

# LET'S STOP FRUIT FLY



May 2022

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## Stop the spread

Fruit fly control and management is essential despite the turn in the weather at this time of year. Key strategies to remember include:

- Pick up and dispose of (place in a plastic bag in the sun for 5 days or freeze and then throw out with the weekly garbage/compost) any fallen fruit in your yard, on the nature strip, orchard, on nearby creek banks or parks.
- Pick fruit still on the plant and use or dispose of as above.
- Prune your trees to keep them at a manageable height for next season's fruit picking or for netting.
- Check ripe and ripening fruit for signs of fruit fly infestation – soft patches, brown to black sting marks, maggots.
- Check traps are within the use-by date and replace or recharge with new baits if required.
- Place traps around the house, especially in evergreen foliage near the house e.g. the lemon tree.
- Netting around most trees can be removed now but should remain if you have ripe or ripening fruit still in your yard.
- If you have fruit trees you no longer want, consider removing them completely and replacing with a non-fruiting plant



## Threat continues despite the approach of winter

One reason for fruit flies being better able to survive the winter is that late fruiting plants are not managed after harvesting in both rural and urban situations. Left-over fruit plus benign weather conditions promote the survival of fruit flies. Fruit fly populations in the Goulburn Murray Valley are currently high so any fruit, even if it has fallen to the ground, will be targeted.

Ripe fruit still on the plant or ground is particularly vulnerable to the threat of Qfly infestation. Eggs, larvae and pupae from these infested fruit will generally die from May onwards due to prolonged cold nights, however adults flies are able to survive by flying to warmer microclimates such as those found in evergreen trees (lemon and orange trees) near packing sheds, heated houses, fowl yards, animal pens or compost heaps. Fruit trees in these areas should be regularly inspected and monitored through the winter months. It is important to pick, or pick up, and destroy unwanted fruit at this time of year, as adult flies may emerge from these fruit.

After taking refuge in relatively warm spots in evergreen plants throughout winter these flies avoid traps due to the cold temperature and generally are not detected until spring when the weather warms up and fruit get stung.



*Post harvest hygiene is essential as the successful removal of fruit makes it harder for fruit fly to survive the winter and emerge in the upcoming spring.*

## The impact of weather

Normally, fruit fly activity declines in late April so that any eggs or larvae in fruit or pupae in the ground in the GMV past mid-April will die due to the cold. But weather conditions for April and May 2022 were not significantly damaging to fruit fly survival and activity, indicating the fruit fly season will extend further into late autumn and early winter than usual.

Fruit fly activity in the form of mating, egg-laying and consequent fruit damage followed by adult emergence is more likely in milder conditions at this time of year.

## Hot spot attention required

The below sites have the potential to become sites from which large numbers of Qfly could establish and spread, so it is important that members of the GMV community who have gardens and orchards in these areas take precautions to reduce the ability of fruit fly to infest fruit and to survive in them.

- Ardmona
- Merrigum
- Shepparton East
- Echuca
- Mooroopna
- Taura
- Euroa
- Orrvale
- Toolamba
- Invergordon
- Rochester
- Undera
- Kyabram
- Shepparton

## Removal of unwanted host plants and trees

The removal of unmanaged fruit trees eliminates a potential breeding ground and helps protect the region against fruit fly. If you're a property owner or home gardener with a fruit tree you no longer want or find difficult to manage, you can apply to have it removed free of charge through the Goulburn Murray Valley Area Wide Management Program's free Fruit Tree Removal Program.

Download or collect an information pack from your local participating Council or at [www.fruitflycontrol.com.au](http://www.fruitflycontrol.com.au) and complete and return the tree removal form to your participating Council to have your unwanted fruit tree removed.



## Fruit fly control

For more information about fruit fly control and management visit the Goulburn Murray Valley Regional Fruit Fly Program website at [www.fruitflycontrol.com.au](http://www.fruitflycontrol.com.au) or collect an information pack from your participating council.

### DID YOU KNOW?

**Fruit fly will seek out warm spots in evergreen plants over winter, providing protection from the winter cold.**



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