

# *Civil War Science*

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## *Station 2*

No story about the involvement of insects with the Civil War would be complete without referring to mosquitoes. Called "gallinippers" by the soldiers, they were considered by some Confederates to be a more annoying than Yankee bullets.





The low-lying wet areas of the Mississippi River provided an excellent breeding habitat for mosquitoes. A Rebel compared the mosquitoes of his native Tennessee to those of his current billet in the Mississippi lowlands. "The Mississippi river fellow is far larger, has a longer and sharper bill, and though he sings the same tune, he sings it with far greater ferocity." Enduring the mosquitoes was bad enough, but it was the ensuing malaria that could prove worse for many soldiers. Folk of the 1860s did not connect the disease with mosquitoes. There were over 1.3 million cases and 10,000 deaths from malaria in the Union Army (Steiner 1968).



Confederate soldiers also suffered, although fatalities from the disease were comparatively lower. Although malaria was common in both the North and South, an effective drug - quinine - was available for prevention and cure of the disease. **Malaria** is a disease that involves high fevers, shaking chills, and flu-like symptoms. It can be kill people if not properly treated.

