

Problem: Japanese Beetle



Hosts: Adults feed on over 300 species of plants including rose, birch, linden, crabapple, grape, Virginia creeper, and buckeye.

Description: Adult Japanese beetles are approximately 7/16-inch long and metallic green with coppery wing covers. They sport a series of white dots made up of tufts of hair that project from under the edges of the wing covers on the back half of the insect. This characteristic is used to distinguish Japanese beetles from other similar beetles. Japanese beetles feed on leaves, flowers and wounded or mushy fruit.

Adults often feed on the green material on the upper surface of the leaf leaving a lacelike or “cellophane” appearance. Most feeding activity occurs over a 4 to 6 week period though individual beetles usually only live about 30 to 45 days.

Japanese beetles tend to be gregarious and feed in groups, starting at the top of a plant and working down. Warm, sunny weather is preferred with beetles favoring plants in full sun. When disturbed, adults fold their legs and drop from foliage.

Recommendations: Adult beetles can be killed by shaking the beetles from the plant into a jar or bucket containing soapy water. This is best done in the morning when the insects are sluggish.

Numerous insecticides can be used including pyrethroid products such as cyfluthrin (Tempo, Bayer Vegetable & Garden Spray), bifenthrin (Hi-Yield Bug Blaster Bifenthrin), and cyhalothrin (Bonide Beetle Killer, Spectracide Bug Stop Indoor + Outdoor Insect Killer, Spectracide Triazicide, Bonide Caterpillar Killer). Carbaryl (Sevin) can also be used. The pyrethroid products normally give 2 to 3 weeks protection with carbaryl not

lasting as long, usually 1 to 2 weeks. All of the above insecticides are detrimental to natural controls such as parasitoids and predators or other pests including the two-spotted spider mite.

Neem products (Natural Guard Neem-Py, Fertlome Triple Action Plus) and Pyola (pyrethrins in canola oil) will provide deterrence of 3 to 4 days.

Japanese beetle traps tend to attract more beetles than they kill and often do more harm than good.

References:

1. [Japanese Beetle](#), K-State Research & Extension, Department of Entomology, MF 3151
2. [Japanese Beetles in the Urban Landscape](#), University of Kentucky College of Agriculture, Entfact-451

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