

The Green Thumb

By GEORGE ABRAHAM

What's that bug? Everyday I get letters from readers asking us for information about insects. I wish we could identify insects for you in this department, but since there are a million species of insects (and many not yet classified), it's almost impossible to describe all the pests which plague the home gardener.

I'd like to say this: Probably 90 per cent of the insects you do have are beneficial, and you shouldn't be concerned about killing them off. Also, insects do not fall into two simple groups, such as harmful and beneficial bugs. Some bugs feed on bugs and these same ones sometimes feed on vegetable matter as well.

Actually, the important thing for the home gardener to know is not what an insect looks like but the type of damage it causes. Entomology (bug study) is a complicated subject. If we tried to describe an insect it'd be necessary to use jawbreaking terms such as mandibular, scutellum, and embolism, useless information to the home gardener.

WATER WITCHING again: A good many readers of this department are sold on the idea of water-dowsing. As we've said many times before, it's something you feel and believe, and as much as we'd like to explain the phenomenon, we cannot offer an explanation. One of our readers has attended meetings of the National Water Dowsers and notes that scientists, college professors, top businessmen and everyone in all walks of life, attend the convention.

One theory on the matter is a simple one, that all animals have the inherent ability to find water, and man is no exception. When people do not have the power to locate water, it is because their electrical impulses repel, rather than transmit electrons, according to a reader. She believes that the natural flower of electrons in an electro-magnetic field uses the body as a travel agent.

One dowsing tells us he found a good well site with 30-inch lengths of brass welding rod. By applying the rule of "10 feet down for every

foot after the rod first starts to turn," he estimated that he'd find water at 60 feet. His new drilled well is 68 feet, the last 43 feet, through solid rock. Are you convinced that there's something to water dowsing?

GREEN THUMB CLINIC: A reader writes: "Please tell us what can be done to keep cut worms from eating our tomato plants."

Answer: Put a wax collar (wrapping paper) or milk carton (cut-in two) around each plant. This forms a barrier and keeps the cut worms out.



A SOLID PLANTING of Nugget marigolds, which are available in several colors, goes around this corner of a path. Note in upper left that the gray foliage of dusty miller is the nearest neighbor, furnishing a fine contrast.

Handy Jim's FIX-UP TIPS

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