



Your Health Matters

By Claudia Parks, RN.



This week's subject is a continuation of last week's composition on the wicked itchy CHIGGER. You learned that probably no creature on earth could cause as much torment for its size as the tiny chigger. Tiny six-legged chigger larvae attack campers, picnickers, hikers, bird watchers, berry pickers, fishermen, soldiers, and homeowners in low, damp areas where vegetation is rank such as woodlands, berry patches, orchards, along lakes and streams, and even in drier places where vegetation is low such as lawns, golf courses, and parks. They are most numerous in early summer when grass, weeds and other vegetation are heaviest.

Chiggers do not burrow into the skin, nor suck blood, but insert their mouthparts in a skin pore or hair follicle. They pierce the skin and inject into the host a salivary secretion containing powerful, digestive enzymes that break down skin cells that are ingested (tissues become liquefied and sucked up). They drop off after feeding - so the practice of putting fingernail polish on the bump to suffocate the critter does no good—it's long gone by the time you itch or see a bite! Their bites produce small, reddish welts on the skin accompanied by intense itching as irritating as acute cases of poison ivy. For temporary relief of itching, apply ointments of benzocaine, hydrocortisone,

calamine lotion or others recommended by your pharmacist or medical doctor. (Since last week's article, I have received a number of calls and emails confirming stick deodorant—to be applied to each bite!) These symptoms often are the only way of learning that an outdoor area is infested. Chiggers feed on a wide variety of snakes, turtles, birds, and small mammals as well as humans.

CONTROL MEASURES: Mowing of briars, weeds, and thick vegetation and close clipping of lawns, to eliminate shade and moisture, will reduce chigger populations, and permit sunlight and air to circulate freely. Chigger larvae can penetrate many types of clothing, but high boots and trousers of tightly woven fabric tucked into stockings or boots help deter them.

Before going into an area where chiggers may be present, protect yourself by using a repellent such as deet (Off, Repel) and/or permethrin available at many drugstores or hardware/lawn stores. Deet-based repellents are effective for only a few hours, whereas permethrin-based repellents are for use only on clothing and effective for several days. Apply the deet repellent to both the skin and clothing, especially on hands, arms, or legs if uncovered, and to clothing openings at cuffs, neck, waistband, and upper edges of socks. Follow label directions since

