

## Do it Yourself Traps to Keep Pests at Bay

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Summer is a great time to be outdoors, lounging around a pool with barbecue cooking. Flies, wasps and other pests seem to think so, too. These pests are attracted to the smells outside and often come inside as you open and close the door. This article will describe a few simple traps you can make to keep the pests at bay.

Many people seem to believe that putting a penny in a bag of water and hanging it up will repel flies. Unfortunately, this has not been scientifically proven.

A simple inexpensive bottle funnel trap does work on flies and other pests and is made with an empty 2-liter bottle. Cut the top of the bottle below the neck, invert into the body as a funnel (with no cap), and attach it with tape or glue.

Poke small holes at in the top sides so it can be hung up on a tree branch. Hang it about 4 to 5 feet above the ground.

Just toss the full buggy bottle out or clean it for reuse. Wait until the flies (or wasps) are dead before opening if cleaning it. Filling the bottle with water and some soap will kill them.

Bait the trap with various foods and liquids depending on what you want to trap. For houseflies, you can bait it with sugar water. If you see flies that have a shiny or metallic back, it is most likely blow or bottle flies. Those types of flies are attracted to protein baits, like hamburger in some water. Rest assured, the meat in the bottle won't make the area smell.

A slice of ripe fruit like banana in water, cider vinegar, beer, or wine is great for attracting tiny fruit flies. Add a drop of soap to the liquid to reduce the surface tension and drown small flies. For controlling fruit flies inside, I've made a mini version of this using a smaller bottle and placed it on the countertop. These baits also work on yellow jackets, hornets, and paper wasps at this time of year.

This trap can even work on mosquitoes and no-see-ums. Since these pests are attracted to us, or rather our CO<sub>2</sub> that leads to us, you simulate this by baiting with a sugar solution made with non-chlorinated or pre-boiled water and brewer's yeast (1 cup water, quarter-cup sugar, and 1 gram yeast per 2-liter bottle). It may take a few hours to start producing sufficient CO<sub>2</sub> through the funnel. After it stops bubbling, add more sugar and yeast to continue the flow. Since mosquitoes are attracted to dark colors, paint the upper part of the trap black or add black tape to increase effectiveness.

For controlling deer flies, yellow flies and horse flies, you can make the "trolling deer fly trap," which was developed at the University of Florida. Simply paint a 6-inch plastic nursery pot bright blue and cover it with sticky viscous material such as Tanglefoot, which is often available at garden stores.

These flies are attracted to movement, so place it on a slow moving vehicle, like a riding lawn mower. An alternative is hanging a black ball with Tanglefoot on a lower branch of a tree in a windy spot.

This is just a few of the many traps that you can make at home. For photos of the traps described in this article or other traps for household and landscape pests, check out the EDIS article called "Do-It-Yourself Insect Pest Traps" at <http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/in1103>.

Enjoy your summer as pest-free as you can and start saving your bottles.