

How to Get Rid of Ants in Your Plants

Fire ants have been the bane of landscape enjoyment for many years in Texas and have stung their way into the doghouse of many humans and pets alike. For those whose landscape work is rudely interrupted and delayed by fire ants, the question arises “What can I use to kill these fire ants relatively quickly and still be able to finish my work without lots of pesticide residue hanging around?”



The answer comes from years of field research by entomologists with Texas A&M Agrilife Extension and it's an easy, effective and natural remedy you can concoct at home. There are three simple ingredients: water, orange oil and blue Dawn® dish soap.

Here's the recipe:

- 1 gallon water
- 3 ounces blue Dawn® dish soap
- 1.5 ounces orange oil

The soap helps the orange oil mix well in the water and stick to the ants in the soil. Apply the mixture following these steps:

1. Add the orange oil and soap to the water and mix thoroughly.
2. **DO NOT DISTURB** the fire ant nest before applying the orange oil/soap/water mixture. If you disturb the nest first, the ants will begin to disperse away from the nest and your treatment will be much less successful, if at all.
3. Beginning at the center of the mound, slowly pour the mixture onto the soil in a circle, gradually expanding the circle from the center outward. Cover the mound area completely from center to edges.
4. USE ALL OF THE MIXTURE ON THE MOUND, no matter the size of the nest.

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