

Exodus-Like 'Plague' Strikes Beachgoers

For those enjoying the serene ocean view on Rhode Island's Misquamicut State Beach on a recent Saturday, the last thing on their mind was being overrun by a swarm of insects.

Yet this is exactly what they ended up experiencing as the Exodus-like swarm made up of millions of dragonflies invaded the beach.

While not on the same scale as the land of Egypt being overrun by locusts, the incident quickly went viral as video of the swarm caught worldwide attention, as people got out their trusty mobile devices to record the bizarre incident.

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"One minute everything was calm," witness Nicole Taylor told news outlet WFSB. "The next minute I saw the most dragonflies I've ever seen in my life.

"It lasted for like three minutes, and then they were gone. It was a very strange experience."

Videos of the event show the skies above the beach congested with the flying pests moving quickly through the shoreline.

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"It was weird," another vacationer, Paula Bellavance, told the outlet. "It was like there was a couple, and then there was more and then it was just like they were coming from the ocean, and we're just trying to process, 'Wow, what is going on,' and you look up, and there's thousands in the air and all

around you.”

Rhode Island Natural History Survey’s Executive Director David Gregg told the Providence Journal that the swarm could be a result of searching for more fertile feeding grounds. “What I suspect is happening is a combination of a good year for this species, a particularly big population, then a decline in their resources, and it triggers them to move and try to find a better place to be,” says Gregg.

Associate scientist Gale Ridge of Connecticut’s Agricultural Experiment Station believes this could just be a case of the swarm being moved by warm breezes from up north.

“These are green donna dragonflies that are commuting possibly from Canada, and they may have been pushed on shore by the wind,” Ridge speculates.

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