

## Keep Your Backyard Bug-Free... Naturally

Summer is the time for barbecues and sleeping under the stars, but bothersome bugs can ruin outdoor fun. Many people spray themselves and their lawns with chemical repellants to get rid of these pests, but there are natural alternatives that are environmentally friendly to your home and our association. Here are a few tips to help you enjoy a bug-free summer.



**Get growing.** Planting a simple garden can do wonders in keeping the bug count down. Plants like garlic, radishes, marigolds, nasturtium, oregano, sage, rosemary, cilantro and mint are easy to cultivate and can make the area in and around your garden uninviting to the creepy crawlers.

**Wet and wild.** Eliminate stagnate or standing water in your yard; it provides breeding grounds for mosquitoes. Emptying used kiddie pools and fountains and refilling them with fresh water, cleaning gutters of leaves and other rain-blocking debris and filling in puddles with dirt are just some of the ways to reduce the buzzing bugs in your yard.

**Going to the birds.** Setting up a few bird houses in your yard is not only a great way to enjoy the beauty of our feathered friends, but it also mitigates bug problems, since many birds love to dine on dragonflies, dung beetles and the ilk.

**Candle in the wind.** When outdoors, ignite an all-natural bug repellent candle nearby to keep the bugs at bay, and enjoy the sweet smell of citronella, lavender, mint and other aromas that pests find repugnant.

**Light up the night.** Many high-flying insects are drawn to light. So, why not install an elevated yellow bug light on your back porch or deck to attract those critters up and away from the ground (and you!) when you spend an evening outdoors.