

Green Gardening Products and Methods That Work

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Diane Emerson, Michael Laurie www.gardengreen.webs.com (206) 567-5492

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Note: products which are considered especially effective are listed in bold. In most cases this means a 75%+ approval rating by customers on Amazon. Other products or methods in bold are especially effective based on our experience and that of many gardeners and farmers we know. These include deer fencing, drip irrigation and timers, and WWOOFers.

Animals - Birds

PRODUCT OR METHOD	USED FOR	INGREDIENTS	NOTES FOR BEST RESULTS
Bird-X netting	Birds		
Flash Tape	Birds	Bright, reflective tape	Take down after harvest so the birds don't get used to the tape
Natural Enemy Scarecrow rotating owl head	Birds		
Orbit Yard Enforcer	Birds	Water	
Scare Tape	Birds	Bright, reflective tape	Take down after harvest so the birds don't get used to the tape

Animals - Deer

PRODUCT OR METHOD	USED FOR	INGREDIENTS	NOTES FOR BEST RESULTS
Deer-X netting	Deer		
Fencing	Deer		6-8 feet tall if net or wire, 5 ½ feet tall if the deer can't see through the fence
La Torre's Deer out	Deer	Peppermint oil, garlic oil, white pepper, putrescent eggs	
Liquid Fence Deer and Rabbit Repellant	Deer and Rabbits	Putrescent egg solids, garlic, sodium lauryl sulfate, potassium sorbate, thyme oil, water, sodium citrate, sodium benzoate, citric acid, xanthan gum	

Animals – Many

PRODUCT OR METHOD	USED FOR	INGREDIENTS	NOTES FOR BEST RESULTS
Floating Row Covers	Birds, deer, insects	Non-woven garden fabric	
Havahart Live animal traps and cage traps	Mice, squirrels, up in size to raccoons		Peanut butter bait, usually legal to trap, but illegal to transport
Deer Out's Critter Out	Mice, rats, squirrels, raccoons.	Peppermint oil, lemongrass oil, clove leaf oil, garlic oil, sodium chloride, white pepper, putrescent egg solids	Good to spray under the hood of vehicles where rodents eat wiring
Molecat	Kills moles, gophers, squirrels, rats, shrews, snakes and other ground dwelling animals.	Kills with shock waves	
T3-R Triple High Impact Rodent Repeller	Mice, rats, squirrels	Repulsive Ultrasonic Sounds (sound above human hearing).	It will take a week or two for the rodents to leave

Animals – Moles and Gophers

PRODUCT OR METHOD	USED FOR	INGREDIENTS	NOTES FOR BEST RESULTS
Answer mole trap	Moles	Metal trap	
Molemax mole and vole repellent	Moles and Voles	Castor oil	

Animals – Rats and Mice

PRODUCT OR METHOD	USED FOR	INGREDIENTS	NOTES FOR BEST RESULTS
'Great Stuff' Foam Sealant	Sealing openings rodents can enter	Prepolymer of MDI and Polyether polyol	Difficult to re-use a can, so plan to use the whole can once you begin
Rat X	Rats and Mice only.	Corn gluten meal, salt	Remove other food sources for best results

Animals – Rats and Mice, Continued

PRODUCT OR METHOD	USED FOR	INGREDIENTS	NOTES FOR BEST RESULTS
'Fresh Cab' Botanical rodent repellent	Rodents	Balsam fir oil	Best for enclosed spaces like storage sheds
Rugged Ranch Ratinator	Rats	Live trap which can trap up to 8 rats at a time	
Pestacator 2000 Plug In Rodent Repeller	Rodents	Plug in unit, uses a pulse technology to send silent pulsing signal through your homes wiring	It will take a week or two to drive them out
Victor Electronic mousetrap	Mice	High voltage shock kills mice in 5 seconds.	
Victor Pest Chaser and Mini-Pro Pest Chaser	Rodents	Emits high frequency sound waves that repel rodents	
Victor Rat and mouse traps	Rodents	Mechanical traps	

