FLORIDA MOSQUITO CONTROL PILOTS ASSOCIATION

Flight Lines

SECOND EDITION SEPTEMBER 2006

Pernicious Pupa

What do you do when you're out inspecting by air and you encounter pupa? Nothing, right? Temephos won't kill it; neither will bti. The only thing that works against pupa is an oil treatment, such as Bonide, or Agnique, or Golden Bear.

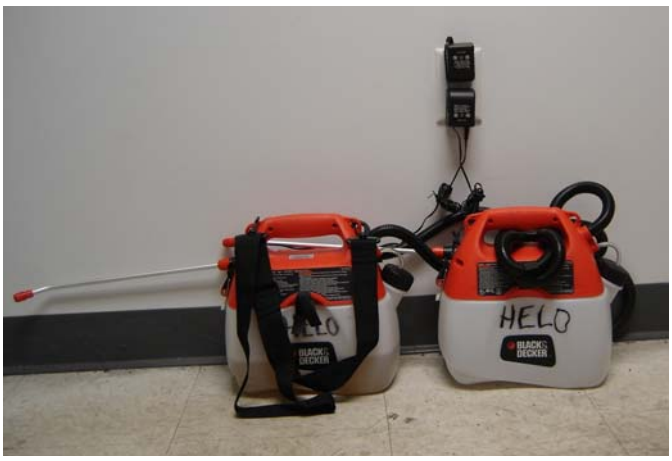
We could set up the wet system on our Bell 206 to use one of those products, but it would be a lot of trouble, and for what? How often do we find pupa? We consider the presence of pupa to be an inspection failure. And usually we just let it hatch off. What else can we do – by the time we could put the system on, if it *were* set up for a pupicide, and get back to spray it, it would most likely have already hatched off anyway.

Okay, once in a while we find such a frightening concentration of pupa that we'll actually go back to the shop, pick up a hand sprayer, and drop the inspector off to deal with it. That's what happened to us at Hillsborough County recently. And we came up with a really cool solution.

It *wasn't* an inspection failure. The larva had been found and treated: 100+ per dip. Two days later it was found again – still alive! And treated again. Then we came back once more, and found pupa – billions and billions of them! It was about a 5 to10 acre pond that had dried up, cracked, and then gotten some rain. I landed the helicopter in water two feet deep, and was astounded at the sheer abundance of pupa distributed throughout the entire pond. If I could have drained the whole pond, dipper by dipper, there would never been less than 100 per dip. The inspector reported that over in the weeds it was worse: we're talking massive black balls... I don't know if it was a bti failure, or a treatment failure, or probably there were just too many of them from the get-go, but now we had a serious dilemma. We *couldn't* let it hatch off.

We flew back to the shop and picked up two hand sprayers loaded with Bonide, and another inspector. Back at the pond, we surveyed the situation. From the ground, the inspectors wouldn't be able to access much of the area. So, we hovered slowly over the pond, working east to west, then north to south, and the inspectors sprayed the Bonide out onto the water from the helicopter. We found that the rotor wash action on the pond caused the film to spread out nicely, even through all the weeds and cracked mud areas.

The next day we checked, and found no skins; just dead pupa. And Monday morning, there were no aggravated phone calls. Success! We liked the idea of being able to spray pupicide from the helicopter, so we sent our warehouse manager out to the local hardware store to procure two handy dandy Black and Decker Garden Sprayers. Each holds 2.5 gallons of Bonide and has a battery powered spray wand which shoots the pupicide of choice out a good 15 feet, especially if you remove the spray tip so you can shoot it straight down in a thin stream. Now we keep them charged up in the pilots' office, and when we go inspecting, we strap them into the cargo compartment. Got pupa? No problem! Call the "Pupanator!"



Cause of Accident Still Unknown

Since we notified everybody on the e-mail list right after it happened, I'm sure you are all aware that Polk County's Piper Aztec crashed due to unknown circumstances on the evening of the 14th of September, killing pilot Richard Wheeler and foreman Clayton Merriett. As very little was left of the airplane, we may never know the cause of the accident.

