



Dodder

Dodder is a really neat plant that is a parasitic annual. It is also known as strangeweeder or devils hair.

It looks like yellow to golden yellow "threads" that twine over other plants, attaching themselves with little suction-cup structures. (see images →) These suckers penetrate the stems of the host plant so the dodder can suck out the sap and nutrients from the host plant. Dodder can produce a very small amount of chlorophyll, but it needs a host to survive.

Since Dodder is an annual it must reproduce by seed. The flowers are small and whitish and will start to appear late April through October. (see far image →) The plant will die at first frost.

Seeds may sprout in the spring, or may lay dormant for up to 20 years. When the seed germinates in the spring, the seedling "reaches out" for a host, if one is not found within 5 to 10 days, it withers and dies.

If it finds an acceptable host, it detaches from the ground and lives completely off of the host. It then begins to reach out to adjacent plants, attacking them as well.

A list of favorite plants, but not limited to these are: Vegetables; asparagus, beet, carrot, eggplant, garlic, melons, onion, pepper, potato and tomato. Ornamentals; chrysanthemum, english ivy, fennel, impatiens, marjoram, mint, morning glory, periwinkle and petunia. Also many agricultural crops including; alfalfa, sugarbeets and weeds such as; bindweed, lambsquarter, pigweed and more.

Control

Since the seeds may lay dormant for up to 20 years and solarization has NO effect on the seeds and a small clipping of the plant can be viable and attack a nearby plant, prevention is the best protection.

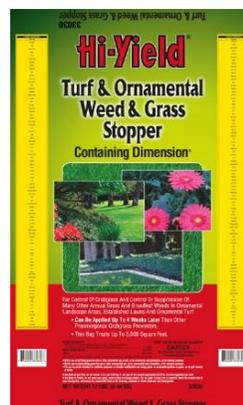
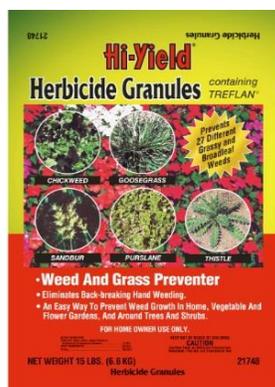
In Vegetables, apply *HY Herbicide Granules* and re-apply at 6 week intervals. In Ornamentals, apply *HY Turf and Ornamental*, re-apply 3 months later to maintain a nearly season long barrier.



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Trying to kill the dodder while it is attached to the host plant generally kills the host plant. Some people have tried to use *Killzall* and carefully painting it on the dodder to selectively control it, with marginal results.

Some research has also shown limited success with hand pulling off the host, but remember a very small piece of the dodder can regenerate into a mature plant. Remove in a plastic bag, DO NOT compost.