

## **Microcosms, Mosquitos and Mites: The behaviour of a Platyseinae Evans, 1957 mite from a fresh-water spring in Christchurch.**

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All active instars of an unnamed species of Platyseinae Evans, 1957 (Acari; Mesostigmata; Blattiscociidae) consumed freshly killed mosquito larvae in microcosms on a daily basis from February 5 - March 15. Early instar larval mosquitos were sometimes captured, killed and consumed by the mites. Other prey included crustaceans and nematodes. The mite could be placed in *Platyseius* Berlese, 1916, but has a broadly fused ventrianal and dorsal sheild. Aspects of the mite's taxonomy and biology, is presented in videos, illustrations and photos. Highlighted are the water-surface habits of the mite; its agility and the presence of a dorsal detritus mass. Mites used the short, sharp setae of the J, Z, S, R and JV series as a fork to lift detritus which was then moved forward onto the mite's dorsum with the 4th pair of legs. Mating rituals, social interactions and egg-laying were observed. The mite was collected in the Thistledown fresh-water springs Christchurch.

