

# Natural Mosquito Repellent Plants

We have billions of insects all over the world. Some are harmless, but some insects like mosquitoes harm human beings. Mosquitoes cause dangerous diseases like dengue, malaria, yellow fever and encephalitis. More than one million people die every year all over the world due to mosquito borne diseases.

Many mosquito repellents and insect repellents are used to control mosquito menace. Unfortunately many are loaded with chemicals which can be harmful to human beings. This is true of any insect repellent, anywhere in the world. Because of these facts, people are seeking natural ways to repel mosquitoes.

One natural and effective way to repel mosquitoes is the use of mosquito repellent plants such as:

## **Citronella Scented Geranium** *Pelargonium citrosum*

Also known as the ‘Mosquito Plant’, this plant has a distinctive fragrance that deters mosquitos. Citronella makes a great garden plant or indoor/outdoor container plant. Requires part to full sun and well-draining soil.

## **Basil** *Ocimum basilicum*

Basil is a very good mosquito repellent. Its characteristic aroma keeps mosquitoes away. All varieties of basil repel mosquitoes. However, lemon basil, cinnamon basil and Peruvian basil are immensely effective against mosquitoes due to their strong aroma.

## **Marigold** *Tagetes spp.*

Marigold plants bear yellow or orange flowers. They have a pungent odor. This is due to terthienyl production. This compound repels mosquitoes and other insects. Farmers usually grow marigold as interval plants in their vegetable garden. Marigold plant is an excellent natural mosquito repellent. Hindus use marigold extensively to worship their deities at home and in the temples. Hindu women wear marigold flowers in their heads.

## **Rosemary** *Rosmarinus officinalis*

Rosemary herb grows up to five feet and bears blue flowers. It is an excellent mosquito repellent. It grows well under warm climatic conditions.

## **Horsemint, Lemon Beebalm** *Monarda citriodora*

Horsemint plant is used in many parts of the world to repel mosquitoes. This fast-growing plant’s strong incense-like odor detours mosquitoes and makes it impossible for them to find you. You may also pinch a bloom or two off the plant and crush them by rubbing them in your hands. Then you may apply them to the exposed areas of your skin. Horsemint is a drought-resistant and a shade-tolerant plant. It grows well in dry sandy soil. Horsemint grows up to three feet. It is known to tolerate salty conditions. Sow horsemint seeds in late summer in cold climate zones. They can also be grown in pots.

## **Catnip** *Nepeta cataria*

Catnip a natural mosquito repellent is 10 times more effective than DEET. DEET is a chemical found in most commercial mosquito repellents. Whether it acts as an irritant or its odor acts as a repellent for mosquitoes, no one knows. However, lab tests conducted in many parts of the world have proved its effectiveness as a mosquito repellent. This perennial herb is easy to grow.

## **Lavender** *Lavandula angustifolia*

Lavender plant is an excellent mosquito repellent. It grows well in a warm sunny climate. Lavender plant grows up to four feet. Keep lavender plants around seating areas.

**Lemon grass** *Cymbopogon citrates*

Lemon grass is nature's own mosquito repellent that has a pleasant and fresh lemony aroma. Grow lemongrass in the landscape or in containers. Place them around your patio, deck or outdoor living spaces.

**Here are a few more plants which are also known to be natural insect repellents:**

**Catmint** *Nepeta faassenii*

**Eucalyptus** *Eucalyptus spp*

**Lemon Balm** *Melissa officinalis*

**Lemon Thyme** *Thymus citriodorus*

**Lemon Verbena** *Aloysia triphylla*

**Mexican Mint Marigold** *Tagetes lucida*

**Pennyroyal** *Menthe pulegium*

**Peppermint** *Mentha piperita*

**Tansy** *Tanacetum vulgare*

You may prefer preparing your own natural mosquito repellent by mixing a blend of five to ten percent of an essential oil with carrier oil. Essential oils such as lemon eucalyptus oil, citronella oil, cinnamon oil or castor oil will repel mosquitoes. Olive oil, sunflower oil, vodka, witch hazel and alcohol are good carriers.