

JAPANESE BEETLE

A HIGHLY INVASIVE PEST



Washington
State Department of
Agriculture

**PEST
PROGRAM**

WHAT IS JAPANESE BEETLE?

Japanese beetle is a highly invasive pest of more than 300 plants, including turf, roses, grapes, and hops. They are very destructive and both challenging and expensive to control.

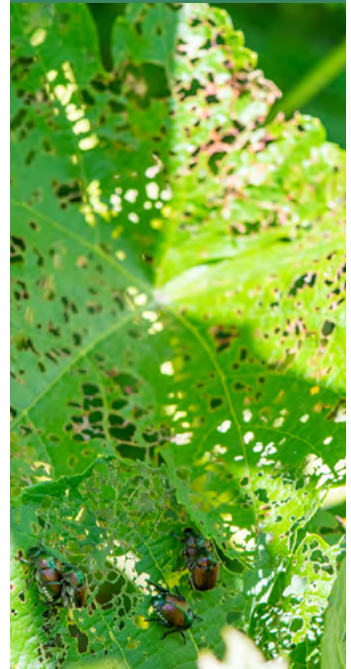
The adult beetles feed on plants, skeletonizing leaves and damaging flowers, buds, and fruit. Females lay 40 - 60 eggs which hatch into grubs (larvae). The grubs live in the soil, eating the roots of grass and other host plants. Grubs and adults can be moved from one location to another in field or yard waste, potted plants, turf/sod, soil, cut flowers, and other items.

If Japanese beetle were to establish in Washington, it would pose a serious threat to gardens, parks, lawns, vineyards, and farms by destroying vegetation. Communities and farmers would experience recurring lawn and crop damage, rising pest control costs, and long-term pesticide usage. It could become difficult and expensive to move Washington agricultural products and nursery plants and potentially limit available markets.



JAPANESE BEETLE

Japanese beetle could damage Washington State's economy, landscape, and ecological function.



IDENTIFICATION

Adult beetles are mainly seen in the summer, often first emerging in June. However, they have been reported from mid-May through mid- October.

- *About 1/3 to 1/2 inches long*
- *Metallic green head and thorax*
- *Copper wing covers*
- *Five white patches of hair on sides of abdomen*
- *Two white patches of hair on tip of abdomen*



Before they become adults, the beetles live as grubs (larvae) in the soil. Grubs favor feeding on the roots of turf grass and sometimes roots of ornamental plants.



Japanese beetle grubs look similar to other beetle grubs. Microscopes are normally needed to identify the grubs.

- *White and C-shaped*
- *Brown/tan head with visible legs*
- *About 1/8 to one inch long, depending on age*
- *Found in soil*



For decades, WSDA has monitored for Japanese beetle introductions each summer. The program sets thousands of traps around nurseries, farms, and even residential areas throughout the state. However, most traps are placed at high-risk areas where beetles are most likely to be found. These areas include airports, golf courses, housing developments, and transfer stations.

During the annual survey In 2020, WSDA trapped two Japanese beetles in Grandview and one in Sunnyside. In 2021 and 2022, WSDA trapped over 24,000 and 23,000 beetles, respectively, within the same area. WSDA is working on a multi-year project to eradicate this introduction. The project involves trapping, larvacide treatment, quarantine, and community involvement.

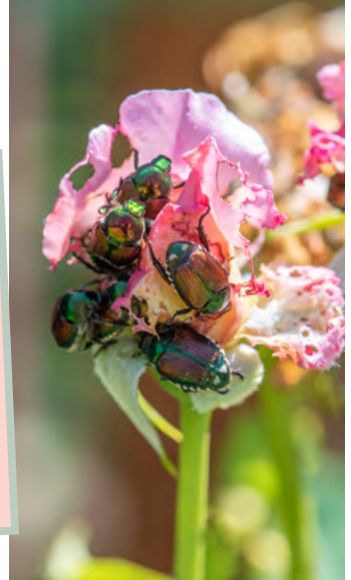
REPORT JAPANESE BEETLE

If you have seen Japanese beetle in Washington State, please report it. Note the location and include a picture.

- Report online at agr.wa.gov/beetles
- Email PestProgram@agr.wa.gov
- Call 1-800-443-6684

HISTORY

Japanese beetle was first found in the United States in 1916 near Riverton, New Jersey. Since then, Japanese beetles have spread throughout all or part of 36 states in the Midwest, South, and Eastern U.S.



BEETLE TRAPPING

Trapping helps WSDA find and monitor Japanese beetles. The traps provide critical information as to whether beetles are present in an area and, if so, whether the number of beetles is increasing or decreasing.

Please do not disturb the traps.

TRAPPING

WSDA sets traps in the spring. The traps are baited with lures that have the scent of flowers and beetle pheromones, which attracts the beetles. The beetles are caught in the trap and can no longer lay eggs in the ground. The traps are checked and emptied periodically and are removed in the fall.



PUBLIC TRAPPING

If Japanese beetles have been found in your area, you can trap beetles yourself. Trapping will catch adult beetles, which can help lower their population. It is another way to control this pest.

