

## Plants : Eco friendly mosquito repellents

V.B. Sanath Kumar and Amreen Taj<sup>1</sup>

Krishi Vigyan Kendra, V.C. Farm, MANDYA (KARNATAKA) INDIA (E-mail: sanath.kumar7@gmail.com)

<sup>1</sup>Department of Floriculture and Landscape Architecture, P.G. Centre (U.H.S.), BENGALURU (KARNATAKA) INDIA



Though mosquitoes are small, they are annoying creatures, cause irritation, itching and spread noxious diseases. There are better ways to get rid of these little creatures than toxic chemicals or futile clapping! The pesticides we use for repelling mosquitoes can be very harmful. Some people even develop allergies due to these pesticides. An easy and environment-friendly way of getting rid of mosquitoes is with the help of mosquito repellent plants. Plants have innumerable uses. But, there is one use of plants which most does not know, that is some plants have the property of being mosquito repellents. The best way to get rid of those mosquitoes is by planting the following mosquito repellent plants. This will be a natural way to ward them off... Given below, are names of mosquito repellent floras, along with some more information on them.

**Citronella plant (*Pelargonium sp.*)**, belongs to the family Gramineae : It grows to a height of two feet, and blooms annually. The flowers of citronella plant are lavender in colour. It requires warm weather to grow, so you need to protect it from frost. Plant it after the frost season, and bring it indoors during the frost season. Citronella is considered one of the best mosquito repellent plants. It is so famous for deterring mosquitoes, that it is known as the mosquito plant! Citronella plant is also used to make oil, which is used in perfumes and other herbal products. Citronella oil also repels cats.

**Rosemary (*Rosemary officinalis*)**, belongs to the family Lamiaceae : Rosemary is a mosquito repelling plant. It is a shrub, but larger than the usual shrubs. It grows 4-5 feet tall, and has blue flowers. Rosemary grows really fast, and is known to be a drought-tolerant shrub. This shrub is used in some fish recipes as well. So, planting it will surely serve multiple purposes.

**Marigolds (*Tagetes erecta*)**, belongs to the family Asteracea : Marigolds owe their mosquito repellent properties to their peculiar smell! There are two types of marigolds - the African and the French. Both of them are mosquito repellent plants. This plant grows 6 inches to 3 feet tall. They have to be grown in sunny areas, as their growth is slowed down when planted in the shade.

**Lemon grass (*Cymbopogon winterianus*)**, belongs to the family Gramineae : The green colour of lemon grass will not only make patio look bright and full of life, but this plant will also ward off mosquitoes. Lemon grass contains citronella oil, and this oil is the actual mosquito repellent. Lemon grass is found mainly in India. It is a perennial plant which grows up to two feet tall and requires a warm climate. Not only is the plant, but even lemon grass oil very useful. This oil is used as a pesticide, and as a preservative.

**Lavender (*Lavandula sp.*)**, belongs to the family of Lamiaceae : It is known for increasing the beauty of one's garden, this plant is also a mosquito repellent. Growing lavender plants is easy. It grows up to 4 feet tall, and requires a sunny climate. Caring for lavender is easy as it hardly requires little care.

**Catnip (*Nepeta cataria*)**, belongs to the family Labiatae : The catnip plant contains nepetalactone, which has recently been declared as an insect repellent. Catnip belongs to the mint family and grows about 3 feet tall when planted in a sunny area, or an area of partial shade. It has white or lavender blooms, and is a perennial plant. The most unique feature of catnip, apart from being a mosquito repellent, is that cats love it and plant is to be protected from cats by fencing. Catnip oil, extracted from the catnip plant, is used in the preparation of mosquito repellents.

**Horse Mint (*Monarda punctata L.*)**, belongs to the family of Lamiaceae : Horse mint is another plant that repels mosquitoes. This plant will grow well in the sun, and doesn't need any special care. It has pink blooms, and is a perennial plant like catnip. Butterflies are said to have an affinity for horse mint. Just like lavender.

**Garlic (*Allium sativum*)**, belongs to the family Alliaceae: Though garlic is herb that is well-known for its culinary uses, garlic is a mosquito repellent plant as well. The repellence might be due to the strong smell of this herb that wards off the mosquitoes. The bulbs of garlic are specifically used as mosquito repellents. Basil, penny royal and ageratum are also well-known mosquito repellent plants. Growing these plants in backyards or garden will give double benefit-freedom from mosquitoes and a beautiful, colourful garden.

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