



GARDEN *pests* IN PERTH

Control of Crickets and Grasshoppers

Lush new growth and new plants in the garden provide a tasty smorgasbord for hordes of crickets and grasshoppers. They feed mostly at night and are very good at hiding in the garden.

The first thing to do is to try and identify the pest. This means going into the garden at night with a torch. Listen for the chirping sound of the insect, then try and find the perpetrator. They are also slow moving in the early morning and this can be the ideal time to catch and destroy them. Drop them into a bucket of water to dispose of them. Or put them into a plastic container and put it in the freezer.

There are different ways to control these pests in the garden.

- Create a bird and reptile friendly garden. If you have lots of birds, beetles, frogs and lizards, they are natural predators and may solve the problem for you.
- Install a physical barrier such as bird or mosquito netting. This takes some effort to install but will also protect the plants from caterpillar and bird attack.
- Plant a green barrier around the garden. Some gardeners leave a border of long grass around the garden to act as an attractant and trap the grasshoppers and crickets. The smell of garlic is a natural defence. Plant a border of Society Garlic (*Thulbugia*), Garlic Chives or Garlic as a scented deterrent.
- Grasshoppers are attracted to yellow. Build a trap by burying a yellow bucket 2/3rds in the garden, then half fill it with water. The insect jumps in, can't get out and is trapped in the bucket. Put a layer of canola oil on the surface of the water to deter bees and mosquitos.
- Make up a blend of garlic, chilli powder, dishwashing detergent and water and put it into a spray bottle. Lightly spray around affected plants or new planting to deter crickets and grasshoppers. Pre-test the spray on a couple of leaves to make sure it doesn't affect the plants.
- Eco-neem is a registered organic insecticide for the control of a broad range of chewing and sucking insects including: caterpillars, curl grubs, grasshoppers (wingless), aphids, mites, lawn army worm, citrus leaf miner, white fly, mealybugs and fungus gnats in soil.
- Pyrethrum spray will control grasshoppers, but it also kills beneficial insects so it should be used with caution in the garden.
- An effective bait is David Grays Cricket and Grasshopper Bait. It is a pelletised product that attracts grasshoppers and crickets to the bran pellets. It is harmful to pets so it is a good idea to put the pellets inside a piece of pvc pipe pinned to the ground in the garden. The pests can get in and eat the bait, but your pets and visiting birds are safe.

This is intended as general information only. Please ask one of our horticulturists for specific advice for your situation.