Animals - Squirrels

PRODUCT OR METHOD	USED FOR	INGREDIENTS	NOTES FOR BEST RESULTS
Rugged Ranch Squirrelinator Trap	Squirrels – can catch up to 12 gray squirrels at a time	Metal live trap	

Animals - Voles

PRODUCT OR METHOD	USED FOR	INGREDIENTS	NOTES FOR BEST RESULTS
Hardware Cloth or plastic around trees, shrub trunks	Voles	Physical deterrent	

Disease

PRODUCT OR METHOD	USED FOR THESE DISEASES	INGREDIENTS	NOTES FOR BEST RESULTS
Bonide® Sulfur Plant Fungicide RTU	Powdery mildew, other fungal disease	Sulfur. This is pure sulfur. Other products with other ingredients added to the sulfur may not be as safe for the environment	Best to apply before the fungus arrives, or at first signs of a problem.
Choose native and/or disease resistant plants for our climate, soil, and microclimate	All		See www.greatplantpicks.org for maritime Pacific Northwest recommendations. Also see the Washington Native Plant Society www.wpns.org/landscaping
Dr. Earth 8007 Ready to Use Disease Control Fungicide	Powdery mildew, rust, black spot, peach leaf curl, shot hole, leaf blotch, scab, dollar spot, brown rot and other plant diseases	Rosemary Oil, Cloves & Clove Oil, Peppermint Oil And Malic Acid	
Drip irrigation and timer to help avoid overwatering	Keeping fungal disease spores from splashing up onto leaves, and helps leaves stay dry overnight		Set timers to water early in the day, to save water and have dry foliage by night time
Eco-Smart organic 3 in 1 rose and flower care (disease, insects and mites)	Black spot, powdery mildew, blight and rust	Rosemary oil, thyme oil, sodium lauryl sulfate, peppermint oil	
Eco-Smart Organic Garden Fungicide	Black spot, rust, powdery mildew, blight and other common plant diseases.	Rosemary and rosemary oil, thyme and thyme oil	
Move sun loving plants to better conditions, as trees and shrubs grow and shade them	Fungal disease, others		

Disease, Continued

PRODUCT OR METHOD	USED FOR THESE DISEASES	INGREDIENTS	NOTES FOR BEST RESULTS
Organic compost and fertilizer	Build healthy soil so plants can fight off disease on their own		
Organocide™ 3-in-1 Garden Spray (fungicide, insecticide, miticide)	Powdery mildew, other fungal disease	Sesame oil, fish oil, lecithin	
Safer Brand Garden Fungicide	Powdery mildew, other fungal disease	Sulfur	
Serenade Disease Control Concentrate	black spot, powdery mildew, rust, gray mold, late blight, scab	Bacillus subtilis	

Insects

PRODUCT OR METHOD	USED FOR THESE INSECTS	INGREDIENTS	NOTES FOR BEST RESULTS
Bug Blaster Bbn Conversion Nozzle	whiteflies, aphids, mealybugs, mites	Water, sprayed in such a way that it gets the undersides of leaves and crevices	Be sure to buy the extension too, or you will get wet!
Citronella incense sticks	Mosquitoes and other flying insects	Brazilian Andiroba oil blended with citronella, rosemary & thyme	
Eco-Smart organic 3 in 1 rose and flower care (disease, insects and mites)	Aphids, caterpillars, mites	Sesame oil, fish oil, lecithin	
Eco-Smart organic insect killer, granules version only	Over 100 crawling insects	2-phenethyl propionate, sodium lauryl sulfate, eugenol, thyme oil, sesame oil	

