



GARDEN *pests* IN PERTH

How to control Aphids

There are many different species of aphid, and they will attack just about any type of plant. This sap sucking insect likes to feed on the tender green shoots of plants and they reproduce very quickly in favourable conditions. They have soft pear-shaped 1-2mm long bodies and the adults may have wings. They can migrate from one plant to another if they are looking for a new food source.

As they suck the sap from the plant, aphids produce honeydew. This attracts ants and provides the ideal conditions for black sooty mould to appear. They can also transmit plant diseases or viruses as they move from one plant to another.

Plants affected by an aphid infestation can appear water stressed. The leaves turn yellow and drop off, flowers and leaves can curl up and wilt. These symptoms are common to many sap sucking insects, including aphids, mealy bugs and scale.

Control techniques

- Regular inspect plants for possible aphid invasion. Look for ant activity on plants and the presence of sooty mould. Small numbers of aphids are easier to control so finding them early is important.
- Strong, healthy plants are much more resistant to aphid damage. Keep plants well fed and regularly watered to prevent attack.
- Remove weeds and neglected plants which can be a target for aphids.
- Encourage beneficial insects which can provide natural control of aphids. Plant species which attract ladybirds, hoverflies, parasitic wasps, and lacewings and limit the use of pesticides which kill good insects as well as pests.
- Remove aphids from plants and squeeze them between your fingers (gloves on if you are a bit squeamish!)
- A blast with a jet of water will dislodge the aphids and limit the infestation.
- Spray with a horticultural soap, such as Natrasoap. This organic spray works by coating the insect, causing suffocation. It is safe to use on fruit and vegetables and there is no withholding period.
- Eco oil is an organic insecticide derived from plant oils. It controls a wide range of pests including aphids without harming beneficial insects. Eco Neem also controls a broad range of chewing and sucking insects. These products use different techniques to control the aphid pest.
- Imidacloprid used in Congard is a systemic and contact insecticide that combats a broad range of pests including aphids.

Prevention is always better than cure, so try and keep the garden well maintained and plants healthy. The it is much more difficult for pests to find an easy target to attack.

This is intended as general information only. Please ask one of our horticulturists for specific advice for your situation.