

How to Control Slugs and Snails Without Using Slug Pellets

Hedgehogs, thrushes, frogs, toads and slow worms all eat slugs. Slug pellets kill animals and birds that eat poisoned slugs and snails because the poison taken in with the slug or snail accumulates in the liver of the predator, leading to a lingering and painful death.

Why not try the following methods of slug and snail control?

Predators: encourage wildlife to control your pests- as well as the animals and birds listed above, the larvae & adults of violet ground beetle and the common ground beetle eat slugs' eggs & very small slugs.

Water the garden in the morning rather than the evening. Slugs are active at night and prefer damp conditions.

Barriers: Cleaned, crushed eggshells, nutshells, grit, sharp sand, sawdust, bonfire ash, and charcoal from a barbecue can all be used as barriers around particular plants you wish to protect. The rough surfaces cause the slug to produce very large amounts of mucus to protect the slug's soft underside which causes dehydration in the animal. Hair, pine needles and thorny prunings can also be used. All these barriers need to be regularly renewed.

Copper can also be used as a barrier, for example around flowerpots. The copper reacts with the slug's slime to produce a tiny electric shock.

Collecting/Trapping: follow slime trails in the evening with a torch to look for slugs. Collect & dispose of them.

Beer trap. Half fill a jar with beer and bury it in the soil with the rim about 2-3cm above the soil to try to prevent other insects such as beetles falling in.

Slugs will collect under upside down flowerpots, grapefruit halves, boards etc. Check underneath seed trays and flowerpots in use as well. Collect and dispose of slugs.

Biological Control: nematodes can be bought and watered on to the soil. They infect the slugs with bacteria which lead to their death.