

Mosquitos and copper ion pool party in Panama

Written by T. Rob Brown (aka Roberto Chocolate)

Monday, 26 July 2010 19:27 - Last Updated Tuesday, 27 July 2010 15:23

Two questions; one about [mosquitos](#) and the other about how the [copper ion system](#) worked during our pool party came in this morning. Roberto

Hi Roberto,

Thanks for the update. As to the [mosquitos](#) . I am bless with them not liking my blood but my wife gets enough of them for all of us. I was interested in general as to the amount of the buggers that are there. I mean being tropical, they are everywhere, but do you have to add coupious amounts of repellent to survive at night or are some areas better than others.Yours for example.

I am a fluids engineer for oil companies so I know what you mean about pH factors. This Ion Egg thing sounds too good to be true but now that I have an adventurer into it, I am interested to see how all the systems work out.

As always appreciate the info. Good luck with the POOL GALA. Steve My response:

Dear Steve,

A fluids engineer? Does that qualify you an oil clean-up expert? LOL The US could sure use one, it seems. Hayward, BP's CEO is about to be tossed after yet another media gaff — there is politics in everything I guess. I too have your wife's sweet blood — mosquitos love me. As do 'no-see-ums' —and 'chiggers' — but they are usually here in the wet season (May - December).

The worst place in Panama for bugs that I have seen is Bocas Del Toro on the Caribbean side (I call it "Bogus del Rain-o)

The

[mosquitos](#)

in the jungles of the Darien have

[dengue fever and malaria](#)

I am told, however I went fishing for a weekend at

[Tropic Star Lodge](#)

in the Darien, and did not get a single mosquito bite.

The higher elevations such as; El Valle, Boquete, Altos Del Maria, etc have a lot more bugs,

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and they are there all year because they do not burn off in the heat of the dry season.

My area (the Pacific beaches) is blessed with much fewer bugs during the rainy season and none in the dry season.

The final straw in deciding not to go return to Canada happened during the summer of 2009. We were getting eaten alive by mosquitos. I remember commenting at the time; "We live in a tropical jungle, and we hardly ever get bitten - we come back to Ontario and get devoured — and we're freezing to death"! We have not been back to Ontario for almost two years.

When you come to Panama, it's a good idea to bring Deep Woods Off with 25% or higher deet content — it is hard to find here. Just to be sure (the horse flu, spread by [mosquitos](#) , was a real concern here a few weeks ago)

I keep a can of OFF in my car. Anti-itch cream helps too.

The Pool Party was a huge success — almost 90 people showed up, very few left at the prescribed 7 P.M. finish. I called last call at 2 A.M. as I was bushed. Everyone had a ball, the food was great. Panamanian neighbors brought an amazing fresh shrimp cocktail for 40 and some Canadian friends brought a huge container of salsa/cheese dip to die for. Our American contractor who built our pool bought all the alcohol and ended up bar-tending for half the night as well.

A couple of gringo friends took over the BBQ for me, which I really appreciated — the skewers of rib-eye beef, tandoori chicken and garlic roasted pork with veggies was a big hit as were the 60 chicken drumsticks which were inhaled along with a huge pot of my wife's famous pesto pasta salad.

The young kids adored the plunge pool, the teenagers had a good time in the hidden cave (monitored carefully by watchful parents) and the adults devoured the curry/garlic shrimp from the stone table in the pool. The tiki torches were romantic and to make the night perfect, it was a full moon.

I took pictures of the pool this morning before I drive out to get 100 pounds of salt. It was so cloudy you could not see the bottom of the eight foot end. I tested the water — the copper was down to zero — and

[ionization](#)

cannot work unless there is at least some coper in the water.

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Salt is an excellent conductor and to kick-start the ionization process, it need a boost. A LOT of beer and a few glasses of wine was spilled in the pool last night! So

[copper ion pools](#)

have a limit — they say it can handle 20 kids in the pool all day — it cannot handle 90 rowdy adults spilling drinks all night.

The distributor of the ion eggs did not show up to the party, so he did not deliver the egg for me to test. I did do a calculation and it appears I would need seven eggs to handle my 33,000 gallon pool. They last about a year I think he said, making it an expensive option.

Like an ion system alone, the egg still requires adding chlorine to get rid of soap and body oils, which ruins the whole point of a chemical-free pool, doesn't it?

The copper ion system in Gorgona seems to be working well, despite the heavy rains they have been getting (our area is in the 'dry arch' — we get much less rain than anywhere else in Panama)

Even so, after a really heavy rain I see the copper levels in my pool plummet, and have to watch my pH levels.

I will let you know how the salt works! Roberto