

# Cats & Your Garden

One of the things that many gardeners dislike is having cats visit their garden. If you would like to keep cats away from your garden, there are some frugal steps that you can take that can help relieve the situation:

First, remove the poop. I know...icky! If you don't, however, the cats will think the area is theirs & they will just continue using your garden as the litter box. You will need to keep repeating this step until you can convince the cats to use another area.

The next step is to, water, water, water your garden and then water it again. Cats hate water, and hate wet soil too. One of your kids high powered water guns works well as a deterrent too, but you have to sit & wait for Charming Kitty to visit your garden for this to work.

Another option may be dusting the area with pepper which works for some:

- 2 parts cayenne pepper
- 3 parts dry yellow mustard
- 5 parts white flour

Mix and dust into the areas of your garden that the cat has been digging in. This has to be repeated every couple days and is not effective when raining.

Another step you can take is you can apply blood meal, which acts as a fertilizer for your soil, to your garden and apparently smells nasty to cats.

A more decorative alternative is to fill in areas your cat seems to visit with more plants or some "garden art" – even if it is only temporary until your cat loses interest in the spot. A row of stepping stones into your garden will work too,

anything that covers up the bare soil.

If you don't mind the cats visiting, but simply want to keep them away from your garden plants, try leaving an area of your yard for the cats. Keep the soil worked and soft as they just love it like that which is the reason why they are always digging in just planted areas of the garden.

Another alternative to keeping cats to specific areas is to plant some catnip in other areas of your yard where the cats have permission to roam. By making other areas of your yard attractive to the cats, they will likely leave your gardens alone.

If your problem is that cats are climbing in planters to nap or dig, you can cut a piece of chicken wire & lay over the top of the pot or planter until the plants come up and it becomes too full for the kitty. Remove the wire as the plants begin to come up. The chicken wire trick also works to just lay pieces of it on top of garden soil in areas you know the cats visit.

With persistence, you and your cat can enjoy your garden together and if it's your neighbor's cat, perhaps you can convince it to head back home.