

Oh, Deer

Invasive, munch and conquer is the mantra of hungry deer that may at times be considered public enemy #1. This is especially true when you've made your garden delectable (read edible) with blooming peonies for the weekend garden party.

So what's a gardener to do?

Well, help is on its way by virtue of a couple of great organic remedies and your family's help. If you have pets, you can pooper scoop your yard, tossing your finds around the perimeter, a strategy preferred for country



GARDEN SAGE

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folk rather than townies where this kind of fencing may be frowned on.

You can hang bars of Irish Spring or Lifebuoy soap from trees every 3 or 4 feet or hang bags made of nylon stockings (who wears them?) filled with human or pet hair. The downside is that your neighbors may think you're whacko decorating for the Holidays in July.

Or, you can organize your garden with plants that deer disdain: hens and chicks, sedum, lambs ears, vinca vine, catnip, sweet woodruff or ornamental blue oat grasses; such herbs and veggies as chives, onions, dill, leeks, lavender and mint; and combinations of, for example, astillbe with hosta.

We've also has great results with a concoction mixed in a five-gallon bucket: 4 eggs, 1 cup each of garlic powder and cayenne powder (available in bulk at BJ's or Costco) and 2 gallons of hot water. Whisk well and add 4-5 squirts of dish washing soap. Using a turkey baster, apply a good squirt every 15-20 feet around the perimeter of your yard. To really protect certain plants, spray directly on the plant. You can start as early as April or May but remember to repeat squirting monthly until the fall.

Happy gardening and don't forget to check the website www.woodstock-gardenclub.org. Remember that Mother Nature needs all the coddling we can give her.