

DETECTING RABBITS FROM YOUR GARDEN

Does this sound familiar? Spring is finally here and this year the garden is going to be perfect. You head out to Family Tree. You spend hours finding the perfect plants. You spend the whole day crawling on your hands and knees, digging and planting and mulching. It looks great! Look at all the color! You go out the next morning to admire your work...and it is torn up, nibbled on and absent. We understand your frustration. Since the local government frowns on discharging firearms in the city limits, try some of these ideas.

Cultural controls, such as removing brush piles or other protective cover where rabbits hide and nest may help. Provide open areas in the landscape-they tend to avoid open spaces that make them vulnerable to predators.

Fencing with chicken wire or flexible netting at least two feet high, buried 4-8" deep is fairly effective. It may not be the prettiest thing to look at, but it works.

There are many odor repellents out there...some work great, some do not. We like Liquid Fence or I Must Garden to spray on the plants or as a barrier around the yard. Predator urine is also very effective...and no we don't know how it is acquired, nor do we want to!

Rabbits usually feed in the early morning and evening, so that would be a good time to let the dog out.

No plants can be said to be "rabbit proof." Hungry rabbits eat virtually anything and most plants are vulnerable when young. However, there are some plants rabbits generally avoid. They don't care for plants that are aromatic, have prickles and spines, or tough, leathery leaves.

The following plants are well worth experimenting with:

Perennials. Achillea, Aconitum, Ajuga, Alchemilla, Anemone, Aquilegia, Artemisia, Aruncus, Asarum, Astilbe, Bergenia, Brunnera, Campanula, Centranthus, Cerastium, Convallaria, Coreopsis, Corydalis, Crocosmia, Delphinium, Dicentra, Digitalis, Eupatorium, Euphorbia, Galium, Gaillardia, Geraniums, Helianthus, Helleborus, Hemerocallis, Heuchera, Hibiscus, Iberis, iris, Lamium, Lavandula, Monarda, Nepeta, Papaver, Peony, Perovskia, Persicaria, Polygonatum, Pulmonaria, Rodgersia, Rudbeckia, Salvia, Saponaria, Sedum, Sempervivum, Stachys, Teucrium, Vinca

Annuals. Agertum, Alyssum, Begonias, Cleome, Cosmos, Dahlia, Dusty Miller, Geranium, Impatiens, Heliotrope, Lobelia, Marigold, Nicotiana, Salvia, Snapdragons, Sunflower, Verbena, Zinnia

Herbs. Chives, Lemon Balm, Mints, Oregano, Rosemary, Sage, Thyme

Shrubs. Barberry, Boxwood, Cotoneaster, Forsythia, Holly, Juniper, Lilac, Mockorange, Potentilla, Rhododendron, Spruce, Viburnum, Yew, Yucca

Remember, rabbits will sample anything if hungry enough. GOOD LUCK!

