

Natural Insect Repellents with Essential Oils

Kill Ants, Mosquitos, Lice, Fleas, Aphids, Ticks, Spiders, Beetles

Peppermint Essential Oil Repels Ants Naturally – *Alvimann, morguefile*

Essential oils are powerful natural insecticides, killing and repelling fleas, mosquitoes, ants and other bugs in your home and garden without toxic chemicals.

Having trouble with ants in your kitchen?

Mosquitoes and aphids in the garden?

Fleas on your pets?

If you're reluctant to kill insect pests with toxic chemicals, essential oils are a natural solution that can repel bugs while still maintaining a safe environment for children, allergy sufferers and pets.

Chemical Insecticides Work... But are Dangerous to Health

Insect repellent is a booming industry, selling chemicals to kill and repel the insects and bugs that get into kitchens, bathrooms, hitch a free ride on pets, and annoy us while we're outside camping or firing up the barbeque. But along with most insecticides comes a price: these chemicals are toxic, causing symptoms like headaches or nausea and long-term problems such as allergies, cancer and birth defects.

One of the easiest and most effective natural alternatives to chemical insecticides is essential oils, which can get rid of just about any unwanted bug guests.

Ants, Flies, Beetles and Spiders in the Home

Everyday bugs in the kitchen and bathroom can be taken care of with a spray bottle of water and ten to twenty drops of peppermint, spearmint, thyme, sage, or rosemary. Sprinkle a few drops of the oil, neat, onto rugs or near drains where bugs might enter the home.

A great trick to stop the invasion of ants is to draw a line of peppermint oil across their paths (completely confusing their scent trails) or pouring two or three drops onto any anthills near the house. [NOTE FROM LORENE: I've used Oregano directly into hot ant beds and obliterated them!]

Insect Repellents for Camping and Outdoor Clothing

The best essential oils for repelling insects in the great outdoors are peppermint, eucalyptus, rosemary, lemongrass and lavender. Avoid any smells that are sweet or perfume-like because they attract most bugs.

Essential oils can be applied neat on the skin, or rubbed gently onto clothing and camping equipment. The same spray as above can also be useful here, but oils should be more concentrated than in home use. The same essential oils can be used to relieve itchiness and minimize swelling if you do get any bug bites.

Treating Garden Plants for Aphids and Caterpillars

Aphids and caterpillars are two of the most destructive bugs in the garden. The best aphid repellent is a spray bottle of water with ten to fifteen drops of cedarwood, peppermint or spearmint. Caterpillars and plant lice are also repelled by spearmint and peppermint.

Natural Flea and Tick Repellent for Pets – and for Human Lice

Essential oils make a natural flea and tick repellent for pets. Peppermint, lemongrass, spearmint and lavender repel fleas, while ticks dislike lavender, lemongrass, sage and thyme.

Human lice can be treated using cedarwood, peppermint and spearmint essential oils. This also works as a defense, if you or your children are exposed to other people with lice.

Does Climate Matter to the Bugs?

Different insects will respond to different oils, so if a particular essential oil or an insect repellent aromatherapy recipe doesn't eliminate the problem, it is worth switching oils to see if you can pin down a combination that will work.

Sometimes, insects that appear to be the same can be very different and will respond differently to the same oils. The same blend of oils that repels most insects in a hot, jungle climate can be completely useless against mosquitoes in the mountains. Come prepared to improvise, even if you know a blend of oils that has worked wonders in the past.

Reference

Stewart, David, Ph.D., "Essential Oils for Things that Bug You Around the House," May 2003.