

Tiger Mosquito Season Begins: Have You Spotted One? Report It!

Published on:

Tuesday, May 12, 2026

With the start of mosquito season, Sciensano and the Institute of Tropical Medicine (ITM) are calling on citizens to report sightings of the tiger mosquito (*Aedes albopictus*) via the citizen science platform www.MuggenSurveillance.be (external link). These reports help map the spread of the tiger mosquito. In 2025, reports from citizens confirmed the presence of Asian tiger mosquitoes in ten municipalities in Belgium, including five where the species had not previously been recorded. Since monitoring began in 2022, the Asian tiger mosquito has been observed in 40 municipalities.

The tiger mosquito is gaining ground

In 2025, citizens reported tiger mosquitoes in ten Belgian municipalities. In five of these, the tiger mosquito had not been reported before: Heusden, Kortenberg, and Zaventem in Flanders, and Etterbeek and Watermaal-Bosvoorde in Brussels.

In addition, citizens reported tiger mosquitoes in five municipalities where the species had already been observed in previous years: Wijnegem, Merelbeke-Melle, Kessel-Lo, and Hoegaarden in Flanders, and Ath in Wallonia.

In addition to reports from citizens, field inspections in 2025 confirmed that the tiger mosquito overwinters in Sint-Joost-ten-Node, Wijnegem, and Hoegaarden. Together with earlier sightings in Ath, Kessel-Lo, Puurs-Sint-Amands, Wilrijk, and Lebbeke, the number of Belgian municipalities where the tiger mosquito is beginning to establish itself locally now stands at eight.

“Every year, the tiger mosquito is reported in new locations. It is likely that this mosquito is present in more places in Belgium than has been confirmed so far,” says Javiera Rebolledo Romero, a researcher at Sciensano. “Knowing where these mosquitoes are found helps authorities take measures to prevent the spread of the tiger mosquito and thus avoid the risk of local transmission of diseases such as dengue, chikungunya, and Zika in the future. That is why we encourage everyone to remain vigilant and report sightings. Are you being bothered during the day by a very small black mosquito with white stripes when you are in your garden or on your patio? Take a photo of it and report it!”

Since 2022, when citizens began actively participating in the surveillance program, the tiger mosquito has been observed in 40 Belgian municipalities. In addition to annual sightings in municipalities where the species was already known, citizens are also reporting tiger mosquitoes in new municipalities where the species had not previously been identified.

“Four years of monitoring show that the tiger mosquito is not only being introduced into Belgium but is also beginning to establish itself here,” says Wim Van Bortel, an entomologist at the ITG. “Thanks to reports from citizens and active field monitoring, in which we track mosquitoes at key locations where reports were made, we can detect both new introductions and local spread. This gives us a much clearer picture of how the species is establishing itself in Belgium.”

Why report a tiger mosquito?

The tiger mosquito is active during the day and can cause significant nuisance due to its aggressive biting behavior. In addition, it can transmit viruses such as dengue, chikungunya, and Zika after biting someone who has returned from a trip while infected. Although the risk of local transmission in Belgium remains low at present, monitoring the tiger mosquito is essential to detect its presence in a timely manner and take measures to control it.

“Citizen involvement is crucial for monitoring the tiger mosquito, as this species often inhabits private gardens in (sub)urban areas and villages. Without these reports, we would likely not detect its presence in many locations,” says Sciensano. “By reporting a tiger mosquito via www.MuggenSurveillance.be(external link), we can identify new locations, follow up on previously reported locations, and take preventive measures to reduce the population and limit the spread and establishment of the species in Belgium.”

What preventive measures can you take?

Citizens play an important role in preventing the spread of the tiger mosquito. Because this species lays its eggs in all kinds of artificial objects containing stagnant water that are common in gardens and on patios, such as buckets and flower pots, it is essential to limit these breeding sites. Urban environments are conducive to the survival and reproduction of the tiger mosquito, as they offer the ideal combination of numerous artificial breeding sites and higher temperatures. It is therefore important that everyone thoroughly clean their garden and patio before the start of the season and keep them tidy throughout the summer. Remove or cover objects where water can accumulate, empty standing water, and change the water in animal drinking bowls at least once a week. Also scrub the walls of artificial objects to remove eggs and cover rain barrels securely.

For travelers, it is advisable to check www.wanda.be (external link) before departure to see which vaccinations are generally required for their destination and whether personal protective measures against mosquitoes are recommended. Upon return, they should check their car and luggage for any tiger mosquitoes that may have hitched a ride. Additionally, it is important to be vigilant for symptoms after returning from a country where mosquito-borne diseases are endemic.

In Flanders, the Department of Health is relaunching the mosquito campaign today. Under the slogan “Keep the tiger mosquito dry,” the campaign encourages citizens to actively remove potential breeding sites and report sightings via www.MuggenSurveillance.be (external link). More information about the campaign and preventive measures can be found at www.steekmuggen.be (external link).

How do you report a tiger mosquito?

Anyone who thinks they have seen a small black mosquito with white stripes can take a photo and upload it via www.MuggenSurveillance.be (external link) or via the app, available for Android (external link) and iOS (external link).

More information about sightings in 2025 and previous years can be found here (external link).

The MEMO+ project is a collaboration between Sciensano and the Institute of Tropical Medicine (ITM). The project is funded by the federal and federated entities responsible for the environment and health through the National Environment and Health Action Plan (NEHAP).

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