

Japanese Beetle

Mitigating the damage of a formidable garden pest



At a Glance

Both larvae and adults can cause significant damage to your landscape.

Adults can travel up to 5 miles daily.

Larvae prefer wet lawns, while adults gravitate to a variety of plant species like grapes and roses.

The most effective method for control known at this time is hand removal and submersion in a solution of dish soap and water.

The Japanese Beetle first came to the United States in 1916 and has been a garden nemesis since. This beetle is particularly difficult in that it does harm to our landscape in both the grub and the adult forms.

The adult beetle can travel 1-5 miles each day, making management difficult. The beetle grubs eat grass roots in lawns, while the adult beetle eats the leaves of multiple plant varieties, skeletonizing leaves of Virginia creeper, grapes, roses, hibiscus, and fruit trees, to name a few of its favorites.

The grubs need constantly moist turf to survive, like golf courses and parks. Homeowner lawns often dry out too much for the grubs to survive, but it may be prudent to treat lawns to help prevent damage. The grubs commonly appear in late July or August.

Characteristics

The larvae of the Japanese Beetle are small, white grubs with dark heads. They feed on roots of grass plants. Turf can sustain a large population before showing symptoms of damage.

Adults are metallic green oval-shaped beetles with shiny brown wings. They have patches of white hair around the sides of the abdomen that appear like spots.



Strategy

Hand-picking beetles and placing them in dish soap and water solution can be very effective to control numbers. There are also alternative organic and conventional products that may help. Beetle traps are usually less effective as they may actually draw more beetles into the area. Selecting the right plants for your landscape will also help control population. See links on the next page for additional information, and visit the Garden Advisors at Tagawa Gardens for helpful strategies.

*Image courtesy of Colorado Department of Agriculture

Is your landscape vulnerable to Japanese Beetle?

Trees & Shrubs

Resistant

Arborvitae
Ash
Boxwood
Burning Bush
Dogwood

Forsythia
Hemlock
Hickory
Holly
Juniper

Lilac
Magnolia
Northern Red Oak
Pine
Redbud

Red Maple
Spruce
Sweetgum
Tulip Poplar
Yew

Vulnerable

Apple & Crabapple
Beech
Birch
Black Walnut
Buckthorn
Crepe Myrtle

Hawthorn
Horse-Chestnut
Japanese Maple
Larch
Linden
Lombardy Poplar

Norway Maple
Plum
Apricot
Cherry
Peach
Pin Oak

Rose of Sharon
Sassafras
Summersweet
Virginia Creeper
Willow

Herbaceous Plants

Resistant

Ageratum
Begonia
California Poppy
Columbine
Coral Bells

Coreopsis
Dusty Miller
Forget Me Not
Foxglove
Hosta

Impatiens
Lantana
Larkspur
Lily of the Valley
Moss Rose

Nasturtium
Pachysandra
Pansy & Viola
Poppy
Showy Sedum

Vulnerable

Evening Primrose
Gladiolus
Grape
Hibiscus

Hollyhock
Lily
Morning Glory
Peony

Red Raspberry
Rhubarb
Rose
Soybean

Sunflower
Zinnia

**For More
Information**



[Japanese Beetle - CSU
Extension](#)



[USDA](#)



[USDA Homeowner's
Handbook](#)

**Link descriptions are clickable. For hard copies, please scan the QR codes with your phone's camera to be taken to the destination.*