

A comment on the suspected introduction of West Nile virus into Hawaii

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In January 2004, a 2-day workshop was held in Honolulu, Hawaii to assess the potential for the introduction of West Nile virus to the islands and its prevention. See:

<http://www.environment-hawaii.org/204experts.htm>

At this meeting, we presented results of a risk assessment of the pathways by which the virus might be introduced. The paper was published in Springer's new peer-reviewed journal, Ecohealth, in June 2004 (Kilpatrick, A.M., Glutzberg, Y., Burgett, J. & Daszak, P. 2004. Quantitative risk assessment of the pathways by which West Nile virus could reach Hawaii. Ecohealth 1: 205-209; available as down-loadable pdf file from:

<http://www.conservationmedicine.org/publicat.htm>

This analysis clearly showed that the most significant potential route of entry is via infected mosquitoes traveling on airplanes from the US mainland. If confirmed, the report in ProMED-mail [West Nile virus, avian - USA (HI): susp 20040925.2648] of suspected West Nile virus in a wild sparrow at Kahului Airport, Hawaii suggests that the analysis was accurate and timely. In the paper, and at the 2-day meeting, we proposed that residual disinsection (the use of nsecticides that leave a residue on surfaces) should be mandated for the holds of all planes from regions where West Nile virus has been confirmed, including most of the USA. If the suspected finding of West Nile virus in Hawaii is not confirmed, or, if the outbreak is successfully controlled, **we strongly suggest that these measures are put into place with high priority** to prevent the public health impact of West Nile virus in Hawaii, and, the potential loss of already threatened endemic Hawaiian avian species.

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WEST NILE VIRUS, AVIAN - USA (HAWAII)(02): SUSPECTED
A ProMED-mail post
<<http://www.promedmail.org>>
ProMED-mail is a program of the
International Society for Infectious Diseases <<http://www.isid.org>>

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