



Keep Brunswick County Beautiful / Brunswick County Recycling

KBCB Newsletter



Sunshine and Bug Bites

Guess what , , , ? They're back and in full swarm. I'm speaking of the mosquitoes (not tourists). Chances are if you've been outside recently you've been bitten. As far as I've been able to determine the only positive affect these irritating little pests have is that they are a very high protein meal for bats and birds (and we all love the birds) so I guess we are stuck with them but we do not have to be their food sources. Mosquitoes are every where and there is simply no way to avoid them completely but I have come across a few ideas and general practices that will help reduce the negative impact that they may have on your outside fun.

Mosquitoes are the pests that we notice immediately but they are not the only annoying pest that we must endure while outside. There flies, ants, ticks and many, many more creepy crawlies and flying objects that we need and want to avoid. There are uncountable products on the market that deter these pests but you can't help but wonder what chemicals these products contain. Let's face it, if a mosquito won't eat it, it must be pretty bad. A lot of these well known products contain DEET. This is a chemical that is proven to repel insects, however, it has also been linked to human health issues. Another ingredient to watch out for is Pennyroyal Oil. This is considered "natural" but has been proven to cause liver damage in humans. Eucalyptus oil is also a natural insect repellent but is poisonous and should never be used on children under three years of age. Remember your skin is a sponge and will absorb anything that you put on it. If you don't want it in your body don't put it on your body.

Now that I have scared you away from these repellents, what do you do? There are some safe options to try. You can mix a few drops of citronella oil in about 4 ounces of hand lotion. This is an effective, short term insect repellent and it is safe. There are a wide variety of natural extracts and essential oils that act as insect repellents. Below is a list of some that you may want to try. It is advised that you apply a small amount to your skin and watch for any adverse reaction.



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|------------------------|------------|
| Lemon | Eucalyptus |
| Citronella | Lemongrass |
| Peppermint | Geranium |
| Castor | Cinnamon |
| Rosemary | Cedar |
| Juniper | Soybean |
| Coconut (or palmarosa) | |

Please keep in mind that children's skin is more sensitive than that of an adult. The best protection for children is clothing but when it is necessary to apply repellent it is better to apply it to their clothing rather than their skin. Another thing to remember is mosquitoes are attracted to dark colors. Where light colored clothing. It's always better to be safe than sorry.



An Ounce of Prevention is Worth a Pound of Repellent



Mosquito problems in a neighborhood are commonly caused by standing water. All mosquitoes require water to breed. There are a few basic steps that we can take to help reduce the number of mosquitoes in our yards simply by eliminating potential breeding areas. Here are a few commonly missed areas where mosquitoes may be breeding and how to remedy them:

- Gutters—make sure gutters are clear of debris and are draining properly.
- Pet dishes—clean daily
- Outdoor faucets—repair leaks
- Children's toys—make sure they are empty and store in a sealed container such as a tote with a lid.
- Bird baths—change the water regularly
- Plant containers and their drainage dishes—make sure the plant is draining properly and empty the drain dish after watering.
- Rain Barrels—make sure they are screened and place mosquito disks in them. These may be purchased at any location that sells pond supplies.
- Plug tree holes
- Boats—boats and canoes should be turned upside down when not in use.
- Exterior trash cans—drill small holes in the bottom to allow water to drain out.
- Pools and ponds—make sure you are properly maintaining your water feature.
- Tires—dispose of any tires around your yard. This may be done at the Brunswick County landfill, Southport Convenience Site and the Leland Convenience Site free of charge.

As mentioned earlier there are many botanical repellents. If you plant some of these around your yard it will discourage the little pests (not to mention a lot of them smell wonderful in a warm summer breeze). One plant that I know works very well on patios and decks is the Mosquito Plant. It is a genetically engineered geranium hybrid. It is easily grown as a potted plant, has attractive foliage and a sweet lemony scent. Eucalyptus will also discourage mosquitoes and other yard pest. It also works well through out the interior of the home in discouraging creepy crawlies. I place it under furniture, beds and in closets. It cuts down on house spiders and since I have an extreme case of arachnophobia this is a household must for me.



A very natural means of reducing mosquitoes in your neighborhood is to increase their natural predator - **BATS!** Bats are known to consume anywhere from 600 to 1000 insects per hour. Dragonflies, damsel flies and some birds, such as swallows, also prey on mosquitoes. You can increase the number of these flying friends in your neighborhood by supplying them with attractive homes. Just like humans they want a nice place to live. Below is a website to visit for free building plans.

<http://www.eparks.org>



Once Bitten . . .

You've taken all the precautions and those pesky mosquitos still managed to get you. There's lots of things on the market for bug bites but there are also many home remedies that work just as well and, from person experience, sometimes the home remedies are even better.

Below is a list of some home remedies that I found on the internet and some home remedies that I remember from the camping trips I used to go on with my grandparents. Most of the ingredients in these concoctions are things that you probably have on hand.

Salt And Baking Soda

This is one of the most effective home remedies for bug bites to relieve both pain and itching. Mix together equal parts of baking soda and salt and enough water to create a thick paste. Apply it on the affected areas.

Vitamin E

Vitamin E has proven to be one of the best home remedies for bug bites from ticks. Just rub vitamin E directly on the tick bite.

Herbal Remedy For Bug Bites Using Honeysuckle

Squeeze the juice out of a honeysuckle vine and rub the juice right on the bug bite.

Banana

To relieve itching from a bug bite, rub the inside of a banana skin on the bite.

Tooth Paste

Apply a little tooth paste to a bee sting to help take away the pain. The fluoride acts as an antihistamine and helps in minutes.



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Solid Waste Schedule

The Brunswick County Landfill will be closed on Thursday, July 4.

Trash collection will run on a normal schedule.

The Brunswick County Convenience Sites will be operating on a normal schedule.



Please remember . . . What goes up, must come down.

If you set off fireworks this holiday when the show is over make sure you check the entire area for debris. Wait until pieces are completely cool and then pick them up and throw them in the trash.

Have a Happy and Safe 4th of July!