Insects, Continued

PRODUCT OR METHOD	USED FOR THESE INSECTS	INGREDIENTS	NOTES FOR BEST RESULTS
EcoSMART 33103 Organic Ant and Roach Killer	Ants and roaches	Peppermint oil, rosemary oil	
EcoSMART 33105 Organic Wasp and Hornet Killer	Wasps and hornets	Peppermint oil, phenethyl propionate	
Hand removal	Aphids, caterpillars, others		Good for early signs of problems
Floating Row Covers	Flea beetles, cabbage moths, and other insects	Non-woven garden fabric	
Live Ladybugs for aphids by Bug Sales	Aphids.		Likely to be more successful in a greenhouse than in a garden. Proper timing of releases and the use of beetles that have used up their stored fat and are ready to feed are very important
Plants to attract beneficial insects	Used for many insects		Sweet alyssum, dill, yarrow. Find more at http://permaculturenews.org/2014/10/04/plants-attract-beneficial-insects/
Rescue YJTR-DT12 Reusable Yellow Jacket Trap	Yellow jackets (wasps)	Food product attractant	
Safer Sticky Trap for whiteflies	Whiteflies	Attracted to yellow color, trapped on sticky paper	
Terro Fruit fly trap	Fruit flies	Sodium lauryl sulfate, acetic acid	
Tree Tanglefoot Insect Barrier	Gypsy moths, cankerworms, weevils, ants, caterpillars, moths and cutworms	Natural gum resins, castor oil, carnuba wax	Apply it to duct tape, cloth, or directly on the tree

Moss

PRODUCT OR METHOD	USED FOR	INGREDIENTS	NOTES FOR BEST RESULTS
Baking Soda	Moss	Bicarbonate of soda	
Agricultural Lime	Adjusting pH so grass can better compete with the moss	Ground limestone	Apply spring and fall
Pruners to cut overhanging limbs	Moss		To increase light and air circulation
Scraping tool for roof	Moss		Careful not to damage shingles

Slugs

PRODUCT OR METHOD	USED FOR	INGREDIENTS	NOTES FOR BEST RESULTS
Beer Traps	Slugs and snails drowning	Beer	Find a gallon jug. Cut a 1" by 1" opening about 3-4" above the bottom. Add one can of beer. Our big slugs need a couple inches of depth to drown in. No need to remove dead slugs.
Corry's Slug & Snail Copper Tape Barrier	Slug and snail repellent	Adhesive Copper tape	Apply to pots, raised beds, ends of mushroom logs, and more.
Encourage predators	Ground beetles, snakes, voles, ducks, other birds, and toads		Provide cover and water
Hand Pick slugs	Slugs and snails		Go out at night or early morning, and on cloudy, wet days
Other traps: boards, upside down pots, cardboard	Slugs and snails		Create a nice daytime hiding place for the slug, and go out on a sunny day and collect the slugs from their cool, shady spot.
Safer® Slug & Snail Copper Tape Barrier	Slug and snail repellent	Adhesive Copper tape	Can make protective collars by cutting up plastic containers and putting copper tape around a 4-6 inch tall 'collar'. Be sure collar is tight to the ground, protecting the individual plant, so slugs don't go under.

Weeds

PRODUCT OR METHOD	USED FOR	INGREDIENTS	NOTES FOR BEST RESULTS
Allow a few weeds to live in the lawn or garden			Relax. Weeds are good for pollinators, beneficial insect predators, and butterflies
Boiling water	Small weeds in sidewalks, patio cracks, other paved areas		Do it when the plants are already stressed by heat and drought. Make sure the water is at full rolling boil.
Bonide Burn Out	All types of actively growing weeds and grasses	citric acid and clove oil	
Cover crops: annual clovers, peas, oats and buckwheat, others	Used for many weeds. Weeds come in when you leave bare earth.		
Down to Earth Corn Weed Blocker	Pre-emergent	Corn gluten meal	
Drip irrigation and timer	Accurate watering so weeds are not watered		
Flame weeder	Gravel paths and driveways, stone walls, paving cracks	Propane flame	
Goats and Sheep	Blackberries, ivy, even holly, but not the berries of ivy or holly		Need good temporary fencing or supervision, and knowledge of toxic plants they should not eat.
Hire teenagers to weed	All		Need good supervision. Suggest \$15/hr
Mulch	Covering bare soil to help keep weeds from sprouting. Several inches thick.	Wood chips, compost, straw, cardboard, 100% cotton or wool rugs, sheets, clothing, thick cardboard, burlap bags, etc.	Vary the mulch to define where your paths are. Small pieces of cardboard from recycling can be used under mulch for longer lasting protection. Grass clippings need to be spread no more than 2 inches deep at a time.
Preen® Organic Vegetable Garden Weed Preventer	Pre-emergent	Corn gluten meal	Put out before annual weed seeds begin to sprout.

