

A Simple Larvacide for Ornamental Pools and Spawning Ponds

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An effort has been made to prepare an effective larvacide for ornamental pools and spawning ponds with a minimum of time, equipment, and materials. It has been noted that mosquito larvae, especially the anopheles, inhabit such bodies of water and thrive even in the presence of fish. The Anopheles larvae confine their activities in the main to the surface of the water, and often take refuge among lily pads and other water plants, and escape the feeding range of minnows and other small fish.

Materials and Equipment

The materials used, with the exception of concentrated oil-pyrethrum extract, can be obtained at the corner grocery: kerosene, any good graulated laundry soap, chemical water softener or common bath salts (trisodium phosphate), concentrated oil-pyrethrum extract (pyrethrins 2.0 grams per 100 cc.)*, and water.

No special equipment is needed. A two-gallon granite kettle, a graduate, and a five-gallon kerosene can are adequate.

Preparation of Stock Solution

One hundred grams of granulated soap and 20 grams of water softener (tri-sodium phosphate) are added to three quarts of water and boiled vigorously in the granite kettle until all ingredients are in solution. The solution is then transferred to the five-gallon can.

Immediately while the soap solution is hot, one gallon of kerosene, to which 800 cc. of oil-pyrethrum extract has been added, is poured gradually into the hot water soap solution and the mixture shaken vigorously for five or ten minutes. A very satisfactory emulsion can be obtained within a very few minutes. The stock solution, if kept in a light-proof container and in a reasonably cool place, retains its strength for months.

Application of the Larvacide

One part of the stock solution of larvacide is added to seven parts of warm soft water and applied to the surface of the ornamental pool with an ordinary two-gallon knapsack sprayer.

Mosquito larvae have been observed to succumb readily in the presence of the larvacide, yet no damage to fish or plant life has been noted. The general health and vigor of water cress, lilies, and other water plants seems to improve with the use of the larvacide, perhaps because of the control of other parasitic insect pests.

* Pyrocide-20, produced by McLaughlin Gormley King Company, Minneapolis, Minnesota, has been found very satisfactory.