

# Natural Garden Remedies from Garden Club Members

## February 8, 2017

**Marilyn Emigh:**

### **Bug Spray (mites, aphids & mealy bugs)**

Mix 3 ingredients and put in spray bottle  
Spray on plants and soil every 2-3 days until bugs are gone  
1 quart water  
1 tsp Ivory dish soap or Murphy's oil soap  
1 Tbsp Vegetable oil

### **Ant Hills-outdoors**

Diatomaceous Earth (composed of silicon dioxide or silica-main component of sand)  
Available at garden centers & Home Depot and Menards  
Ants eat it and it lacerates their bodies--ants do not become immune to it-it's a mechanical killer  
Re-apply after rain as needed

### **Ants - indoors**

Bay Leaves - put a few on a counter or spot where you have seen ants.  
Replace after 30-60 days as needed  
(You can make bay leaf tea and pour outside your house to keep ants away)

### **Fungus Gnats** - sometimes found in bagged potting soil

Treat new potting soil in planters  
4 quarts water  
1 pint hydrogen peroxide  
Mix 2 ingredients together and pour on soil

**Ron Willer:**

### **Creeping Charlie**

I've found the best way to eliminate "creeping Charlie" (*glechoma hederacea*) is ....manually.  
I've used all kinds of chemicals, and, subsequently, either killed or at least stunted "normal" grass growth, so I found by using a tool like a dental pick (with a little hook on the end) to reach down and grab the vine growing below the grass blades, pulling up for my finger to grab, then pull the entire vine - with leaves and blossoms - is effective (and satisfying!). You can also use a nail with a head on it or a crochet hook.  
Best time is when the soil is a little moist, like the day after a drizzle, so the grass blades flex better, and Charlie's roots rip out easier.  
A lot of crawling around on your hands and knees, though...

**Kathy Juhnke :**

### **Weeds**

Regular vinegar will kill the leaves of weeds, but not the roots.  
I use Geen Gobbler Vinegar, which is a 30% solution.  
It was \$12.50 on Amazon.



**Tom Wahrnke**

### **Aphids and Caterpillars**

I use the following solution for sucking insects like aphids and caterpillars. I've seen this a lot on the internet so it's probably nothing new. Mix one part water, one part rubbing alcohol and a few drops of liquid dish detergent in a spray bottle, just enough detergent that it becomes a little sudsy. Spray on all parts of the affected plants--both sides of leaves, stems, flowers--wherever insects are present. The detergent helps it stick to the plant rather than dripping off immediately. It does a good job of killing them without harmful residue. It may have to be repeated but it's especially good on houseplants where reinfestation is not likely from the outdoors.

### **Wire fencing for rabbits**

We bought 'welded wire fencing' for our outdoor beds from Home Depot (I'm sure it's available at all the Big Box stores). Our roll was 3'x50' and coated with green vinyl. We cut it into 1' wide strips along the length, so (3) 1'x50' strips, cut off one of the lengthwise strands of wire to create 'legs' that can be pushed into the ground. If you're really into appearance, this will not be the best, but it was good protection against rabbits. It comes in 3', 4' and 5' wide rolls so you can cut it to whatever height you want. It's also available in black as well as green. For tall, dense beds, it's nearly invisible until you're right up to it. Of course, the rabbits can easily jump a 1' high barrier so if they're a serious problem, you'd probably have to go to 18" or more. It's better than poison that may kill the rabbit but then work it's way up the food chain to the coyotes and hawks. Here's a link to the product: Everbilt Green Vinyl Welded Fencing Wire.



<http://www.homedepot.com/p/Everbilt-3-ft-x-50-ft-Green-Vinyl-Welded-Wire-308351EB/205960861>

I also use the welded wire fence to protect the small shrubs and young trees from rabbit damage in winter. So much easier to work with than chicken wire.

**Carrie Brooks:**

### **Slugs**

Slugs are hermaphrodites which means they have both male and female reproductive sex organs.

A single slug can produce 2 -3 dozen offspring several times a year.

In spring look for slug eggs. They are a whitish jelly filled sac about the size of BB's. Kill the sac with salt.

