

# NSW ARBOVIRUS SURVEILLANCE & MOSQUITO MONITORING PROGRAM 2015-2016

## Weekly Update

Date: 20/Nov/2015

### SUMMARY

- **Climate:** over the last week, light to moderate rainfall occurred across the entire state, although rainfall amounts were less in the west.
- **Three Month Forecast:** for December 2015 to February 2016, rainfall predictions for NSW are for average rainfall for most of the state, with above average for the north coast. According to the BOM as of 10/Nov/15, the current El Niño episode is expected to persist until the end of the year and then ease into early 2016.
- **Tidal:** the next series of high tides that may result in *Aedes vigilax* hatching are due to occur over 24-29/Nov/15.
- **MVEV models:** the data relevant to both the Forbes' and Nichols' hypotheses have been updated to Oct 2015 and both theories remain inconsistent with past MVEV outbreaks.
- **Mosquito Numbers Inland:** mosquito numbers are starting to creep up, with 'high' collections from both Griffith and Macquarie Marshes although numbers are close to the long term average.
- **Mosquito Numbers Coast:** surveillance activities are due to begin in December.
- **Mosquito Numbers Sydney:** surveillance activities are due to begin in December.
- **Arboviral Isolates:** there were no arboviral detections in the mosquitoes.
- **Chicken Sentinel Seroconversions:** no report has been issued this season by the serology laboratory.
- **Human Notifications:** for the current fiscal year, there have been 317 RRV and 39 BFV notifications.

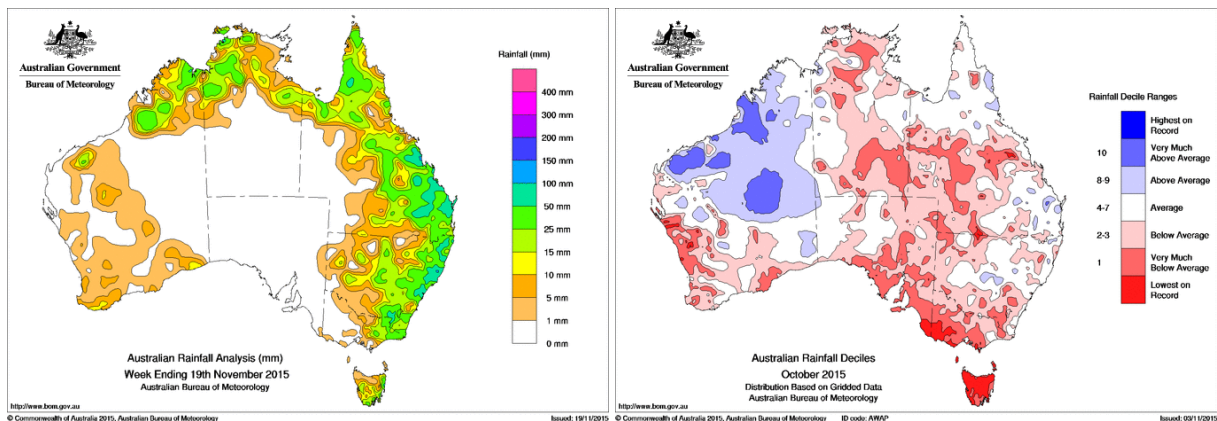
**Comment:** the heat is on and over the last few days temperatures across the state have been well above average, even 12°C above normal in the west. This should shorten mosquito developmental times, which may bring on a spurt of activity over the next few days, particularly as there has been recent rainfall. High tides are predicted for next week, which are likely to initiate *Aedes vigilax* hatching, producing increased adult numbers in around two weeks.

On the issue of avoiding mosquito bites, there are numerous gimmicks on the market, which could provide a false sense of security against mosquito attack and thus increase the risk of mosquito-borne diseases to the user. Cameron Webb from our Department has just written a blog on the very topic, which you can read here: <https://theconversation.com/health-check-do-wrist-bands-work-to-repel-mozzies-50186>.

## ENVIRONMENTAL CONDITIONS

### Rainfall

Rainfall across Australia for the week ending 19/Nov/2015 is depicted on the left and monthly rainfall deciles for October 2015 are on the right. Over the last week, light to moderate rainfall occurred across the entire state, although rainfall amounts were less in the west. For October, rainfall was above to very much above average. Maximum and minimum temperatures for April were 2-3 degrees below average.



