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Creepy Crane Flies

Now is the time where we begin to see nuisance crane flies enter into buildings. Sometimes these flies are called “mosquito hawks” but unlike mosquitoes, these adult flies do not feed. These flies are large in size with long legs and they are only alive long enough to mate and lay more eggs for the next generation. Even though crane flies are not medically important, they are a nuisance when they enter homes and other buildings in large numbers.

The larvae of the crane fly are gray in color and cylindrical in shape. Larvae are usually found in layers of decomposing leaves or in compost piles from December to January. The larvae of the crane fly have chewing mouthparts and feed on organic matter. They are beneficial, since they are decomposers. However, the adult flies are sometimes considered a nuisance in early spring. Just remember that they are only here for a couple of months out of the year, so keep doors and windows closed as much as possible to prevent these adult flies from entering buildings.



Photo of a crane fly, (Diptera: Tipulidae). Photo by Bart Drees, Professor and Extension Entomologist, Texas A&M University.

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