



Morning Glory Control

Wild morning glory is also known as field bindweed, creeping jenny and several other names not used in polite circles. Do not confuse wild morning glory with the annual morning glory vines that are easily controlled and bloom beautifully all summer.

Wild morning glory grows in almost every part of the world and is one of nature's most smothering, persistent plants with roots penetrating the soil to a depth of eight feet or more. In addition to its tenacious, perennial nature, seeds are produced each year that may germinate over a 20 year period or more. Yes, wild morning glory is a tough problem in your yard, but you can do several things to battle the invader.

The best time to start controlling Morning Glory is 'NOW', whatever time of the year it is.



How do You Get Rid of Morning Glory?

The true answer is: 'You don't. But you can slow it down and manage it'.

Mechanical Controls

1. Research has established that by removing the top growth every 12 to 14 days the plant will deplete its food reserves in the root system without a 'recharging' effect from photosynthesis. This means that pulling or cutting the stems at ground level every two weeks, during the growing season, will significantly reduce wild morning glory vigor. It may take a season or two of work to eliminate morning glory in this manner. There is no need to dig up the entire plant; you'll never get all the roots anyway. Simply use a push-pull hoe and slice off the tops just below ground level; but you must do it regularly or the plant will have a chance to rejuvenate itself.



2. Wild morning glory will grow through most weed cloth fabrics, but it will not grow through a black plastic sheet. However, it will find and escape through any holes that develop within the plastic and around the edges. Black plastic should be considered in non crop areas or with widely spaced plants. Shrubs, trees, or vegetables, such as squash, tomatoes, or melons can be planted through small holes in the plastic. Pull the wild morning glory that emerges through the planting hole.

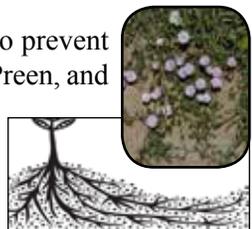


3. Bark and other organic mulches are not a solution to wild morning glory control because it will emerge through several feet of sawdust, bark or shavings.



Chemical Controls

Prevention - It is not possible to prevent morning glory successfully. Treflan, Preen, and Casoron will kill young seedlings and tender shoots, but neither will control the tough, deep roots from growing. This is especially true in perennial



plants such as raspberries, strawberries, grapes, ornamental shrubs, and perennial flower plantings.

Delay planting, to get control of wild morning glory, if that option is available to you. You can also try solarizing your garden soil before planting. Please read our Soil Solarization handouts for more details.

Glyphosate (Kleenup, Killzall, Roundup) is the chemical of first choice. It is non-selective and kills all broadleaf and grassy plants. Roundup products have no "carry-over effect" in the soil: it becomes inactive when it comes in contact with soil particles. Roundup products must be sprayed directly on green, living, 'dust-free' leaves. Roundup products will not harm plants that have not been directly sprayed with the herbicide, and it doesn't help to spray bare ground.



Once sprayed on leaves, it is translocated deep within the plant into the root system. The biggest drawback of using roundup is the fact that it takes up to two weeks for plants to die, since the chemical is being translocated throughout the plant. However, the wait is worth it when controlling morning glory because you are trying to kill the entire root system. Roundup products are environmentally friendly and have low human toxicity, so it is relatively safe to use.

Turflon Ester is an herbicide that is great for controlling the really hard-to-kill broadleaf weeds, such as morning glory and wild violets. It is expensive, but you will have excellent results with Tri-clopyr (Turflon Ester); sometimes even better results than using the Roundup Products.



2,4-D and Trimec are two other homeowner chemicals that can provide control of wild morning glory if used correctly. These chemicals are commonly found in **Weed Out, Weed Beater, Weed B Gon, Weedout, Lawn Weed Killer** and many other brands of lawn weed killers. These chemicals will kill broadleaf weeds and plants but they will not kill grass-type weeds. These herbicides are somewhat soil active which means they can be absorbed by the root systems of flowers, trees, and



shrubs. You should not apply these types of herbicides within the drip line of any desirable plants. These chemicals can also remain active within the soil for up to two weeks, so you must wait after you spray before you plant in the soil.

Weed Free Zone is one of the newest broadleaf killers. It is a combination of four proven Weed Killers: 2,4-D, mecoprop-p, dicamba, and carfentrazone-ethyl. Carfentrazone is a new weed killer that is extremely effective in the cool weather, when it is the perfect time to kill morning glory roots.



Weed Free Zone, 2, 4-D and Trimec are all very effective chemicals to control wild morning glory in lawns. The best time of the year to apply these types of chemicals is in the fall; after the first killing frost, but before the frost has a chance to freeze the wild morning glory stems. Spray every two weeks until the frost kills the morning glory stems.