### Three Month Rainfall & Temperature Forecast

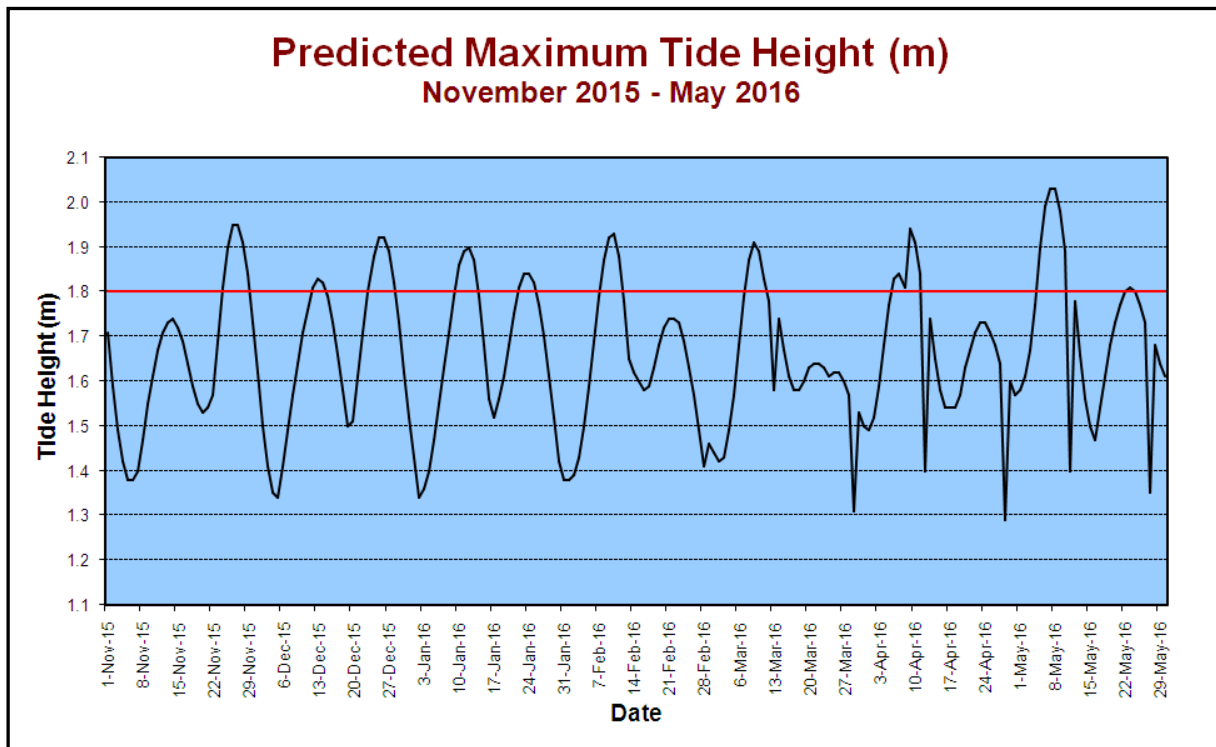
For December 2015 to February 2016, rainfall predictions for NSW are for average rainfall for most of the state, with above average for the north coast. Minimum temperatures are expected to be above normal for the coast and northwest of the state, especially in the southeast, while maximum temperatures are expected to be above average for the south coast and state northwest. The following pages contain graphics of the seasonal outlook:

[www.bom.gov.au/climate/outlooks/#/rainfall/median](http://www.bom.gov.au/climate/outlooks/#/rainfall/median) (Rainfall outlook).

[www.bom.gov.au/climate/outlooks/#/temperature/summary](http://www.bom.gov.au/climate/outlooks/#/temperature/summary) (Max & min temperature outlook).

According to the BOM as of 10/Nov/15, the El Niño event has been going for six months and set to continue until the end of the year, before declining during the first quarter of 2016 (note: an El Niño is associated with decreased rainfall eastern Australia, whereas a La Niña is associated with increased rainfall). For more information: [www.bom.gov.au/climate/enso/](http://www.bom.gov.au/climate/enso/)

## Tidal



Tidal information is relevant for the prediction of the activity of the salt marsh mosquito, *Aedes vigilax*. Typically for NSW, tides of over 1.8m can induce hatching of *Aedes vigilax* larvae and the graph below of predicted tide heights can provide some indication of when this is likely to occur.

The next series of high tides that may result in *Aedes vigilax* hatching are due to occur over 24-29/Nov/15.

Note that actual tide heights can vary by 0.3m (or more in unusual circumstances) due to variations in atmospheric pressure, rainfall, wind and other climatic phenomena. Thus predicted tide height should be used as a gauge only for potential *Aedes vigilax* activity. The larvae of the saltmarsh mosquito relies on a inundation/drying cycle for the mudflats in which it lives; continual wet weather prevents the drying cycles thereby reducing larval production.

