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Delaware National Wildlife Refuge
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Official at Bombay Hook Cites Value of Marshes

A contingent of state officials that visited Washington, D. C., wildlife officials in an effort to "clean up" Bombay Hook mosquitoes did not contact anyone at the refuge before making their plea, said Dale T. Coggeshall, assistant refuge manager, yesterday.

Coggeshall said the sprawling wildlife refuge, east of Smyrna, is, and has been, cooperating with state mosquito control operations by defining areas where mosquitoes hatch and permitting spraying operations in those sections.

"We have reported to the state whenever there are unusual high tide conditions, during which mosquitoes hatch," said Coggeshall.

Keeps Level Low

In addition, during the period when mosquitoes are known to develop—from May to October—the refuge keeps the levels of its impoundments low in order to restrain the development of mosquitoes.

Members of the state legislature told the Bureau of Sports Fisheries and Wildlife that when mosquitoes glide toward Dover on westbound winds, residents have to seek cover indoors.

Coggeshall said the salt marshes at the refuge are of considerable importance to the state.

"Most vital is the role the

marshes play as a nursery area for marine fish," said Coggeshall.

Defends Marshes

He cited menhaden and crabs as particular beneficiaries of the shelter and nutrients to be found in the marshes.

At the same time it should be realized that not all of the marsh lands at the U. S. refuge are suitable as a mosquito habitat, he said.

"Each individual section must be considered," said Coggeshall.

If the marshes were filled in, they would not only destroy the value of the marshes as a fishery spawning area, but also as a habitat for Delaware's traditional muskrat.

Marshes also help maintain the water table, said Coggeshall.

Not 'Sitting Idly By'

"We haven't been sitting idly by (in the face of complaints about mosquitoes) but have been intelligently considering all factors in relation to mosquitoes," said Coggeshall.

"As in the past, we will continue to cooperate with state officials to control mosquitoes."

The remedy is to be found in study, intelligent consideration and trial and error, he said.

Entomologists at the University of Delaware are conducting a study on the question, he said.