

“Solutions for a happier lawn and garden”



APHIDS, THE NEW SUPER VILLAIN?! **(Aphid control)**

Are aphids the new super villain? They have some astounding traits that could qualify them as the super villains or superheroes (depends on your perspective) of the insect world. I guess humans would place them in the super villain category because of all the destruction they cause to our indoor and outdoor plants.

Aphid eggs can overwinter even in harsh climates. In the spring, the female aphid is basically born pregnant. Talk about reproductive ability! One female aphid can have 12 babies a day without any help from her male counterpart. Maybe the female is the superhero! Aphids have many overlapping generations in one season and these villains love to spend time together. If you go out in the garden now, you may see these villainous clusters everywhere. In my own garden, I have spied them lurking on my sedum, mock orange, spirea, sand cherry, viburnum, honeysuckle, roses and so many more. In my house, they have enjoyed sucking on the buds of my overwintered hibiscus. Shame on them, preying on the new, innocent, tender, spring growth of our sweet plants. Aphids love all the tender shoots and they love to eat together in a big, aphid feast. Another incredible, super villain trait that aphids possess is the ability to sprout wings as needed. Aphids do not normally have wings but will grow them if the feeding spot they are at becomes too crowded and food becomes scarce. They will sprout wings to find more food. Pretty amazing.

Not only can they reproduce without a mate, have 12 babies a day, sprout wings when needed, but they also come in an assortment of colors...green, black, brown, orange, yellow, gray, white, pink, and colorless. Aphids tend to match the plant they eat, providing them with much needed camouflage from hungry predators. Pretty cool!

Aphids are not impervious super villains. They have their weak spots too. They are very soft bodied insects so many insects and insect controls can kill them easily. They are also very slow. This makes them easy targets. The most natural controls for aphids are water, Lady Bugs, and Lace Wings. We sell beneficial Lady Bugs and Lace Wings right in the store. Come down to Van Wilgen's and adopt some. One Lady Bug can eat up to 100 aphids per day. What great garden helpers. Knocking the aphids off the plant with water does not eliminate them but it suppresses their immediate damage. Some Organic products that work very well on Aphids are Neem Oil, Horticultural Oil, and Insecticidal Soap. They are easy to use and easy on the environment.





Aphid damage is criminal. Aphids cause plants to twist, curl, stunt, and turn yellow. These little offenders can also spread viruses to our plants with each suck they take out of a leaf or stem. If the problem is severe, be proactive and use a systemic product like Bayer All-in-One Rose & Flower Care. Applied to the soil, it gets absorbed through the plant and as soon as Aphids go to eat, they ingest the product into their system and meet their demise. This product along with Bayer Dual Action Rose & Flower Insect Killer is kryptonite to Aphids.

The bottom line is that your plants will most likely survive the destruction from these super villains but let's thwart their unwanted behavior by keeping our plants strong with a slow release fertilizer such as, Van Wilgen's All Purpose Slow Release Plant Food. Using high Nitrogen, quick release fertilizers are not the best choice when Aphids are in abundance. It is also important to keep these unwanted corrupts under control with the recommended pest control products.

Have no fear, the super hero, VanWilgen's Garden Center is here! We can help you solve all your pest control problems and we don't even need to wear a cape to do it!

Come see us at Van Wilgen's. We would love to help.

Thanks a bunch...Stacey



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