Have you seen this?

How to Attract and Conserve Pollinators/Natural Enemies in Your Garden

Many beneficial insects feed on the pollen and nectar provided by flowering plants. They also need the shelter offered by:

1. Perennial plants growing in untilled areas
2. Woody plant material such as unused firewood
3. Undisturbed soil in areas that are not mowed or cultivated

You can be the architect of a garden that provides for both of these needs, and in return enjoy the pest control activities of these beneficial creatures. The following suggestions will help you get started:

- Plant a variety of flowering annuals and perennials in borders around the garden and as rows within the garden, to provide habitat and food for beneficials.
- Provide a water source in or near the home garden. Consider a dish or bird bath, or even a small pond, and change the water every other day to prevent mosquitoes from breeding.
- Surround the garden with natural vegetation or...
perennial plant beds that offer sheltered overwintering sites, particularly for predaceous ground beetles.

--- Read many more tips on attracting pollinators

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**April Tips**

- Pinch the blooms off flower and vegetable transplants before you set them out. This will help direct the plants' energies to root development and will result in more productive plants. Gently break up the roots of root-bound transplants.

- Did your garden get overtaken by weeds last year? Take action now, before weeds become unmanageable. Consider the following options around plants and between rows: dried grass clippings, sections of newspaper covered with straw, black landscape fabric, or black plastic mulch.

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**What's hot**

**Trending Topics**

- **Garlic Mustard** - Pull up this invasive weed now before it sets seeds. Bag it up and dispose of it in the trash.

- **Mining Bees** - These bees are beginning to swarm in lawns. They are important early pollinators and are not aggressive.

- **Mosquitoes** - Breeding season is upon us. [Protect yourself from mosquito bites (PDF)](#) | [View Video from Mike Raupp on Mosquito Control](#)

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**Featured Video**

**Get Started With Salad Table Gardening**

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Jon Traunfeld talks about how to get started using a University of Maryland Salad Table. Learn how simple and easy it is to grow your own food, like lettuce and herbs.

→ View on YouTube

Q&A

I don't want to use chemical herbicides in my landscape. Do you think I can use white vinegar to kill the weeds in my yard?

Regular household vinegar is 5% acetic acid and is not strong enough to kill weeds. You may burn the top but the roots may still be viable. If they are perennial weeds, the weeds will resprout. Acetic acid concentrations greater than 5% may be hazardous and should be handled with appropriate precautions. We recommend that you simply pull weeds when the soil is moist, which makes pulling the entire root system out of the ground easier. Alternatively, slice the weeds off at the soil line with a sharp weeding tool. After weeding areas, apply a 2-3 inch layer of mulch to prevent weeds. For tough perennial weeds, cover the area with cardboard or sections of newspaper topped with 2-3 inches of mulch. This method can be an effective weed killer and lasts at least a year.

Have a plant or pest question? University of Maryland Extension’s experts have answers! Send in your questions and photos to Ask an Expert.

Have a suggestion for a topic to cover in the HGIC newsletter? Send in your suggestions.

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