

Japanese Beetles

Japanese beetles are members of the scarab beetle family, some of the worst garden pests. Adult beetles chew holes in foliage, fruit, and flowers, and their larvae devour grass roots. Adult Japanese beetles attack more than 250 kinds of plants, chewing holes in the leaves. Eventually only the leaf veins will remain, forming a lacy skeleton.

The larvae, called white grubs, feed on grass roots. In severe infestations there can be more than 50 Japanese beetle grubs per square foot of lawn. Damage consists of dead or balding patches. The turf will have no roots and can be rolled back like a carpet.

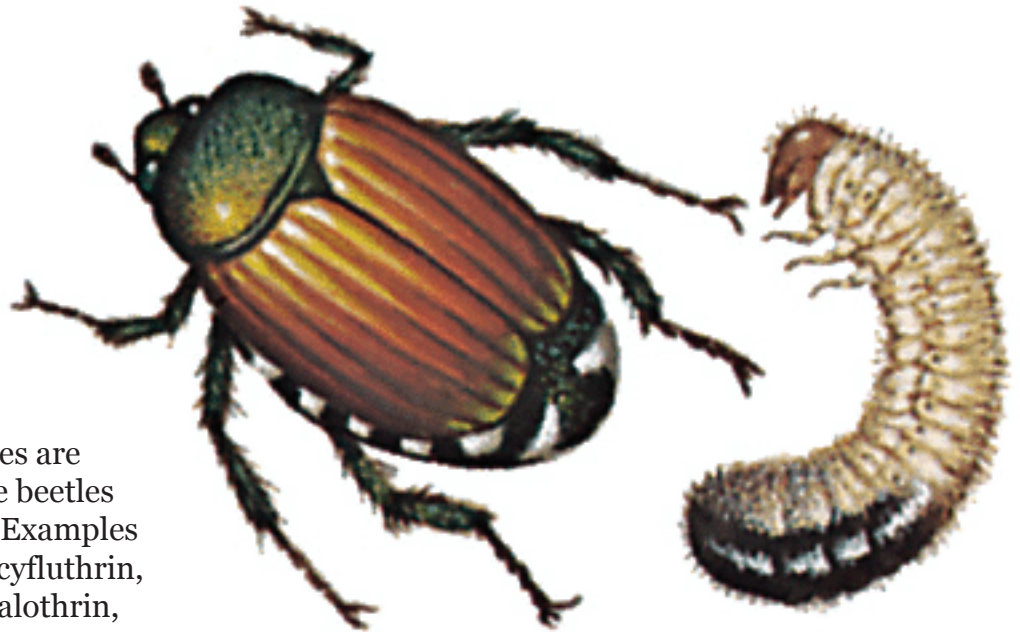
Effective control measures must be aimed at both adult and larvae. To control the grubs, apply Milky Spore to your lawn. Although it will take several seasons for the bacteria that caused the disease to build up to effective levels, in the long run it is a worthwhile step to take. Certain pesticides are also effective.

Chemical control: Many insecticides are labeled for use against adult Japanese beetles and Johnson's carries many of them. Examples include pyrethroid products, such as cyfluthrin, bifenthrin, deltamethrin, lambda cyhalothrin, esfenvalerate and permethrin. Carbaryl is also effective. The pyrethroid products generally provide 2 to 3 weeks protection of plant foliage while carbaryl protects 1 to 2 weeks. For those seeking a botanical alternative, Neem products, such as Azatrol or Neem-Away, or Pyola (pyrethrins in canola oil) provide about 3 to 4 days deterrence of Japanese beetle feeding. Insecticidal soap, extracts of garlic, hot pepper, or orange peels, & companion planting, however, are generally ineffective.

With all products, foliage and flowers should be thoroughly treated. The application may need to be repeated to prevent re-infestation during the adult flight period. Follow label directions and avoid spraying under windy conditions or when bees are foraging. Be sure the insecticide is registered for use on the plant or crop you intend to spray. If it is a food crop, note the minimum number of days that must be observed between the date of the last application and the date of harvest.

Because Japanese beetles are attracted to favored host plants from a considerable distance, controlling white grubs in the lawn will not protect landscape plants from adult feeding.

Japanese beetle traps: If using traps, be sure to place them well away from gardens and landscape plants.



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