

How to make a trap for male gypsy moths* using a Yogurt container and a Pan

To interrupt the breeding of Gypsy Moths, you can build a trap for male moths, using an elastic band soaked in female moth hormones as a “lure”. You will need to find a supplier (beyond the scope of this article)

You need to bring the following with you to pick up your lure:

A plastic bag that will close (Ziploc or equivalent) or a plastic bag with a twist-tie to keep it firmly closed so the elastic doesn't fall out.

Material required:

1. Disposable gloves
2. Tweezers tweezers to pick up the elastic band – in combination with the gloves
3. A high-sided pan (1-3 inches high) such as a dishpan, turkey cooking aluminum pan or equivalent. If the pan has sides that are too high, during a rainstorm the opening and the lure could be submerged.
4. String or twist tie
5. 1 yogurt tub (750 gm size works fine) and a stone to weigh the tub down
6. Scissors
7. 1 elastic band lure (it is good for the entire season)
8. Dishwashing detergent (1-2 drops) and water (this reduces the water's surface tension and when the moth touches the water it becomes trapped).

Method:

- Cut two slots 1 to 1-½ inches deep – one on each side of the yogurt tub at the top.
- Drill or punch a hole in the bottom of the yogurt tub (a nail and hammer works to make the hole).
- Tie the lure to a string, or tie the string to a large paper clip or a binder clip (see below) to keep the lure from falling into the water below and pull the string through the hole and fasten it or tie a knot to keep the lure in place .
- Turn the yogurt tub upside down in the pan so the slots are at the bottom.
- Place the pan on level ground and out of the rain and away from the areas that you use frequently because you will attract many male moths.
- Pour in water so it rises about half-way up the slot and then add a squirt or two of liquid dishwashing detergent.
- Place a stone or brick on the tub to keep it stable or attach it to the pan with hot glue to maintain stability and guard against squirrels, racoons etc..

How it works:

The slotted openings which allow a pheromone scent trail to escape are close to the water surface which draws the flying moths down until their wings touch the water. Normally the moths would bounce off the water surface but because of the detergent in the water, the wings break the surface and the moth will drown.

Context and Additional Information:

- Both bottle and pan traps are highly effective designs. For areas of low infestation, bottle traps hung above the ground are low maintenance and excellent at drawing male moths away from both you and female moths.
- For areas of medium to high infestation where you really want to destroy large numbers of male moths, the pan trap works best because there is more water for the moths to contact, Trials between the bottle and pan traps show that the pan trap is ten times more efficacious than the bottle trap.
- NEVER TOUCH THE ELASTIC BAND LURE. The elastic band contains the pheromone, which can quickly transfer to and penetrate skin and for a long time you will attract male gypsy moths.
- NEVER LET THE ELASTIC LURE CONTACT THE WATER – it could lose its power to attract male gypsy moths.

*The common name is about to be changed to a less culturally offensive word

