



# J&L Garden Center

The All Season Gift  
and Garden Center

620 North 500 West Bountiful, Utah 292-0421

[www.JLGardenCenter.com](http://www.JLGardenCenter.com)

## Morning Glory Control

Wild morning glory is also known as field bindweed, creeping jenny and several other names not used in polite circles. Do not confuse wild morning glory with the annual morning glory vines that are easily controlled and bloom beautifully all summer. Wild morning glory grows in almost every part of the world and is one of nature's most smothering, persistent plants with roots penetrating the soil to a depth of eight feet or more. In addition to its tenacious perennial nature, seeds are produced each year that may germinate over a 20 year period or more. Yes, wild morning glory is a tough problem in your yard, but you can do several things to battle the invader.



### Mechanical Controls

1. Research has established that by removing the top growth every 12 to 14 days the plant will deplete its food reserves in the root system without a "recharging" effect from photosynthesis. This means that pulling or cutting the stems at ground level every two weeks, during the growing season, will significantly reduce wild morning glory vigor. It may take a season or two of work to eliminate morning glory in this manner. There is no need to dig up the entire plant; you'll never get all the roots anyway. Simply use a push-pull hoe and slice off the tops just below ground level; but you must do it regularly or the plant will have a chance to rejuvenate itself.



2. Wild morning glory will not grow through a black plastic sheet. However, it will find and escape through any holes that develop within the plastic and around the edges. Black plastic should be considered in non crop areas or with widely spaced plants. Shrubs, trees, or vegetables like squash, tomatoes, or melons can be planted through small holes in the plastic. Pull the wild morning glory that emerges through the planting hole.



3. Bark and other organic mulches are not a solution to wild morning glory control because it will emerge through several feet of sawdust, bark or shavings.

### Chemical Controls

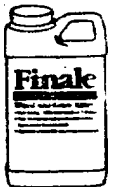
**Prevention** - It would be much to your advantage if plants and wild morning glory were not combined. This is especially true of perennial plants such as raspberries, strawberries, grapes, ornamental shrubs, and flower plantings. Delay planting, to get control of wild morning glory, if that option is available to you.



**Glyphosate (Killzall, Roundup)** is the chemical of first choice. It is non-selective and kills all broadleaf and grassy plants. Roundup has no "carry-over effect" in the soil: it becomes inactive when it comes in contact with soil particles. Roundup must be sprayed directly on green, living, "dust-free" leaves. Roundup will not harm plants that have not been directly sprayed with the herbicide. Once sprayed on leaves, it is translocated deep within the plant into the root system. The biggest drawback of using roundup is the fact that it takes up to two weeks for plants to die, since the chemical is being translocated throughout the plant. However, the wait is worth it when controlling morning glory because you are trying to kill the entire root system. Roundup is environmentally friendly and has low human toxicity, so it is relatively safe to use.



**Finale** is another product that kills wild morning glory. It is similar to Roundup in that it is non-selective: it kills anything it is sprayed on. Finale kills plants in a similar fashion to roundup; it is absorbed by the leaf and then translocated within the plant. Finale kills weeds much faster than roundup does but finale is not translocated as deeply into the root system as roundup is. Finale is a good chemical to control young morning glory plants that have not had a chance to develop a deep root system.



**2, 4-D and Trimec** are two other homeowner chemicals that can provide control of wild morning glory if used correctly. These chemicals are commonly found in **Weed Beater, Weed B Gon, Weedout, Lawn Weed Killer** and many other brands of lawn weed killers. These chemicals will kill broadleaf weeds and plants but they will not kill grass-type weeds. These herbicides are somewhat soil active which means they can be absorbed by the root sys-



tems of flowers, trees, and shrubs. You should not apply these types of herbicides within the drip line of any desirable plants. These chemicals can also remain active within the soil for up to two weeks, so you must wait after you spray before you plant in the soil.

**2, 4-D** and **Trimec** are very effective chemicals to control wild morning glory in lawns. The best time of the year to apply these types of chemicals is in the fall; after the first killing frost, but before the frost has a chance to freeze the wild morning glory stems. Spray every two weeks until the frost kills the morning glory stems.