Richard's wife Helen told me he loved to fly, and was very enthusiastic about the new mosquito control pilot's association. I understand Clayton also loved to fly, and just had to get in one last flight before his retirement, scheduled for two weeks later.

Clayton's memorial was held the following Tuesday, but Richard did not want a service. Nonetheless, Helen says she may do something in his memory at the airport in Bartow in November, around his birthday. She wants to have a celebration of his life and love of flying.

Polk County is collecting donations to assist the families of the two men in their time of need. Anyone wishing to donate can send a check to Polk County Mosquito Control, 4177 Ben Durrance Road, Bartow Florida 33830.

HOPI PRAYER of The Soul's Graduation:

Do not stand at my grave and weep
I am not there,
I do not sleep.
I am a thousand winds that blow.
I am the diamond glints on snow.
I am the sunlight
On the ripened grain.
I am the gentle Autumn's rain.
When you awaken in the morning hush,
I am the swift uplifting rush
of quiet birds in circled flight.
I am the soft stars that shine at night.
Do not stand at my grave and cry.
I am not there.
I did not die.
My Spirit is still alive…

In memory of Richard Wheeler and Clayton Merriett

FALL FMCPA SAFETY AND TRAINING SEMINAR

JACKSONVILLE MOSQUITO CONTROL

OCTOBER 26, 2006

TOPICS:

Calibration of ULV Equipment

Larvicides – Who's Using What and Why

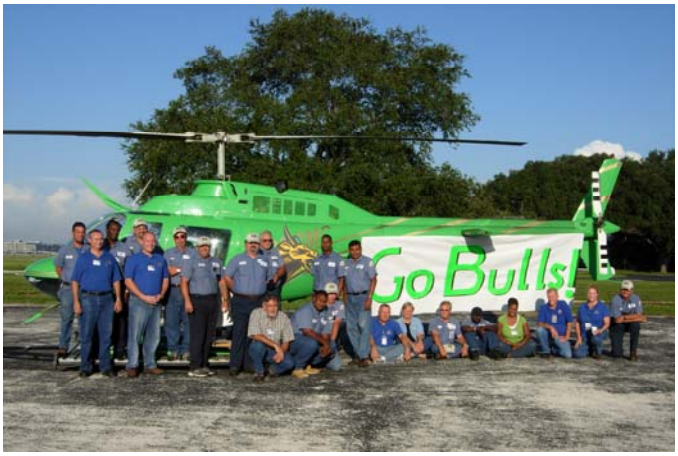
Special Risk Category – Where are We and Where Do We Go From Here

Lighting and Marking of Obstacles to Flight

Homeland Security and Agricultural Aircraft

What's The Story?

Send us your interesting stories, new gadgets, or even just cool photos of your equipment!



(Don't ask me to explain this!)

Everybody on the e-mail list has already been sent a questionnaire about larvicide products in use, but in case you haven't, or you haven't yet filled it out and returned it, please take a moment to answer the following questions for our larvicide survey. The results will be presented at the Fall Safety and Training Seminar in Jacksonville on October 26, and subsequently reproduced in this newsletter so we can all benefit from the information.

1. What larvicide (brand name and formulation) do you primarily use?

2. How long have you been using it?

3. Why did you choose this larvicide and formulation?

4. What is your alternate larvicide (brand name and formulation)?

5. How long have you been using it?

6. Why did you choose this larvicide and formulation?

7. When or where do you use your alternate larvicide?

8. What kind of habitat (salt marsh, pastures, ponds, etc.) do you primarily treat?

9. Do you have an alternate procedure for treating pupa? Or do you just let it hatch off?

10. How many acres do you larvicide annually (average)?

11. What aircraft do you use for larviciding (number and type)?

12. What spray systems do you have on these aircraft for larviciding? (Isolair wet-boom, dry broadcaster, homebuilt, etc.)

Please share your information – that's why we formed this organization. I just know somebody is reading my pupa story and saying "Big deal, we've been doing that for years...."

Pam