

# Cynthia Brian's Mid-Month Gardening Guide

**MOSQUITO WATCH:** Did you know that mosquitoes are the most deadly creatures on the planet? Except for Maine, West Nile Virus transmitted by mosquitoes has been reported in all the states of the continental United States. Zika is the most recent mosquito-borne disease to infect humans and cause birth defects. In Asia, Japanese encephalitis is deadly and malaria has been a global killer for centuries. As vectors for diseases they also transmit dengue fever, chikungunya, and dog heartworm. Mosquitoes are attracted to carbon dioxide. People with high metabolisms create more CO<sub>2</sub> and attract more mosquitoes. What can you do to keep these pesky, biting, disease-filled flyers away?

- Empty all standing water from any vessel.
- Add mosquito dunks to ponds or fountains. Vector Control gives free mosquito fish to pond owners. Call (925) 771-6192.
- Apply DEET to all exposed skin. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention indicate that oil of lemon eucalyptus can be as effective as low doses of DEET, however, it needs to be reapplied every 15 to 20 minutes.
- Sunscreen-repellent combinations are not as effective and are not recommended.
- Repellent clothing such as Insect Shield is worthwhile. ([www.insectshield.com](http://www.insectshield.com))

If you are planning a trip and you'd like to know how to protect yourself from these pests visit the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's Traveler Health page. <https://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel>

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Close-up of Dinner Plate Dahlia

Photos Cynthia Breian



Pink Crape Myrtle



Stick your nose into a fragrant magenta rose.