

Mosquitos, Dogs and Us

With the nice weather upon us the mosquitos, are starting to appear and we may be looking at an artificial way of combating the nuisances so here are a few *natural* ways we can use instead. Placing a variety of these easy growing plants around/near your dogs favorite spot outside, around your porch, deck, front and back doors will keep the mosquitos at bay. It is their scents that the mosquitos hate so if there is a wind they will become less effective, but the wind keeps them away too.



Citronella is one of the most popular/important ingredients in mosquito repellants and is a beautiful grass plant. In our cooler Alberta climate you can grow it pots and have it year round if you like. *Cymbopogon nardus* or *Citronella winterianus* are the varieties to look for when purchasing this plant because others may be sold as "Citronella Scented". (*perennial*)



Marigold is a happy, bright plant that we are all familiar with but it is also mosquito repelling plant. The pretty yellow, orange and gold flowers will look lovely in your flower garden and do very well in pot where you can place anywhere. (*annual*)



Horsemint/Beebalm much like Citronella, Horsemint deters mosquitos by it's strong scent. It has a pretty flower that also attracts butterflies and bees to your yard. It will do well in pots and brought inside for winter. (*perennial*)

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Catnip is from the mint family and grows just like it. The verdict seems to be split on whether or not it's non-toxic for dogs. Mint isn't good for them, but we have personally grown mint in pots for years and we have never had an issue and we are going to grow catnip this year :)

Catnip, *Nepeta cataria* is reported to be 10 times more effective than DEET according to an Iowa State University study, although they are not sure if it is due to its scent or

irritation that makes it so effective. Giving the leaves a crush just before you put your dog out will intensify its potency.

Added bonus is that all of the plants above can be dried and made into teas for us humans to enjoy.

Please add your own thoughts and ideas for combatting bugs and such, and have a great summer!