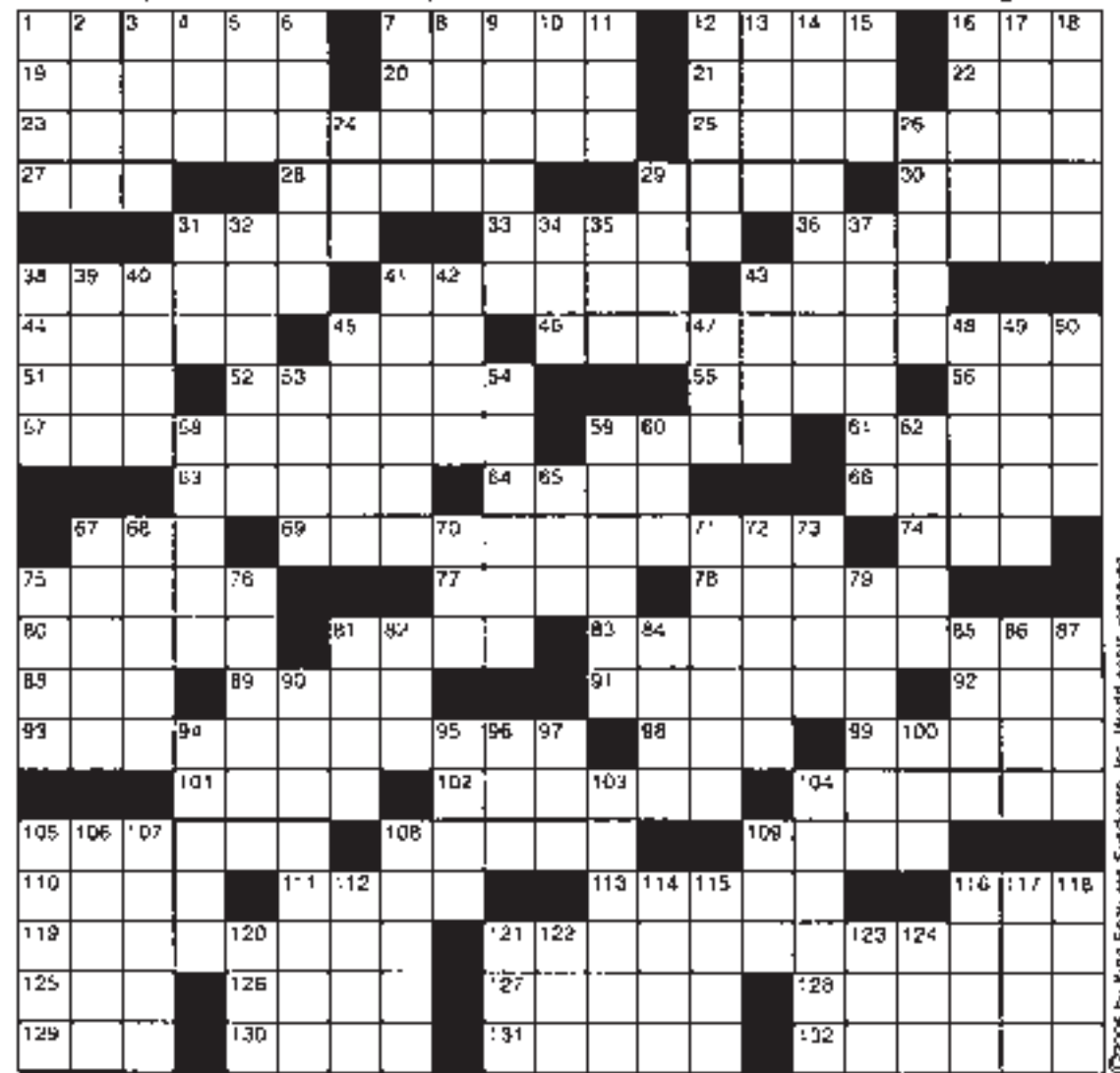
repellents may damage plastics, nail polish, and painted surfaces. Do not use indiscriminately as severe human allergies can develop. Keep moving since the worst chigger infestations occur when sitting or laying down in a sunny spot at midday. If possible, stick to roads and trails. Added note: Do not wear dog or cat flea collars on your ankles or cattle ear tags on your shoes to ward off chiggers. It is very dangerous and can result in chemical skin burns and toxic effect to the wearers.

INSECTICIDES: Treating known chigger trouble spots is quicker and less expensive than treating an entire area. Test the area for chiggers! Place six-inch squares of black cardboard on edge in the grass and observe for a few minutes. Any small, yellowish or pinkish chiggers present will climb rapidly to the top of the square and congregate there. Unless the entire area is infested, treat only the spots where control is desired such as grass around picnic tables, lawn chairs, or recreational equipment. Chiggers tend to concentrate in "mite islands" while nearby spots are free of them. They become rather inactive at temperatures below 60°F. Spray the grass and other areas with a garden insecticide, using label directions. Only the licensed pest control operator can use certain stronger formulations of insecticides to rid your areas of many small pests.

Claudia Parks, RN, lived in south Fulton County (Georgia) for more than forty years. She is a former doctor's office and emergency room nurse and retired as an educator from Fulton County Schools. She writes Your Health Matters as a public service; the information here is designed to help you make informed choices about your health. It is not intended as a substitute for the advice of your physician. Claudia and her husband make their home in the beautiful north Georgia Mountains, near Blairsville. To reach Claudia, e-mail at yhm@windstream.net

