



# Buggin' with CPT G

## PARTY ON FRUIT FLIES!

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Spring time is just around the corner! The weather is already warming up and we can actually spend time comfortably outdoors enjoying BBQ and fresh fruit. However, leaving bananas or watermelon rinds around can attract fruit flies. Although they are not a disease vector, fruit flies can be a real nuisance around the home, but they are being used to find out some interesting facts regarding alcohol.

**Common Name:** Fruit Fly, Banana Fly, Vinegar Fly

**Scientific Name:** *Drosophila* sp.

**Order:** Diptera



**Habitat and Food Source(s), Damage:** Mouthparts are for lapping in adults, while maggots have chewing mouthparts. Immature stages feed on over ripe, fermenting or rotting fruit and vegetables, whole or in part (peels), fermenting liquids (vinegar, beer, wine, cider) and other rotting organic material in garbage and other unsanitary areas. Adults can be attracted to fruit or fermenting liquid especially if placed outdoors in a compost pile or near garbage.

**Pest Status:** Adult flies can be a nuisance in restaurants, wine cellars and near fruit and vegetable fields and food processing areas, anywhere where abundant breeding habitat is available. The common fruit fly, sometimes called the "banana fly," have been used extensively as laboratory animals for experiments in genetics, insect behavior and physiology. [insects.tamu.edu/fieldguide](http://insects.tamu.edu/fieldguide)

**What's in the News:** How many of you remember your genetics experiment to mimic Gregor Mendel's pea plant studies? It was Thomas Hunt Morgan in early 1900 that first used the fruit fly to demonstrate the heritable traits in genetics. Now fruit flies are being used in multiple alcohol related studies like how alcohol affects our inhibitions, finding a potential drug target for alcoholism, the genetics of alcohol sensitivity and most recently how alcohol can be used to kill parasites. In this study from Emory University fruit flies are infected with a blood-borne parasite and consume alcohol to self-medicate, a behavior that shows to greatly increase their survival rate. The researchers hope that their data will lead to more studies of how alcohol may control pathogens in other organisms, including humans. See the [full story](#).



### Control your fruit flies at home with a homemade trap

Cut a plastic soda bottle and invert as shown and fill with fly bait. Place near a problem area to remove fruit flies, then seal and discard.



#### CPT G's Fruit Fly Bait

- 3 Tblsp Vinegar  
(Red Wine Vinegar works best)
- 1 Tblsp Tap Water
- 2 Tsp Sugar
- 3-4 Drops of Liquid Dish Soap



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