



Why natural mosquito control?



ASIAN TIGER MOSQUITO

Excellent query! If you are at all interested in preserving life on Earth (including yours), you will want to know the answer to this question.

Mosquito spraying kills insects, small birds, and even small mammals that make up the biodiversity necessary to keep our ecosystems healthy.

Since ecosystems regulate climate, it's more important than ever to protect biodiversity.

But there's even more concern now. We plant native plants to draw insects and birds to our gardens only to have them killed by mosquito spray drift, which only hastens insect and bird decline as well as climate crisis.

Research on Mosquito Sprays

According to Colin Purrington, PhD, mosquito sprays contain permethrins, which are toxic to Monarch caterpillars, bees, fireflies, many other insects, earthworms, fish and cats. (Any cat lovers out there?) Do visit Dr.

Purrington's website for in-depth information on the toxicity of mosquito spraying by companies like Mosquito Joe.

Mother Nature's Mosquito Control

There is a way to eliminate those annoying mosquitoes that does not involve toxic sprays. Nature supplies the alternative: bats, barn swallows, downy woodpeckers, toads, spiders, [dragonflies](#), damselflies and turtles! They all eat mosquitoes. Lots of them. How do you attract mosquito-eating wildlife? By adding native plants to your garden.

In addition to Mother Nature's natural controls, you can help by making your property inhospitable to mosquitoes. Start your mosquito control efforts in the beginning of March. Mosquito eggs begin hatching in the spring when temperatures reach 50 degrees. For Delaware County, PA residents, that could be early March, given weather changes caused by climate crisis.

Using Mosquito Dunks

Mosquito dunks are a great way to control mosquitoes. Mosquito dunks contain *Bacillus thuringiensis* (Bti), a bacterium that is deadly to mosquito larvae but harmless to other living things. Each dunk kills mosquito larvae for 30 days. Doug Tallamy explains the rationale behind mosquito dunks in his [video](#).

How to Use dunks:

Fill a 5 gallon bucket with water, add a mosquito dunk, and let the water stagnate. Mosquitoes will lay eggs in the water and the dunk will kill the eggs when they hatch. Begin using dunks in the beginning of March. Add a new dunk every month. Continue using dunks until November or until temperatures are below 50 degrees.

Remove Standing Water

Standing water is a mosquito breeding ground. Be a water detective. Look for areas of your property that serve as containers for stagnant water. Here are actions you can take:

- ✔ Remove old tires, cans, buckets, and pots—anything that can trap rainwater.
- ✔ Drain potted plant saucers.
- ✔ Turn plastic wading pools and wheelbarrows upside-down when not in use.
- ✔ Change birdbath water every three days without fail.
- ✔ Install gutter gloves. These rain gutter guards keep out mosquitoes.
- ✔ Or add Mosquito Dunks granules to rain gutters.
- ✔ Remove leaves and any obstructions from downspouts.
- ✔ Look for pools of water created by low ground areas on your property.
- ✔ Position tarps and boat covers to allow rain runoff.
- ✔ Keep swimming pools chlorinated.
- ✔ Stock ponds with minnows—they eat mosquito larvae.

More to Do

- ✔ Learn about the [harmful effects](#) of toxic sprays.
- ✔ Make or buy a [bat house](#)
- ✔ Plant natives like black-eyed Susan, Joe-Pye weed, yarrow, borage, coneflower and swamp milkweed to draw [dragonflies](#) and damselflies to your garden.
- ✔ Plant catnip, basil, lavender, lemon balm, sage, rosemary and peppermint to deter mosquitoes.
- ✔ Put suet in your birdfeeder to attract woodpeckers

- ✔ Make your garden hospitable to **toads**
- ✔ Welcome **turtles** to your garden
- ✔ DO NOT use a bug zapper. Bug zappers kill mosquitoes and other pesky insects, but they also kill beneficial insects—including those that feast on mosquitoes.

How to Protect Yourself

- ✔ Place netting on your garden hat.
- ✔ Research has proven mosquitoes won't be able to approach you if you use a fan on your porch or patio when you sit outside.
- ✔ Use Repel lemon eucalyptus insect repellent. It contains no toxic chemicals.

Please share this information with your neighbors. Mosquitoes fly from yard to yard, so the best way to eliminate them is to work with your neighbors to identify and implement the suggestions in this blog.

I hope I convinced you that mosquito sprays are harmful and given you some insight into why *natural* mosquito control is necessary and possible.