

For Immediate Release

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Kill Fungus Gnats on Houseplants Naturally with BTI

A naturally occurring bacterium called BTI is the key to killing fungus gnat larvae that live in the moist potting soil of houseplants and container-grown plants.

Houseplants are trending all over social media. More people than ever before are growing live plants in their homes and apartments. As we continue to spend more time indoors, we are adding plants to every room in the home and office.

That's a good thing. Indoor plants add beauty and help clean the air. Plus, in a recent survey by Stoneside, 93% of those who have purchased plants since March 2020 say taking care of plants has reduced their stress levels.

Caring for plants can be a relaxing and enjoyable experience. But sometimes, plant owners must protect their plants from insect pests. One common pest is the fungus gnat.

Where do fungus gnats come from?



Fungus gnats are the tiny flying insects that can swarm like an annoying black cloud whenever an infested houseplant or outdoor potted plant is moved. Fungus gnats (*Bradysia* species) are small, mosquito-like pests that commonly infest the soil or growing medium of potted plants.

Sometimes the potting soil of new houseplants can contain the larvae of fungus gnats. Also, when outdoor plants are brought indoors, fungus gnats in the potting mix can “hitchhike” inside your home. That’s when these pesky insects can quickly infest the soil of other houseplants.

Fungus gnats thrive in moist potting soil, where they lay their eggs. After the eggs hatch, fungus gnat larvae live in the top two to three inches of the potting soil. Fungus gnat larvae can cause plant damage by eating plant roots. After about two or three weeks, the fungus gnat larvae pupate in the potting soil. Then they become the tiny black adult gnats that fly erratically when a potted plant is moved.

To help control fungus gnats, let the potting soil dry out between waterings. Sometimes more aggressive measures are needed to kill these pests. Fortunately, there are now natural, non-chemical ways to naturally kill fungus gnats and control fungus gnat infestations.

Kill fungus gnat larvae with BTI

To kill fungus gnat larvae, use a naturally occurring bacterium called BTI. Fungus gnats are closely related to mosquitoes, so fungus gnat larvae are effectively killed by BTI. (The BTI bacterium is deadly to mosquito larvae AND fungus gnat larvae.)



BTI, which is short for *Bacillus thuringiensis israelensis*, is deadly to mosquito larvae and fungus gnat larvae but harmless to other living things. The bacterium is nature's way of keeping fungus gnat and mosquito populations down. But fortunately, BTI has no effect on other insects (such as bees and butterflies). Nor does it harm animals, fish, birds, plants, pets or people.

BTI is the active ingredient in top-selling Mosquito Bits[®], which is approved for the biological control of fungus gnats. Mosquito Bits may be used on houseplants, vegetables, herbs and home mushroom beds. To kill fungus gnats, mix 4 tablespoons of Mosquito Bits[®] in one gallon of water. Let the Mosquito Bits[®] soak for 30 minutes. Then simply skim off the floating granules and shake or stir the water. The resulting BTI-infused water can now be used to water the potting mix of any

container-grown plant. The BTI in the water will kill fungus gnat larvae in the soil to break their reproductive cycle. Repeat this process weekly for three weeks. If fungus gnats return, just repeat the treatment cycle again.

Mosquito Bits[®] are available at fine garden centers, home centers, farm & ranch stores, hardware stores and online at www.SummitResponsibleSolutions.com.

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