

## GOOD BUGS ON THE WEB

BY ROSEMARY KNOWER, CONTRIBUTING WRITER

When you think about bugs in your garden, you probably think, as Allison Mia Starcher did when she first started gardening, that "the only good bug is a dead bug." However, when she started organic gardening and swore off chemical pesticides, she began to look into the differences between good bugs and bad. She found a world where the good bugs could be a powerful ally against the bad guys in the garden. She wrote about, and drew, the bugs in her garden for a wonderful book, "Good Bugs for Your Garden" (Algonquin Books, May 1995). Because Starcher had to start learning about her allies from scratch, her book (available from [www.amazon.com](http://www.amazon.com) for about \$9) is a wonderful source for people who don't want to know everything about every bug. "I just wanted to know about the beneficial ones," says Starcher. "What did they look like? Where were they found? What did they eat? And how could I keep them happy in my garden?"

The Web today provides lots of sources for following Starcher's suggestions to attract and keep the good bugs happy in your garden. This spring, consider hosting the ladybugs, praying mantises, trichogramma wasps and ground beetles who will eat their weight and more in aphids, slugs, snails, mealy bugs, scales and spider mites.

Nature's Control offers not only the bugs themselves for shipping but good pictures, release instructions and advice on how to help them do their jobs, how many you need for the space you have and a pest identification section that helps you identify what will eat the bad guys.  
([www.naturescontrol.com](http://www.naturescontrol.com))

Garden Gate Magazine is an informative Web publication that helps you sort out the basics of integrated pest management, the canny gardener's way of using a combination of plantings and good bugs to discourage pests in the garden.  
([www.gardengatemagazine.com/basics/ipm.html](http://www.gardengatemagazine.com/basics/ipm.html))

The Territorial Seed Company provides extensive information as well as green lacewings, ladybugs and other good bugs.  
([www.territorial-seed.com](http://www.territorial-seed.com))

Natures Best Masked Flower Images is a vast and fascinating site offering good photos, bugs and information as well as the Bug Vacuum, a rechargeable vacuum with a sealed disposal container and a telescoping nozzle that will grab persistent pests right out of the air, \$50.  
([www.maskedflowerimages.com](http://www.maskedflowerimages.com))

The Brooklyn Botanic Garden has wonderful information on which plants attract good bugs and includes folklore and traditional uses of good bugs in the garden.  
([www.bbg.org/gar2/topics/sustainable/2001su\\_beneficial\\_bugs.html](http://www.bbg.org/gar2/topics/sustainable/2001su_beneficial_bugs.html))

Safer's Web site is for their Victor™ Poison-Free products, with the company's articles and advice on where to find their products and a virtual synopsis of the sites on the Web that carry alternate gardening supplies, including pheromone traps (those bugs may think they're going to mate, but they're in for a big surprise) and live-catch traps.  
([www.victorpest.com](http://www.victorpest.com)) •