Ohio Mosquito and Vector Control Association Newsletter

Summer 2026 Issue

Newsletter Snapshot

Save the Date! 2026 OMVCA Conference • Organization Spotlight • Poster Comp. Winners
New Positions Available • Call for Conference Speakers • Call for Abstracts • Board of Directors

A Message from the President

Members of the Ohio Mosquito and Vector Control Association,

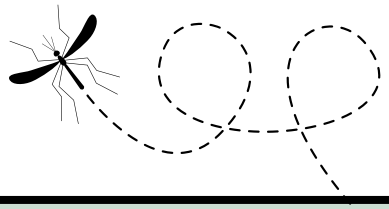
Last year, Ohio, like many other states, experienced a huge surge in West Nile positive mosquito pools and saw infection rates well above previous records. Thanks in part to the dedication of mosquito management professionals across the state, however, human disease incidence did not reach the outbreak status most recently seen in 2012. Unfortunately, we also saw a record-breaking number of human cases of La Crosse virus, with a total of 53 cases in 2025.

Reported cases of Lyme disease also continue to increase, with over 2,600 human cases reported to the Ohio Department of Health in 2025, breaking the record set the prior year, and there have been nearly 200 cases reported so far in 2026. Tick surveillance and public education efforts continue to ramp up in response as Ohio approaches “high incidence” status for this tick-borne disease.

Vector-borne diseases are not going away; quite the opposite, and we are continually asked to do more with less. It is your dedication that protects the people of Ohio from the worst outcomes and each of you should take pride in your contribution. If there is anything that the Ohio Mosquito and Vector Control Association can do to support you, my door is always open.

All the best,

Zach Holbert-Watson, MS, REHS
President
Ohio Mosquito and Vector Control Association



Organization spotlight

AMCA’s Yesterday’s Threat, Today’s Solutions
Check it Out HERE!

SAVE the DATE!

2026 OMVCA CONFERENCE

October 26th and 27th

Hocking Hills Lodge and Conference Center

We're **HIRING!**
Dr. Sarah Short's Mosquito-microbe interactions lab. Position descriptions at end of newsletter.

Call for OMVCA Conference Speakers!

Reach out to Zach by July 31st for more information

POSTER COMPETITION WINNERS!!

2025

Undergraduate Winner:

A Comparison of Tick Abundance in Licking County Parks: A Collaboration with the Licking County Health Department.

Fafa Nartey, Denison University
Departments of Biology and Global Health
Co-Author: Jessica Rettig, PhD

We studied the abundance of ticks in seven Licking County public parks, in collaboration with the Licking County Health Department (LCHD), during the summer of 2025.

Graduate Winner:

Evaluating the Toxic Effects of Cannabidiol (CBD) in Aedes aegypti Mosquitoes.

Erick Martinez, The Ohio State University
Co-Authors: Peter M. Piermarini, PhD; Luis Canas, PhD; Larry P. Phelan, PhD

This study investigates the larvicidal and adulticidal effects of cannabidiol (CBD), a compound derived from hemp (Cannabis sativa), as a potential biopesticide for mosquito management.

CALL FOR ABSTRACTS!

Registration is open for the 2026 OMVCA Student Poster Presentation Competition!

Submission Deadline: September 30th, 2026

Competition Date: October 27th, 2026

Where: 2026 OMVCA Annual Meeting

Cost of Submission:
Full Meeting Attendance - Student Fee
Poster Competition Only - Free

Awards: Professional Development Stipends

For additional information on submission guidelines and to register for the competition, please fill out the **Abstract Submission Form**

In addition to the poster competition, **we are seeking volunteers to help judge the entries**. If you're planning to attend the meeting and are interested in assisting with the judging process, please reach out!

Point of Contact: Hannah Dehus (dehus.5@buckeyemail.osu.edu)

Got a question for your Board of Directors?

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Members at large: Hannah Alanis, Danny Phillips, Alice Pozzi, Neal Sargeant, REHS and Annie Levar, REHS

Position available: Lab manager/researcher in mosquito-microbe interactions lab.

Position duration: Renewable for up to five years, depending on performance and availability of funds.

