

How to Attract Beneficial Insects to Your Garden

The Good Guys: Assassin bugs, damsel bugs, lacewing, lady beetle, ground beetles, parasitic wasps, praying mantis and more.

Healthy and stress free plants are more able to survive a run in with the ‘bad guys’:

Crop Rotation, Soil Health and Companion Planting

Avoid broad spectrum insecticides.

How much damage is a given pest creating? Sometimes hand-picking a pest or blasting it off a plant with water will suffice.

Create an environment for the good guys to live in your garden – food source and shelter

Allow some aphids to stay on a fava beans or roses. Ladybugs will lay their eggs right next to an aphid infestation so that newly hatched larvae have food source. When you spray the aphids (even with neem) you may also be killing the ladybugs.

Expect lag time. The beneficial insects will reproduce after finding food source. Give them time.

Companion Planting: ranks alongside rotation and soil health as one of your foremost weapons against pests and diseases. This is the technique of growing plants in close proximity with the aim of benefiting at least one of them.

Plant chives or scallions in with your carrots – carrot fly can smell carrots from up to a mile away, but the onion family mask their carroty smell

Plant basil near your tomatoes as it attracts aphids to it, and away from your precious tomatoes

Sow nasturtiums near your beans and lettuces – they are a great sacrificial plant, attracting cabbage white butterflies away from the crops.

Borage / tomato and squash: attracts pollinating insects and repels tomato worm

Cilantro / most vegetables: repels aphids and carrot fly and attracts pollinators when flowers

Anise Hyssop / brassicas: repels white cabbage butterfly and attracts pollinators when flowers

Marigolds / most vegetable: produces chemicals in its roots which deter nematodes, slugs and wireworms

Mint / cabbage, tomatoes: deters white cabbage butterfly, aphids and flea beetles

Oregano / brassicas: repels white cabbage butterfly and attracts beneficial insects and pollinators when flowers

Pot Marigold (Calendula) / tomatoes and asparagus: repels tomato worm, whitefly and asparagus beetle

Thyme, Rosemary and Sage: all attract beneficial insects and pollinators when in flower, repel cabbage moth, flea beetle and carrot fly.

Beneficial Insect Attracting plants:

Anise Hyssop

Borage

Butterfly bush, *Buddleja davidii*

Catnip

Clover

Coreopsis

Fennel

Feverfew

Flowering herbs

Lavender

Lemon balm

Lovage

Marigold

Mint

Nasturtium

Oregano

Parsley

Penstemon

Salvia

Stonecrops, *Sedum spurium*

Sunflowers

Thyme

Yarrow, *Achillea*

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sources: River Cottage Handbook, Sunset Western Book of Edibles

resources: www.groworganic.com