Walk around your property in early morning and look for slugs on the sidewalk and squish them.

Slugs will live for several years and get BIGGER every year.

Go slug hunting at night. Carry a salt shaker and sprinkle just a little on the slug and it's a goner. I have never damaged a plant doing this. Just keep the salt on the slug or just pick them up by hand and drown in salt water.

Egg shells look messy in the garden, diatomaceous earth is expensive and needs to be replenished after rain.

Make a slug trap out of a 1 liter plastic bottle. Just google "how to make a slug trap" for lots of homemade traps.

If you are diligent you can win the battle against slugs.

Terry Sieroslowski:

### Fertilizers

1. **Wood ashes** - adds potassium to soil, which improves the hardiness of the plant and the flavor of their fruits.
2. **Coffee grounds** - mulched around acid-loving plants, provides a mild but complete food.
3. **Apple juice and Epsom salts** - take a flat-backed spade, and plunge it into the ground in a circle all the way around the bush at the tips of the farthest branches. Then pour a mixture of **1 cup of apple juice and 2 tbsp. of Epsom salts per 1 gallon of warm water** into the cuts in the soil around a flowering bush. Your bushes should burst into bloom with their best and brightest colors.

### Replanting additive

**Oatmeal** - add a handful or two of dry oatmeal to the soil mix when replanting. Oatmeal provides many essential nutrients, so instead of drying plants, you've got happy thriving ones.

### Pesticides

1. **To fight aphids, whiteflies, and similar garden pests** - Puree **8 to 10 chili peppers in a blender with 1 tbsp. vegetable oil**. Strain the mixture through a sieve into a quart storage jar. Add **3 cups hot water and a tsp. liquid dishwashing soap**. Cap the jar and shake to mix thoroughly. Decant the mixture into a clean spray bottle and spray the affected plants, making sure to cover both sides of the leaves.
2. **For Aphids, mealybugs, mites and scales** -  
Soap spray: Mix **one tbsp, dishwashing soap into 1 gallon of water**. Test Spray a few leaves of the affected plant; if no damage results, spray the whole plant.  
Ammonia spray: Mix **1 part household ammonia with 7 parts water**.  
Oil spray: Stir **1 tbsp. liquid dishwashing soap into one cup of vegetable oil**.  
Mix **2 tsp. of the soap and oil blend into one cup water**. Apply to plant.
3. **Fungal diseases (powdery mildew and black spots)** - Mix **one tsp. of baking soda into one quart warm water**. Add **one tsp. liquid dishwashing soap**. Apply to leaves as a spray or drench the leaves of smaller plants with a watering can.
4. **Thugs** - Sprinkle **cayenne pepper and pre-sifted flour** onto and around your plants. The garden thugs can't stand the taste.

### Weed killer

Ingredients:

**2 cups vinegar**

**1 tbs. liquid dish washing soap**

**1 tbsp. salt**

Add ingredients into a spray bottle. Gently shake to mix. Shield your surrounding plants. Make sure to only spray, not pour.

**Linda Waycie:**

**Ants**

To kill ants in the patio blocks, mix

1 Cup water

½ Cup sugar

3 TBSP. Borax

This also works for ants on the kitchen counter.

Put mixture in a shallow lid. Ants eat it and take it back to the nest.

**Mary Scanlon:**

**Another use for plant containers**

I save the plastic plant containers and cut off the bottoms. I place the cut containers, jagged edge up, over new and/or emerging plants to give them a chance to grow in my garden.

**Cayenne pepper**

I sprinkle cayenne pepper on plant leaves and continue to do this spring through summer.

This helps keep critters away.

**Jeannie Weber:**

**Weeds in the lawn**

I use corn gluten meal and spread it with a lawn spreader. It is a natural pre-emergent which inhibits root formation when the weed seeds germinate. It will not kill existing weeds.

Apply it in the spring before weeds emerge above the soil. It takes 2 – 3 applications before it is fully effective. The effects are cumulative, so your results will improve over time. A bonus is that it acts as a fertilizer also. I bought it at Pesche's but it should be available at most nurseries.