

## MOSQUITO

The Latin name for the mosquito is *Culiseta annulata*.

There are fifty British species of this family, many of them called gnats. They are found from the tropics to the Arctic Circle and from lowlands to the peaks of high mountains.

Mosquitoes have long, slender wings and are unusual among flies in having small scales over most of the wing veins. The body is narrow, with a body length of 6-7mm. Both the body and legs are white-banded, while the wings are distinctively spotted. The long antennae (*feelers*) have numerous whorls of hair, which are short in the female and long and bushy in the male.

The mouthparts of the female are long and are adapted for piercing and for sucking blood. They feed mostly on the blood of warm-blooded animals. The male has rudimentary mouthparts. When they bite, they inject some of their salivary fluid into the wound, causing swelling and irritation. This may contain infectious micro-organisms, which transmit such diseases as malaria, yellow fever, dengue and filariasis.

This species passes the winter as an adult, often in outbuildings, from which it may emerge to feed on warmer winter days.