Full tidal information and the implications of the tide heights relevant to the breeding of the salt marsh mosquito, *Aedes vigilax*, can be obtained from: <http://medent.usyd.edu.au/arbovirus/climate/tideheights201516.htm>

## MVEV Climatic Models

Three predictive environmental based models for MVEV activity have been developed; the Forbes (which relies on rainfall in the river catchment basins of Eastern Australia), Nichols (based on the Southern Oscillation), and the Bennett theory (based on the Indian Ocean Dipole). The latter theory is poorly developed (and unreliable), and is not considered below. Note that all the predictive models have been developed on a limited data set and do not always forecast activity. There can also be unusual environmental conditions that may lead to the introduction of the virus to southeastern Australia, such as the movement of low pressure cells from the north to the south of the country during 2008 and 2011. Vertical transmission of the virus (from adult to the egg in *Aedes* species) can result in restricted activity following localised heavy precipitation (as per 2003 at Menindee).

### i. Forbes' Hypothesis

Rainfall was not above Decile 7 in all of the river catchment basins in eastern Australia for the last quarter of 2014 or most of the catchments for the first quarter of 2015 (Table 1). For the Oct-Dec 2015 period, rainfall so far, has been well below Decile 7 in all catchment basins.

**Table 1.** Rainfall indices for the main catchment basins of eastern Australia as per Forbes' hypothesis, relevant to the 2015-2016 season. Note that a value of 1 equals Deciles 7 rainfall.

Catchment Basin	Oct-Dec 2014	Jan-Mar 2015	Oct-Dec 2015*	Jan-Mar 2016
Darling River	0.80	0.65	0.48	
Lachlan/Murrumbidgee/Murray Rivers	0.97	1.05	0.29	
Northern Rivers	0.94	0.67	0.33	
North Lake Eyre system	1.07	0.67	0.11	

\*data for October only

### ii. Nichol's Hypothesis

**Table 2.** The seasonal atmospheric pressures (in mm) according to Nichol's hypothesis, relevant to the 2015-2016 season.

	Autumn 2015	Winter 2015	Spring 2015*
2015 Value	1010.83	1014.37	1013.85
Pre past MVEV seasons	<1009.74	<1012.99	<1009.99

\*data for September and October only.

None of seasonal periods pertaining to the Nichol's hypothesis are in line with past MVEV active years.

## ARBOVIRAL ISOLATES

LOCATION - Site	Date Trapped	Mosquito Species	Virus

\*Detection via Honey-Baited Cards, mosquito species can not be determined.  
<http://medent.usyd.edu.au/arbovirus/results/virusisolates.htm>

## HUMAN NOTIFICATIONS

Weekly notifications of human mosquito-borne diseases infections are available from the NSW Ministry of Health, Communicable Disease Weekly Report and summarised in the Table below:

<http://www.health.nsw.gov.au/Infectious/reports/Pages/Communicable-Diseases-Weekly-Report.aspx>

### Notifications of Mosquito-Borne Disease in NSW, 2015-2016

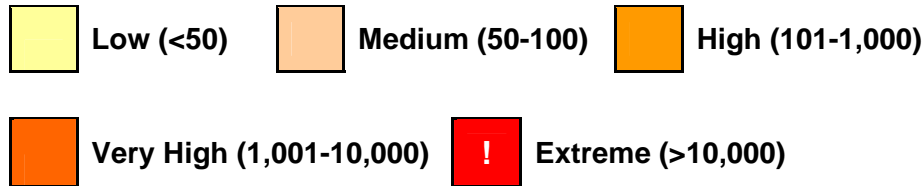
Week Ending	RRV	BFV	DENV	Malaria	CHIKV	Total
5-Jul-15	14	4	5	2	0	25
12-Jul-15	13	3	2	0	1	19
19-Jul-15	7	0	4	1	0	12
26-Jul-15	19	0	3	0	0	22
2-Aug-15	21	2	4	1	0	28
9-Aug-15	12	3	1	0	0	16
16-Aug-15	16	3	4	2	1	26
23-Aug-15	12	1	2	2	0	17
30-Aug-15	27	2	5	2	0	36
6-Sep-15	8	3	6	1	0	18
13-Sep-15	12	0	3	0	1	16
20-Sep-15	24	5	1	0	0	30
27-Sep-15	11	0	1	1	0	13
4-Oct-15	16	2	1	0	0	19
11-Oct-15	11	2	4	0	0	17
18-Oct-15	17	1	5	0	0	23
25-Oct-15	19	2	4	1	0	26
1-Nov-15	16	2	5	1	0	24
8-Nov-15	17	2	6	2	0	27
15-Nov-15	25	2	3	1	0	31
<b>Total</b>	<b>317</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>69</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>445</b>

*Comment:* last season saw the largest outbreak of RRV since notifications began to be reported on a routine basis in 1985. The high number of RRV notifications during the winter months of this year makes no epidemiological sense as vector numbers are low and the risk of acquiring the virus is small. These reports are highly unlikely to represent recent infections (recent as in the previous week) and could relate to delays in notifications, past infections as IgM can persist for long periods, or errors in the serological testing.

