



Tucson  
Organic  
Gardeners

Soiling our hands since 1971

# Pest Barriers and Companion Planting

**ANTS:** Black *ants* can be driven from cupboard shelves with freshly picked catnip or pennyroyal or spearmint or cinnamon. Thin strips of cucumber will repel *ants*. Plant spearmint near plants that have aphids, *ants* do not like the strong smell of the mint. Plant pennyroyal near doorways to repel *ants*. Peppermint planted among shrubs will drive away **red ants**. Mints or tansy planted near entrances to a home also act as a repellent. Fill cracks in the house with petroleum jelly for a temporary measure against *ants*. When time permits, fill holes and cracks with putty to keep ants out of the home. If a colony of *ants* are near where one must work or children play, pour boiling water or hot paraffin down the nest entrance. Since *ants* can survive for days under water, flooding the nest with cold water won't do the trick. However *ants* do enrich the soil, and prey on cockroaches, conenose bug, the larva of filth flies, scale insects, mealy bugs, and other pests. Mosquito eggs are a delicacy. Termites and *ants* are enemies. A wingless queen termite often loses her life to an *ant*. *Ants* will eat just about anything humans do, but termites eat only wood-related products.

**ANIMALS:** Wormwood or absinthium in a border around the planting area will repel animals.

**APHIDS:** Although *aphids* injure plants when present in great numbers, some must remain for the aphid-eating insects to feed on. Aphids may be green, black, pink, yellow or red. Use spent plants of Chinese celery as a trap crop. Scientists found the color yellow causes *flying aphids* to avoid plants growing above them. Coriander has a reputation for being immune to *aphids*, but will repel them when planted with other plants that *aphids* relish. Use oil of garlic to kill *aphids*. The alkaloids in larkspur deter *aphids*. Plant nasturtiums near broccoli and other plants *aphids* love. Use parsnip spray for pea *aphids*. Hot pepper spray also works on *aphids*. The strong scent of any allium will deter *aphids* among roses.

**BEETLES:** Many kinds, and some are driven away by one herb, and not by others. *Mexican bean beetle* is repelled by French marigolds. By planting bush beans in alternate rows with potatoes, the potatoes are protected from the *Colorado potato beetle*, and the *Mexican bean beetles* dislike the potato. Black nightshade is poisonous, but *Colorado potato beetle* prefers the weed, so plant near potatoes, the beetles will eat it and die. Rue planted near roses and raspberries is an excellent insect repellent for *Japanese beetle*. *Flea beetle* can be driven away by a spray made with catnip. Interplant collards with tomatoes to deter the *flea beetle*. Odorless marigold deterred *Japanese beetles* from eating corn silk. Grow sunflowers in alternate rows with corn to reduce *Carpophilus beetles*. The poisonous plant Datura is especially helpful to pumpkins and other plants by protecting them from *Japanese beetles*. Grow eggplants with green beans and potatoes as the *Colorado potato beetle* likes eggplant but find beans repellent. Flax is a good companion to carrots and potatoes against the *Colorado potato beetle*. Lay bruised elderberry leaves over the rows of plants to deter *flea beetles*. Interplant lettuce with radish and kohlrabi to control *flea beetle*. Geraniums planted among roses, grapes, cabbage and corn will repel *Japanese beetles*. *Squash bugs* dislike nasturtiums so plant early in the squash bed. Tomatoes protect asparagus from the *asparagus beetle*. Plant parsley with roses to protect against rose beetles. Plant petunias with beans to protect against *bean beetles*. *Soybeans* planted with corn will discourage *cinch bugs* and *Japanese beetles*. Tansy deters *Japanese beetles*, *striped cucumber beetles* and *squash bugs*. To repel the *striped cucumber beetle*, sow radish seeds with cucumber, melon and squash seeds.

**BIRDS:** One of the best insect controls, but can eat much of the fruit. Hang sliced onions in the trees. Hang empty milk cartons from a string that lets it twirl in the breeze. Use strips of cloth, bright fluttering ribbons, or pieces of shiny foil hanging from branches to flutter. To protect watermelons or corn from crows, put up several stakes, string white strips of cloth around the patch and criss-cross it in the center. It will look like a trap.

**BLACK FLY:** Use a fermented extract of nettle to keep black flies from broad beans. Lady beetle also is an enemy. Intercropping with garlic, nasturtium, spearmint, or southernwood is also a good plan.