

Silloth RNLI

Report by:
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Manager
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Silloth Lifeboat “Spirit of Cumbria” was called out three times on Sunday 4th May to the following incidents:

1) 10.30hrs to a man cut off by the tide at Southerness, Scotland. The man was safe and well and managed to get ashore before the lifeboat arrived.

2) 11.30hrs to assist with a hovercraft which had broken down half a mile North of the village of Glencaple up the River Nith, Scotland. Silloth Lifeboat assisted Nith Rescue boat to tow the hovercraft back to Glencaple.

3) 15.05hrs to a man who was attempting to save a dog which had gone into the sea on the West Beach, Silloth. The dog was being carried away by the fast flowing tide. Silloth Lifeboat arrived at the scene to find the dog had managed to swim ashore. Fortunately, the man did not enter the water.

All safe and well!

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Slugs and snails must appear on virtually every gardener’s top ten pest list. I’d be happy to share a percentage of my yield to them but I don’t see why they should have a nibble of every strawberry. In the compost heap they do a useful job munching through our waste and helping to turn all those unwanted prunings into gardener’s gold. But that’s about the only positive thing they do.

There are many different kinds of both slugs and snails with varying habits and appetites but they are all unwelcome in the garden, and action to control them is pretty much the same regardless of species.

Slugs and snails have soft, slimy bodies prone to drying out, so they tend to be confined to moist environments. Keeping the garden as



dry as possible will help to deter them, but our plants tend to sulk if we reduce their moisture too much. Unfortunately, last year’s wet summer was a good one for slugs and their progeny, and as they tend to lay thirty or so eggs every time they mate, (and being hermaphrodites they all lay the eggs) we could be inundated with slugs this year.

Forewarned is forearmed so what can we do to deter the slimy monsters?

There are probably more documented ways to reduce the numbers of this pest than for any other nuisance. Our first decision has to be the principle by which we get rid of them. Are they to be killed or simply removed under torch light? Most options are not suitable for the squeamish amongst us. Our choices include chemical control, biological control, traps and baits and deterrents. I seldom walk round the garden without a sharp hoe in my hand. This has many different uses but is effective in slicing

through weeds or slugs whenever seen.

Chemical control which usually comes in the form of blue pellets is not too good for the wildlife we try to encourage. In my experience people who have problems with slugs are those who use slug pellets liberally. They tell me it’s because they have lots of slugs that they have to use them, but it is my belief that using slug pellets actually attracts slugs from all around. Indeed slugs are not only attracted to the pellets but to the bodies of their dead slimy mates, on which they dine.

If you just want to round them up and humanely take them to pastures new, they will congregate happily under a grapefruit skin. If you want to trap them and can cope with lots of dead bodies, a glass of beer placed in the borders will give them something pleasant to drown in. (Don’t go mad, cheap beer from the supermarket is good enough. Micro brewery finest is not necessary)

Nematodes are

parasitic worms which are bought as a powder and mixed with water to be watered onto the soil. The nematodes deal with slugs both above and below ground. This is probably the best way of reducing numbers unless you don’t actually want the slug to die. Slugs are eaten by hedgehogs, ducks and other slugs, but introducing ducks or slugs into your garden to protect the plants can be counter productive.



Slugs need to be moist, so any barrier which will dry them out can be an effective deterrent - hair, sawdust, bran, vermiculite. They also like to lurk under stones and in garden debris. Keeping the lawn edges short and the garden clean and tidy, all help to make the slug feel unwelcome and may encourage them to go

away and have some one else’s hostas for lunch.

Slug and snail resistant plants for early summer

Hardy geraniums
Not the brightly coloured bedding pelargonium which we often call geraniums (although they too are fairly slug resistant) but the perennial varieties. There are hundreds of different cultivars of varying sizes and colours but most tend to be shades of blue, white or pink. Cutting these back to the ground after flowering usually encourages a second flush later in the year.

Oriental poppy
Most poppies are pretty much slug resistant but at this time of the year the large flowered Oriental poppies are particularly attractive.

Hosta tardiflora
Look out for this particular cultivar which has large leathery leaves if you prefer your hostas to look like plants rather than lace curtains. This is about the only hosta that the slimy mollusc leaves alone.

Enjoy your gardening



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