Be Selective -

Careful spraying of wild morning glory plants among desirable plants will help reduce its presence. Herbicides will affect any green growing vegetation so keep them off plant foliage. Tank Sprayers, trigger spray bottles, sponges, or paint brushes are good ways to apply the weed killers.



Hose End Sprayers - Hose sprayers are good when spraying large areas, such as lawns (with 2,4-D or Trimec), but hose end sprayers are not a good way to apply any weed killer in and around desirable plants.

Tank Sprayers - Tank sprayers are the fastest, safest, and easiest way to apply weed killers in areas with other desirable plants.



Sponges, Paint Brushes, & Gloves - Where there is a lot of wild morning glory intertwined among plants, a clean cotton glove worn over a rubber glove permits handling the weed after placing the glove in the herbicide solution. A sponge or paint brush is also very effective in tight places. Since the amount of solution deposited on the leaves by wiping is less than by spraying, consider increasing the herbicide solution strength by 3 or 4 times. You have to get enough weed killer on the leaves to kill them. A spreader-sticker (surfactant) added to the spray solution will also help increase its effectiveness.

Trigger Sprayers - With a trigger sprayer, you can treat a lot of wild morning glory in a short time especially if the patches are small or scattered.

Timing

The Best Time of the Entire Year to spray to control Morning Glory is right after the First Frost (mid-October).

After the first frost, morning glory is still actively growing, but instead of putting its energy into top-growth, it starts putting its energy into food storage in the root system. If you spray while morning glory is transporting food to its root system, you will kill the root system deeper into the soil than you can by spraying during the spring or summer.



Spray wild morning glory while it is

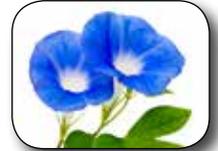
still growing actively. The more foliage that is present, the more effectively the chemical will be absorbed and translocated throughout the plant. Wild morning glory that is under stress from drought or that has leaves covered with dust will not absorb herbicide well. Do not spray within 6 to 8 hours of expected rainfall or sprinkler irrigation.



Remember: Sprays applied in the late summer or early fall are particularly effective. The most effective are the ones right after the first frost, the one that kills your tomatoes and cucumbers.

A single application will greatly reduce wild morning glory infestation, but you will not eradicate this weed with one application. You must plan for follow-up treatments, for the next 10 to 100 years.

Vegetables & Flowers - Roundup products are registered for use as a preplant treatment in most vegetable and fruit crops. Do not use it once plants are growing in the garden.



Roundup products may be used at almost any time in and around non-edible plants such as annual and perennial flowers, trees and shrubs. Do not use any 2,4-D products in vegetable or flower gardens anytime during the growing season.

Lawns - Well managed turf makes wild morning glory control quite easy. Maintain a thick lawn with proper fertilization. Mow regularly at 2 - 2 1/2" height and use lawn weed sprays containing Weed Free Zone, 2, 4-D or Trimec. Roundup will kill the grass as well as the morning glory, so be very selective and careful. Fall is the best time to kill morning glory in the lawn areas.

Corn - A sweet corn patch can help with wild morning glory control. The shade and root competition reduces morning glory's food manufacturing ability. Corn is fairly easily cleaned of weeds by using a gliding type hoe every two weeks. If desired, 2,4-D can be used on the wild morning glory around the corn plants, since corn is closely related to the grass family. Spray carefully so that you don't get any chemical in the growing points of the corn plants.

Junipers - If applied correctly, 2,4-D (not Trimec, Weed Free Zone or Roundup products) can be sprayed on morning glory plants growing in juniper areas without killing the junipers. You have to wait as long as possible in the fall to spray: wait until the junipers are dormant but the morning glory is still growing. Spray the morning glory leaves and try to not spray the junipers. If a little spray comes in contact with the juniper needles it will not harm them at this stage of growth. Both Trimec and Roundup products may cause injury to junipers during any stage of growth.

Follow-up

After the initial treatment, some young morning glory plants may arise from roots that weren't completely killed. Seeds may also germinate and grow after your first treatment. Regular patrols of your yard will give you the chance to remove these plants before they have a chance to mature and become a real problem. Keeping control of morning glory at this young stage of growth is relatively easy.



Be Careful

Apply all herbicides carefully: 1. Stray spray can kill desirable plants; 2. If any runs off the leaves, it is wasted; 3. If any blows away, it may kill some of your neighbor's plants; 4. Wasted product is expensive! 5. A spreader-sticker (surfactant) added to the spray solution will also increase its effectiveness.

