

Japanese Beetles are One Reliable Pest

It seems like there are fewer things in life that you can count on without doubt. Unfortunately, gardeners can count on Japanese beetles to arrive in June to wreak havoc on your plants. Of course, like other pests, they have plants that they prefer over others. You know that if you have roses. Other plants that are high priority on their menu are grapes and muscadines, Japanese maples, plum, apple peach, cherry, crabapple, asparagus and Virginia creeper.

The best way to control Japanese beetles is by controlling adults and larvae. For adult beetle control, carbaryl (Sevin) does a great job. During the most active times, Sevin will need to be applied every 3-7 days. Remember too, that for fruits and vegetables, Sevin has a 3-5 day waiting period before crops are safe to harvest. Avoid using Sevin when bees are actively working those plants as Sevin is deadly to bees.

What about traps for adult beetles? I get that question often and you will find that those traps get full quickly. The use of pheromone traps is not recommended because you end up attracting more beetles than you would have had otherwise. If you get all your neighbors to use one, however, you may find that works great for you!

The larval stage of Japanese beetles can and often causes damage to turf. Heavy infestations of these grubs can destroy large areas so badly that it can be rolled up like carpet. Control measures are not called for until you have 10 grubs per square foot. The best time to control grubs are late spring or late summer (August) when they are close to the surface. They do have the ability to hide deeper in soil where pesticides do little good. Several insecticides are available that will be effective, including trichlorfon, imidacloprid (Bayer Advanced) or halofenozide (Grub-B-Gone).