there is mention of five fatalities in persons aged one to 33 years who died after ingesting unspecified quantities of deet.

Due to concerns over the potential toxicity of deet a number of outdoors persons have tried Avon Skin-So-Soft as a "natural" alternative. Its "natural" ingredients are di-isopropyl adipate, mineral oil, isopropyl palmitate, dioctyl sodium sulfosuccinate, the sun screen benzophenone-11, and fragrance.

While the Medical Newsletter concedes Skin-So-Soft may offer some short-term insect protection, it warns that this product was formulated as a concentrated bath oil, and that the effects of pouring this concentrate over yourself are unknown.

However, all is not doom and gloom as a new concoction of deet with a polymer to prevent its absorption and evaporation has been developed and should be commercially available, hopefully within the next year. The addition of this polymer gives effective protection with a lower concentration of deet and reduces the frequency of re-application.

In the meantime, I'm not going to throw my bug juice away but I will continue to exercise caution in my use of it, wearing protective clothing and only putting repellent on my hands and face when I can't cover them.

Bill Ness

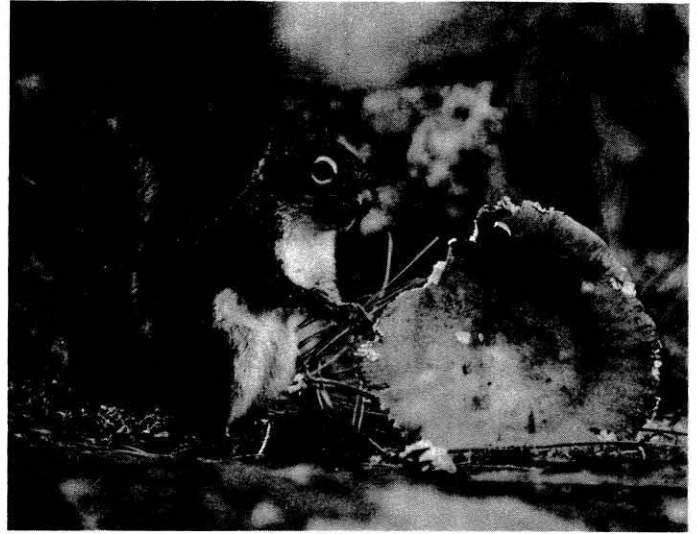


Photo by Dave Buckley

WCA'S FUTURE

ANOTHER CONCERN

Is there a future for the WCA? Is the attitude of today's general membership one of take, take, and take, but never put anything back?

The Nominations Committee, whose responsibility it is to find suitable members to run for the Board of Directors, has, during the past few years, found it increasingly difficult to find members willing to serve on the Board. This year the Committee had to approach seventeen members before they finally found the three candidates required to replace the three retiring directors. All three are longtime members. Glenn Spence is a founding member of the WCA, and this must be at least his fourth time around as a director. Herb Pohl is another oldtimer (in service, Herb, not in age) who is doing his third stint as a director. Tony Bird is a longtime member who, for several years, did an outstanding job as Outings Committee Chairman. My concern is, what are the longterm prospects of the WCA when the old guard finally retires for good?

The Outings Committee also seems to be having the same problems recruiting organizers. Take a look at this year's spring list (including those listed in the Winter 1989 issue of *Nastawgan*) of club outings. Only 33 trips listed compared to 51 in 1989 and 48 in 1988. It appears everybody wants to go on trips, but very few members are prepared to be organizers.

The WCA keeps on growing in numbers (over 600 members at the end of 1989), but willingness of members to help run the club is sadly lacking. If this attitude persists then, in my opinion, the WCA has no longterm future.

Jim Greenacre (Retired: Outings Committee, Communications Committee, Sporstmen's Show Committee, trip organizer, director.)