A variety of traps are available for purchase online or at local home and garden stores. Traps vary in design, so follow the instructions provided.



SETTING THE TRAP

You can set traps from mid-May through mid-October when adult beetles are active. When selecting a trap site, be sure it is on your own property and find a spot away from roses and vegetable gardens. Make sure to check your trap regularly throughout the season and empty it as needed.

COLLECTING BEETLES

Beetles are safe to touch as they do not sting or bite. You can pick beetles off vegetation and drop them in a bowl of soapy water. It is best to do this in the morning or evening when beetles are less active. Japanese beetles tend to “drop” when they are disturbed, so holding a container under the beetles when you collect them will prevent them from falling and escaping.

REPORT COLLECTIONS AND TRAP CATCHES

You can take a photo and report your trap catches or hand collected beetles by using the online reporting form (go to agr.wa.gov/beetles and click on “Report Japanese beetle” in the top menu.)

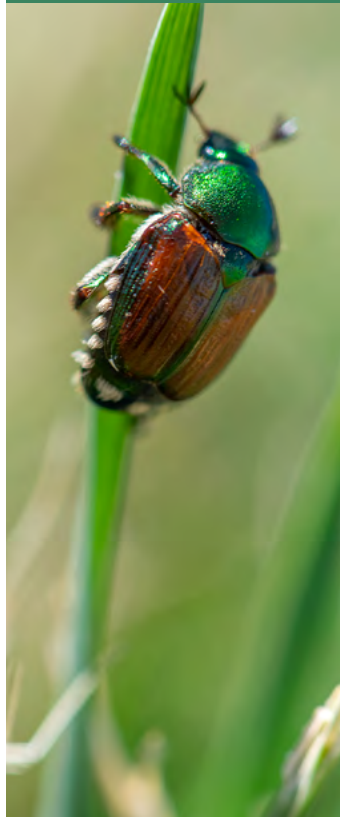
If you trap beetles in a quarantine area, there may be local community drop-offs. Visit WSDA’s website at agr.wa.gov/beetles and click on “Residents” and then “Public trapping” for current drop-off site information.



BEETLE TREATMENT

WSDA treats areas infested with Japanese beetle.

WSDA's goal is to eradicate this pest.



With support and partnership of community members, landowners, and growers, Washington has a better chance of eliminating this pest. This is a multi-year project; it will take several years of treatments and trapping to eradicate the beetles.

TREATMENTS

To eradicate this pest, WSDA applies a “reduced risk” larvicide which is not considered to be a health risk for humans, pets, wildlife, and other beneficial insects (including bees) when applied according to label directions. It is approved for grass on athletic fields, parks, playgrounds, and lawns, as well as flower beds and bushes.

Beetle treatments begin in the spring and may require property owner consent. Widespread participation is necessary for success.

PRIVATE TREATMENT OPTIONS

WSDA treats during the grub stage. You can further protect your yard by treating during the summer for adults if you find the beetles on your property. Contact your county Washington State University Extension office for recommendations.



QUARANTINES

A quarantine is a designated area where WSDA restricts the movement of certain materials. The goal is to protect resources outside of the infested area by preventing the spread of Japanese beetle.

Quarantines limit the movement of items unless they meet certain conditions, such as being treated to kill any possible beetles. Quarantined items can include plants, soil, yard waste, and other products.

As part of the quarantine process, small businesses are surveyed to see how the quarantine would impact their business. WSDA then works with these businesses to mitigate economic loss while still preventing the spread of Japanese beetle.

Failure to comply with the quarantine could spread the beetles to new locations. Other states and countries could refuse or put expensive quarantine restrictions for Washington-grown products. Limiting the movement of nursery and other agricultural products could significantly impact local economies.



BEETLE QUARANTINE

USDA maintains a national Japanese Beetle Quarantine to prevent the spread of this beetle from the Eastern US to uninfested Western states.

Since being found in Washington, WSDA has also established a quarantine within the state.



PREVENT THE SPREAD

Community members, the agriculture industry, and WSDA must work together to eradicate and prevent the spread of Japanese beetle.

If you transport plants or materials with Japanese beetles, you could be responsible for spreading them to new areas. The pest can travel in yard debris, soil, potted plants, and on other vegetation.

Plants, soil, and yard waste should be kept inside a quarantine area. WSDA establishes yard waste drop-off sites within quarantined areas to dispose of green waste. You can also compost on-site.

HOW YOU CAN HELP

Without everyone's participation, we won't be able to get rid of Japanese beetle. Here's how you can help get rid of this pest:

- Allow WSDA trappers to place traps on your property when needed.
- Give permission to treat your property when needed, and encourage your friends and neighbors to do the same.
- Educate yourself and your neighbors about Japanese beetle and the threat it poses to our state.
- Learn more about the Japanese beetle project on WSDA's website at agr.wa.gov/beetles.



Keep plants, soil, and yard waste in the quarantine area

PLANTS



SOIL



WASTE



Don't spread Japanese beetle



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Do you need this publication in an alternate format?
Contact the WSDA Receptionist at (360) 902-1976 or TTY Relay (800) 833-6388.

