

Make your own stable fly trap

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The pest

Stable flies are a problem in Perth, Western Australia, because the Swan Coastal Plain provides perfect conditions (sandy soils, temperate climate, rotting organic material and nearby hosts) for stable fly to breed in high numbers.

Management of organic waste is the most successful method to control stable fly numbers; however sticky or cloth target-treated traps can help to reduce the numbers of adult flies that may be causing annoyance around your property.

You can make a simple **sticky 'Williams' trap** with a white board and a non-drying glue or a **cloth target treated trap**, which is a white cloth soaked in insecticide that attracts, then kills stable flies.

Boards with a white sticky surface will attract stable flies, as they like to rest on a cool, vertical surface after a blood meal. These boards can be reused by removing the old coating (and dead flies) and reapplying a fresh coat of non-drying glue. Multiple boards, cleared daily and re-painted, can remove several thousand stable flies.



Traps can help protect animals from stable flies

What you need to do

Step 1: Materials required

Visit your local hardware store.

- **Board**

There are many different types of boards you can purchase.

You can use corflute, melamine, aligloss, acrylic sheets, high density polyethylene boards, masonite or stainless steel minisheets, which come in sizes from 600 mm x 600 mm, 900 mm x 600 mm, and 1200 mm x 900 mm.

- **Glue**

One litre will of glue will cover up to 15 traps.

Suitable commercial non-drying glue includes:

- *Catchmaster Tree Banding Insect Barrier* or *Olson Sticky Stuff Brush on Insect Trap Coating* non-drying glue, such as *Stikem*®
- Amazon Australia advertises *Tangle Foot Sticky Glue Coating*.
- *Catchmaster Tree Banding Insect Barrier DIY Kit*, which is a 430 g bucket with a spreader.



Sticky traps are specific to stable flies and catch little else

- An alternative is to purchase 100 m rolls of white or clear film that have non-drying glue on both sides. You simply stick the film onto any whiteboards and peel off when covered with flies. The rolls of film can be purchased in either 15 cm or 30 cm wide strips, so you can put several strips on the white board depending upon the size of the board you choose.
- **Star picket** – to mount board

Step 2: Apply the glue

- Heat the non-drying glue on a hot plate or over hot water so it thins out and can be easily spread. Cover both sides of the board with the glue.

Step 3: Place in paddock

- Secure the board to a star picket, so that it is about 1 m from the ground to avoid it being covered in dirt and dust.
- Place near livestock and horses, but out of their reach
- Monitor the white board regularly and when it is covered with flies, remove the glue with a paint scraper before re-applying a new coat of glue.

Alternatively, you could make a **cloth target treated trap**. This is a white cloth soaked in insecticide that attracts, then kills stable flies when they land on it. These traps can be effective for up to 3 months if the cloth is kept dry and in shade. If left in the weather, it is effective for only one to 2 weeks. Animals must be kept away from the cloth.

To construct a cloth target treated trap:

1. Soak the cloth in either 0.1 % solution of lambda-cyhalothrin or other pyrethroid/permethrins and let it dry on a flat surface.
2. Prior to securing it tightly between 2 posts/star pickets, the bottom of the cloth trap should be no more than 0.5 m above ground level and be clear of vegetation.
3. Alternative insecticides include bifenthrin, cyfluthrin, tetramethrin, deltamethrin, permethrin. See [APVMA](#) for up-to-date information.



For more information and strategies on managing stable fly see dpiird.wa.gov.au/stablefly.

If you are experiencing problems with stable fly, please report to your local government authority.

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