

The Black Fly *Simulium jenningsi*: A Nuisance Gnat in the Mid-Atlantic

Are you bothered by swarming gnats during the summer? They may be black flies.

- Black flies are very small flies, only about 3-7mm in length. Most people in the mid-Atlantic call them gnats.
- Female black flies feed on blood before laying their eggs. They breed in flowing water.
- The species *Simulium jenningsi* is found throughout the mid-Atlantic. They form persistent swarms around heads and faces.
- When swarms become large enough, summer outdoor activities can become unbearable.

Adult *Simulium jenningsi*:



Actual Size:



Larval Black Fly:



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www.mdblackfly.com

About *Simulium jenningsi*

- Most black fly species are not attracted to humans. *S. jenningsi* will swarm and bite both humans and livestock.
- *S. jenningsi* breeds in large rivers, at least 20 feet wide. In western Maryland, the main source of *S. jenningsi* is the Potomac River and its larger tributaries.
- *S. jenningsi* has multiple generations each year, and can be a nuisance problem the entire summer.
- *S. jenningsi* populations can be managed through aerial spraying of the bacterial pesticide *Bacillus thuringiensis israelensis* (Bti) at the larval source. Pennsylvania and West Virginia have state control programs, but Maryland does not.