Weeds, Continued

PRODUCT OR METHOD	USED FOR	INGREDIENTS	NOTES FOR BEST RESULTS
Vinegar, 30 per cent pure vinegar, acetic acid	All types of actively growing weeds and grasses	Acetic acid	Dilute to 20%, wear protective eyewear and rubber gloves. Most effective if plants are stressed from lack of water
Water deeply but infrequently	Annual weeds	Discourages annual weeds from sprouting	Best if your soil is at least 4 inches deep
Water with drip irrigation	Annual and perennial weeds	Discourages annual weeds from sprouting, and slows down perennial weeds	Helpful to have timers and filters on the water lines.
Weeding Tools	All types of weeds and grasses		A sawtooth shovel, for example, is great for digging out blackberry roots
WWOOFers or HelpX workers: 4 hours of work a day in exchange for room and board	All		Need a place for them to sleep, need to feed them, and often transport them. https://wwoofusa.org/ and https://www.helpx.net/

Our safety reviews are based on research from Grow Smart Grow Safe, <http://www.growsmartgrowsafe.org/Default.aspx> or The Pharos Project <https://www.pharosproject.net/>

Our reviews of effectiveness were based on Amazon ratings, our own experience, and the experiences of a number of Vashon gardeners and farmers who were interviewed on two separate occasions.

To have the best results with these products it is important to take the time to learn how they work, and their limitations. For many of these safe products, they may not kill as completely and quickly as some of the toxic products, but that is the nature of the problem. If a product kills your pest or disease quickly and completely, it may harm other things you **don't** want harmed: like you, your family, your pets, and your and your neighbor's drinking water.

Some of the safe products achieve their best results if they are used at a particular time. For example, many of the insect sprays work best if applied when you first encounter a few problem insects. If you wait until the insects are overwhelming it may be too late to get the best results with the safe product. In the case of the flame weeder, it is best to use on well-watered plants. But for vinegar, it is best to use on dehydrated plants.

Some of these products are only successful with particular pests, like powdery mildew or aphids. That means that part of the user's responsibility will be to determine exactly what the pest or disease problem is. Thankfully we have the Vashon Master Gardeners to help accurately identify insect and disease pests.

There are also a number of books and online resources that can help on this subject, including:

2015 Directory of Least Toxic Pest Control Products: <http://www.birc.org/Directory.htm>

Bio-Integral Resource Center, www.birc.org

The Holistic Orchard book, Michael Phillips, Chelsea Green, 2011

The Gardener's Guide to Common-Sense Pest Control, by William Olkowski, Sheila Daar, Helga Olkowski and Steven Ash. Published by Taunton Press, 2013

Grow Smart, Grow Safe: <http://www.growsmartgrowsafe.org/Default.aspx>

The Pharos Project: <https://pharosproject.net>

Great Plant Picks – Plants that are less susceptible to disease and insects in Western Washington: <http://www.greatplantpicks.org/>

Also, many garden pests have natural predators ranging from snakes for slugs to lady beetles for aphids. But if a gardener uses too much of a pesticide and kills all of the pests, the predators that do some of the work will have nothing to eat and may die or leave.

If you have a favorite green product that has worked really well for you that is not listed here, please let us know at mlaurie@mindspring.com