

Deforestation may spread malaria

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Scientists say they have found a link between deforestation and the spread of malaria in the Peruvian Amazon.

U.S. and Peruvian researchers found that in the most deforested areas the biting rate of the mosquito *Anopheles darlingi* "was more than 278 times higher than the rate determined for areas that were predominantly forested," The Washington Post reported.

The report, published in the January issue of the *American Journal of Tropical Medicine and Hygiene*, said mosquitoes prefer to live in open, sunlit pools of water, which are more prevalent in deforested areas.

Because mosquitoes spread malaria, the findings indicate that "deforestation increases" the risk of the disease, one of the paper's authors, Jonathan A. Patz of the University of Wisconsin at Madison, said in an interview with the Post.

"In this case, conservation policy and public health policy are one and the same," he said.

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