Salary: $40,000-$55,000 depending on experience

Location: Howlett Hall, Columbus Ohio, 43210, USA

Hours: 40 hours/week

To apply: Go to OSU Careers (https://hr.osu.edu/careers/) and search for **R149803** or follow the links below:

External application link: https://osu.wd1.myworkdayjobs.com/OSUCareers/job/Columbus-Campus/Senior-Research-Technician_R149803

OSU Internal application link: https://www.myworkday.com/osu/d/inst/15$392530/9925$362731.htmld

Please provide a Cover letter and a CV/resume when applying.

Job description: The Department of Entomology, within the College of Food, Agricultural, and Environmental Sciences seeks a **Senior Research Technician** to join a dynamic department of researchers. The position will be in the laboratory of Dr. Sarah Short and will contribute to an NIH-funded study (R01AI189572, https://reporter.nih.gov/search/wk0CzbUpwE69AxJ0uTlPBQ/project-details/11296317) which focuses on the interplay between the microbiota and life history traits in male *Aedes aegypti* mosquitoes. To learn more about the lab, go to https://shortlab.cfaes.ohio-state.edu/. Duties will primarily involve laboratory management, project management, and conducting experiments, as well as training of laboratory personnel, data management/curation, and biosafety management. There will also be opportunities for project leadership and first-author publication.

Percent Breakdown of areas of responsibility:

50% lab management (organization, ordering, training, maintenance, record keeping, biosafety)

50% research (conducting experiments, data analysis, figure generation, manuscript preparation)

Required experience: A Bachelor's degree in the life sciences is required. Also required are strong organizational, communication, and leadership skills, as well as the ability to work independently and as part of a team. Experience working in molecular biology, vector biology, and/or microbiology is preferred.

If you have questions, feel free to email Sarah Short: short.343@osu.edu

Position available: Postdoctoral Researcher in mosquito-microbe interactions lab

To apply: Go to OSU Careers (https://hr.osu.edu/careers/) and search for **R149804** or follow the links below:

External application link: https://osu.wd1.myworkdayjobs.com/OSUCareers/job/Columbus-Campus/Postdoctoral-Researcher_R149804-1

OSU Internal application link: https://www.myworkday.com/osu/d/inst/15$392530/9925$363612.htmld

Please provide a Statement of Interest and a CV when applying.

Job Description

This Postdoctoral researcher will contribute to an NIH-funded study (R01AI189572, https://reporter.nih.gov/search/wk0CzbUpwE69AxJ0uTlPBQ/project-details/11296317) which focuses on the interplay between the microbiota and life history traits in male Aedes aegypti mosquitoes. The position will be in the lab of Dr. Sarah Short. To learn more about the lab, go to https://shortlab.cfaes.ohio-state.edu/. Dr. Short's lab is housed in the Department of Entomology and in affiliation with the Infectious Diseases Institute. In collaboration with their scientific mentor (the P.I.), the successful candidate will design and execute experiments, analyze data, and publish findings in competitive scientific journals. They will develop new methodologies and troubleshoot as necessary. They will also mentor junior members of the laboratory to hone their instructional and mentoring skills. They will apply for appropriate grant and fellowship funding to support their research. They will also enrich their training by attending relevant seminars and colloquia and by developing independent projects that build upon the laboratory's ongoing work. The position is renewable for up to five years, pending satisfactory performance and availability of funds.

Responsibilities

95% Conduct laboratory experiments, analyze data, compose manuscripts

5% Support mentee training

Salary

$61,008.00-$63,480.00/annual

Minimum Education Required

Doctorate (Academic) with a Major in the life sciences

Required Qualifications

Required: The successful candidate must have a Ph.D. in the life sciences and must show a strong record of publication and success in research. They must have a strong background in experimental design, bioinformatics, and data analysis.

Preferred Qualifications

The preferred candidate will have experience in vector biology and microbiology, as well as insect-microbe interactions, bacterial community profiling, microbial ecology, metagenomics, and/or metabolomics. Experience working with teams and conducting field work is a plus, as is experience performing molecular and organismal experiments in insect systems.

Location: Howlett Hall, Columbus Ohio, 43210, USA

If you have questions, feel free to email Sarah Short: short.343@osu.edu