CAN'T STANDISH STILL Super Crossword

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| ACROSS | 1 WWII site | 7 Serenity | 12 Brazos River city | 16 Clerical garb | 19 Point the finger at | 20 Synthetic fiber | 21 Christiania, today | 22 Remote | 23 Riddle: Part 1 | 25 Gerishwin's "in Blue" | 27 Squinty or | 28 Gaggle gal | 29 Watch part | 30 Fountain order | 31 Rocker Marc | 33 Nature spirit | 36 Sabre, for one | 38 Lee of "The Fall Guy" | 41 Camaloupe's cousin | 43 Team | 44 Skater | 45 Black critique | 46 Riddle: Part 2 | 51 Papua New Guinea port | 52 Conlam-inates | 55 But or Women | 56 Sapporo sash | 57 Tactful | 59 Consider | 61 Ford flop | 63 Maine town | 64 Space | 66 AJ — (cooking term) | 67 Lear, to | 69 Riddle: Part 3 | 74 Fleur-de- | 75 Desert schlepper | 77 — Romeo | 78 Heep of Dickens | 80 Coeur d'—, ID | 81 Caricaturist | 83 Hard to describe | 88 Hurried | 89 Little one | 91 Plato | 92 —4 (Toyota model) | 93 Riddle: Part 4 | 98 Loader part | 99 Gladson | 101 Alan of "Gingari's Island" | 102 Frequent Funicello co-star | 104 Scanty | 105 Roller-coaster feeling | 108 1970 World's Fair site | 109 Chatterley or Windermere | 110 Director Nicolas | 111 Skip | 113 Turbine part | 116 — Goncalo, Brazil | 119 Avoidance | 121 Answer to riddle | 125 Swell place? | 126 Actor Barry | 127 Murcia mistle | 128 Farm adolescent | 129 Weaken | 130 — Neisse Line | 131 Early German | 132 Spanish — | 5 Shake-spearish snake | 6 Equine exclamations | 7 Kelly's possum | 8 Goals | 9 Tabloid subjects | 10 Cot follower | 11 Minnesota twins? | 12 Meni | 13 '75 | 14 More humed | 15 "Alley —" | 16 In progress | 17 Soup scoop | 18 Adams or Ferry | 24 Actor Chaney | 26 It needs to be threaded | 29 Boom or gal | 31 Swindle | 32 Wind instrument? | 34 Spitz sound | 35 Exec's deg. | 37 Porpoised | 38 Bland | 39 Ja. — | 40 Army vehicle | 41 "Maxin' Whoopee" singer | 42 Pro loe | 43 "The King and I" setting | 45 Brandell's instrument | 47 Pigskin prop | 48 Mubarak of Egypt | 49 Helps a hood | 50 Mosaic bit | 53 Singer Toni | 54 Torah, a.g. | 58 Shade of green | 59 Realm | 60 Big bird | 62 Indian city | 65 Oven setting | 67 — Lama | 68 Improve | 70 — kwon do | 71 London borough | 72 Furious | 73 Short movie? | 75 Funny fellow | 76 Deadly | 78 "It's a deal!" | 81 — terner | 82 Drill sergeant's shout | 84 Wosl. alliance | 85 Improve oneself in a way | 86 Behind schedule | 87 Always as paper | 90 Aged, as | 94 Poultry serving | 95 Cobbler's need | 96 Palindromic name | 97 Asian ox | 100 Nonclerical | 103 It's down in the mouth | 104 "Vandellas" leader | 105 Lock | 106 Biblical book | 107 Summarize | 108 Ocean vessel | 109 Christie or Costello | 112 Leon's pride | 114 Melville work | 115 Like Hitchcock's curtain | 116 Couch | 117 Served well | 118 Create veggie | 120 — thp addenda | 122 Whore rocks frolic | 123 "Tell — No" ('65 hit) | 124 Outer edge |
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Strange But True

By SAMANTHA WEAVER

• Worldwide, herbivores kill more people than carnivores.

• According to a recent Reuters report, paleontologists in Australia have found fossilized remains of some surprising creatures in the state of Queensland. One specimen, a fanged killer kangaroo, lived between 10 million and 20 million years ago. Needless to say, it didn't much resemble its modern relatives: For one thing, it had wolf-like fangs. Also, the killer kangaroo didn't hop; its long, powerful forearms indicate to researchers that it galloped when pursuing its prey.

• You can check out every list of the most popular baby names ever compiled, but you're not going to find many of the names chosen by today's celebrities for their children. Actor Jason Lee's son is named Pilot Inspektor, Nicholas Cage named his son Kal-el, and actress Shannyn Sossamon chose the name Audio Science for her

baby.

• In some states, it is punishable by fine or imprisonment to attempt to commit this crime, but not to commit this crime: suicide.



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