

HOW TO MAKE 5 BUG TRAPS

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If there are so many bugs around us, why are they so hard to find when you want one? Suppose you're all ready to go bug hunting. You have a bug container and a magnifying lens and maybe even a field guide to insects. But you can't find any interesting bugs. Well, you need a bug trap. My five favorite bug traps are practically guaranteed to catch bugs.

Beat Sheet - Make a Beat Sheet by putting a white cloth under a tree or shrub. Beat or shake the branches. Did any bugs fall on the sheet? Scoop them up into your collecting jar. This is a good way to find cicadas, ladybugs, or beetles. Note: A good way to collect bugs without harming them (or being harmed) is with a paintbrush. Use the brush to gently push bugs into your bug container.

Creep-Under Bug Trap - Spread a thick mat of grass clippings in a shady place. Lay a large plastic garbage bag or a piece of lumber on top of the grass. (If you use a garbage bag, secure it with rocks at each corner.) After a few days, lift the trap carefully and see who moved in.

Fly-Right-In Bug Trap - To catch flying insects, put bits of ripe fruit in a wide-mouth jar. Or at night, put a glow stick in a jar to catch insects that are attracted to light. Place a funnel in the jar opening with the small end of the funnel pointing down. The wide mouth of the funnel balances on the rim of the jar so that when bugs fly into the jar through the funnel, they won't be able to get out again. Note: Ripe banana attracts fruit flies.

Flowerpot Trap - This couldn't be simpler, but it works for me almost every time. Put a clay flowerpot on its side in a deeply shaded area where small plants are growing. Check the flowerpot every day to see if a daddy longlegs is resting in it. You may also find snails, slugs, millipedes, or pillbugs.

Shining Sheet - On a warm summer night, if you provide a light, the night will provide bugs. You can easily observe moths, beetles, and many kinds of flying insects with a Shining Sheet. Hang a white sheet over a railing or between two trees. Set up a flashlight behind it. Then sit quietly in front of the sheet and watch for visitors. I don't try to catch moths (or butterflies), but I love to see them. If you do this experiment every few days during the summer, you'll see the most amazing variety of flying insects – new ones each week. Have fun catching bugs!