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## etymologia

### *Culex quinquefasciatus* [*'kyō leks 'kwinkwə fa she 'ah tus*]

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In 1823, the American entomologist Thomas Say described *Culex* (Latin for “gnat”) *quinquefasciatus*, which he collected along the Mississippi River. Originally written as “C. 5-fasciatus,” the name refers to 5 (“quinque”) black, broad, transverse bands (“fasciatus” or “fasciae”) on the mosquito’s dorsal abdomen. The name remains despite later revelations of more than 5 fasciae, thanks to improved microscopy. Although *quinquefasciatus* is the official scientific name, there are at least 5 synonymous names for this species.

Say described this species as “exceedingly numerous and troublesome.” “Quinx” are among the world’s most abundant peridomestic mosquitoes, earning the nickname “southern house mosquito.” *Cx. quinquefasciatus* is found throughout subtropical and tropical areas worldwide, except for exceedingly dry or cold regions. This mosquito is a principal vector of many pathogens, transmitting the phlebovirus Rift Valley fever virus and the 2 flaviviruses St. Louis encephalitis virus and West Nile virus, in addition to filarial worms and avian malarial parasites.

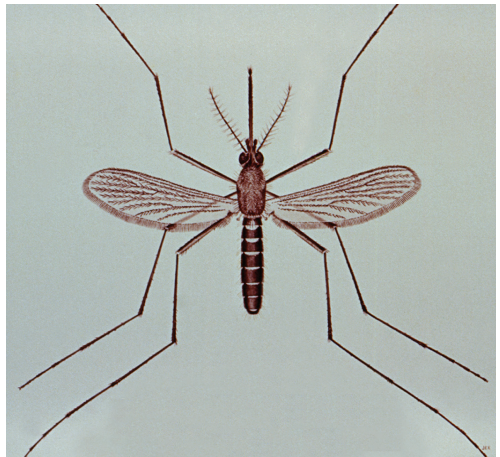


Figure. Female *Culex quinquefasciatus* mosquito. Image credit: CDC Public Health Image Library, 1976.

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