

# 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.

# *Is your landscape vulnerable to Japanese Beetle?*

## Trees & Shrubs

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### *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  
Crepe Myrtle  
Hawthorn

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

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### *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**



[CSU Extension](#)



[USDA](#)



[USDA Homeowner's  
Handbook](#)

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