## MOSQUITO RESULTS

All the full mosquito results can be obtained from:  
<http://medent.usyd.edu.au/arbovirus/results/results.htm#site>

Mosquito abundances are best described in relative terms, and in keeping with the terminology from previous NSWASP Annual Reports, mosquito numbers are depicted on the tables below as:



Each location represents the average for all trapping sites at that location.

### Inland

Location	Mosquito	Nov-15					Dec				Jan-16					Feb				Mar				Apr			
		1	8	15	22	29	6	13	20	27	3	10	17	24	31	7	14	21	28	6	13	20	27	3	10	17	24
<a href="#">Albury</a>	<i>Cx. annul</i>																										
	Total Mosq.																										
<a href="#">Bourke</a>	<i>Cx. annul</i>																										
	Total Mosq.																										
<a href="#">Griffith</a>	<i>Cx. annul</i>																										
	Total Mosq.																										
<a href="#">Leeton</a>	<i>Cx. annul</i>																										
	Total Mosq.																										
<a href="#">Macquarie Marshes</a>	<i>Cx. annul</i>																										
	Total Mosq.																										
<a href="#">Mathoura</a>	<i>Cx. annul</i>																										
	Total Mosq.																										
<a href="#">Wagga</a>	<i>Cx. annul</i>																										
	Total Mosq.																										



## Coastal

Location	Mosquito	Nov-15					Dec					Jan-16					Feb				Mar				Apr			
		1	8	15	22	29	6	13	20	27	3	10	17	24	31	7	14	21	28	6	13	20	27	3	10	17	24	
<a href="#">Ballina</a>	<i>Cx. annul</i>																											
	Total Mosq.																											
<a href="#">Coffs Harbour</a>	<i>Cx. annul</i>																											
	Total Mosq.																											
<a href="#">Gosford</a>	<i>Cx. annul</i>																											
	Total Mosq.																											
<a href="#">Lake Macquarie</a>	<i>Cx. annul</i>																											
	Total Mosq.																											
<a href="#">Nambucca</a>	<i>Cx. annul</i>																											
	Total Mosq.																											
<a href="#">Port Macquarie</a>	<i>Cx. annul</i>																											
	Total Mosq.																											
<a href="#">Shoal-haven</a>	<i>Cx. annul</i>																											
	Total Mosq.																											
<a href="#">Tweed</a>	<i>Cx. annul</i>																											
	Total Mosq.																											
<a href="#">Wyong</a>	<i>Cx. annul</i>																											
	Total Mosq.																											

## Sydney

Location	Mosquito	Nov-15					Dec					Jan-16					Feb				Mar				Apr			
		1	8	15	22	29	6	13	20	27	3	10	17	24	31	7	14	21	28	6	13	20	27	3	10	17	24	
<a href="#">Banks-town</a>	<i>Cx. annul</i>																											
	Total Mosq.																											
<a href="#">Blacktown</a>	<i>Cx. annul</i>																											
	Total Mosq.																											
<a href="#">Georges River</a>	<i>Cx. annul</i>																											
	Total Mosq.																											
<a href="#">Hawkes-bury</a>	<i>Cx. annul</i>																											
	Total Mosq.																											
<a href="#">Penrith</a>	<i>Cx. annul</i>																											
	Total Mosq.																											
<a href="#">Sydney Olympic Park</a>	<i>Cx. annul</i>																											
	Total Mosq.																											
<a href="#">Ryde</a>	<i>Cx. annul</i>																											
	Total Mosq.																											

## Sentinel Chicken Seroconversions

[http://medent.usyd.edu.au/arbovirus/results/chicken\\_results\\_all\\_sites.htm](http://medent.usyd.edu.au/arbovirus/results/chicken_results_all_sites.htm)

Location	Nov-15					Dec				Jan-16					Feb				Mar				Apr							
	1	8	15	22	29	6	13	20	27	3	10	17	24	31	7	14	21	28	6	13	20	27	3	10	17	24				
<a href="#">Bourke</a>																														
<a href="#">Deniliquin</a>																														
<a href="#">Forbes</a>																														
<a href="#">Griffith</a>																														
<a href="#">Hay</a>																														
<a href="#">Leeton</a>																														
<a href="#">Macquarie Marshes</a>																														
<a href="#">Menindee</a>																														
<a href="#">Moama</a>																														
<a href="#">Moree</a>																														
<a href="#">Wee Waa</a>																														

N= Negative for MVEV & KUNV

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