## Be Selective -

Careful spraying of wild morning glory plants among desirable plants will help reduce its presence. Herbicides will affect any green growing vegetation so keep them off plant foliage. Tank Sprayers, trigger spray bottles, sponges, or paint brushes are good ways to apply the weed killers.



**Hose End Sprayers** - Hose sprayers are good when spraying large areas, such as lawns (with 2,4-D or Trimec), but hose end sprayers are not a good way to apply any weed killer in and around desirable plants.

**Tank Sprayers** - Tank sprayers are the fastest, safest, and easiest way to apply weed killers in areas with other desirable plants.

**Sponges, Paint Brushes, & Gloves** - Where there is a lot of wild morning glory intertwined among plants, a clean cotton glove worn over a rubber glove permits handling the weed after placing the glove in the herbicide solution. A sponge or paint brush is also very effective in tight places. Since the amount of solution deposited on the leaves by wiping is less than by spraying, consider increasing the herbicide solution strength by 3 or 4 times. You have to get enough weed killer on the leaves to kill them. A spreader-sticker (surfactant) added to the spray solution will also help increase its effectiveness.

**Trigger Sprayers** - With a trigger sprayer, you can treat a lot of wild morning glory in a short time especially if the patches are small or scattered.

## Timing

Spray when wild morning glory is growing actively. The more foliage that is present, the more effectively the chemical will be absorbed and translocated throughout the plant. Wild morning glory that is under stress from drought or that has leaves covered with dust will not absorb glyphosate well. Do not spray within 6 to 8 hours of expected rainfall or sprinkler irrigation.



*Sprays applied in the late summer or early fall are particularly effective. You may even delay until the first*

## *frost kills your tomatoes and cucumbers.*

A single application will greatly reduce wild morning glory infestation, but you will probably not eradicate the weed with one application. You must plan for follow-up treatment either later the same fall or early the next year.

**Vegetables & Flowers** - Roundup is registered for use as a preplant treatment in most vegetable and fruit crops. Roundup may be used at almost any time in and around non-edible plants such as annual and perennial flowers, trees and shrubs. Do not use **2,4-D** in vegetable or flower gardens during the growing season.

**Lawns** - Well managed turf makes wild morning glory control quite easy. Maintain a thick lawn with proper fertilization. Mow regularly at 2 - 2 1/2" height and use lawn weed sprays containing 2, 4-D or Trimec. Roundup will kill the grass as well as the morning glory. Fall is the best time to kill morning glory in the lawn areas.

**Corn** - A sweet corn patch can help with wild morning glory control. The shade and root competition reduces morning glory's food manufacturing ability. Corn is fairly easily cleaned of weeds by using a gliding type hoe every two weeks. If desired, 2,4-D can be used on the wild morning glory around the corn plants, since corn is closely related to the grass family. Spray carefully so that you don't get any chemical in the growing points of the corn plants.

**Junipers** - If applied correctly, **2,4-D** (not Trimec or Roundup) can be sprayed on morning glory plants growing in juniper areas without killing the junipers. You have to wait as long as possible in the fall to spray: wait until the junipers are dormant but the morning glory is still growing. Spray the morning glory leaves and try to not spray the junipers. If a little spray comes in contact with the juniper needles it will not harm them at this stage of growth. Both Trimec and Roundup may cause injury to junipers during any stage of growth.

## Follow-up

After the initial treatment, some young morning glory plants may arise from roots that weren't completely killed. Seeds may also germinate and grow after your first treatment. Regular patrols of your yard will give you the chance to remove these plants before they have a chance to mature and become a real problem. Keeping control of morning glory at this young stage of growth is relatively easy.



## Be Careful

**Apply all herbicides carefully:** 1. Stray spray can kill desirable plants; 2. If any runs off the leaves, it is wasted; 3. If any blows away, it may kill some of your neighbor's plants; 4. Wasted product is expensive! 5. A spreader-sticker (surfactant) added to the spray solution will also increase its effectiveness.

