

Great Gardens in Small Spaces

Washington County Master Gardener™ Association

What To Do About Creatures in the Garden

Seeing insects, spiders, and slugs in the garden often raises alarm. However, 97% of all the insects on earth are valuable garden helpers. These beneficial insects pollinate plants, break down plant debris, and harm insects and mites that cause problems in the garden. Some insects, spiders, and slugs may be simply a nuisance. Other insects are pests, damaging fruits, vegetables, and other plants. Pesticides will kill beneficial insects as well as pests and nuisance insects. When you see an insect, do the following before you reach for a pesticide:

1. Identify the creature – if you are unsure, ask a Master Gardener
2. Determine if the creature is a
 - Helper — pollinators; feeds on insect pests —> Encourage
 - Nuisance — in the house, near outside living areas, cosmetic or minimal plant damage —> Tolerate
 - Pest— damages plants, vegetables —> Eradicate

The difference between a nuisance and a pest is the amount of damage and the plant involved.

Below are some common insects found in the garden.

| Creature | | What do they do? | What should we do? |
|---|----------|---|--|
|  <p>Lady Beetle (ladybug) and Lady Beetle larva</p> | <p>●</p> | <p>Feed on soft-bodied insect pests like mealybugs, aphids, whiteflies, and spider mites</p> | <p>Grow flowers and flowering shrubs that attract lady beetles and their larvae. Examples: angelica, yarrow, sweet alyssum, marigold, Queen Anne's lace, dill, cilantro</p> <p>Do not buy ladybugs. Most will fly away from your garden shortly after being released.</p> <p>Avoid or limit use of pesticides</p> <p><i>Lady Beetles</i> https://bit.ly/ladybeetles</p> |
|  <p>Green Lacewing</p> | <p>●</p> | <p>Attack garden pests like aphids, leafhoppers, plant bugs (immature), spider mites, thrips.</p> | <p>Grow plants that attract lacewings such as herbs like cilantro, dill, parsley and flowers like cosmos, sunflower, and sweet alyssum</p> <p>Consider purchasing green lacewing eggs or larvae</p> <p>Avoid or limit use of pesticides</p> |

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|  <p>Oregon Swallowtail butterfly</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Pollinate ornamental plants and vegetables. | <p>Grow flowers that attract butterflies such as milkweed, sunflowers, zinnia</p> <p><i>12 Plants to Entice Pollinators to Your Garden:</i> https://bit.ly/12Pollinators</p> |
|  <p>Bee on lavender</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Pollinate flowers and crops ● Some bees may sting - they are generally docile unless they are provoked <p style="text-align: center;">*If you think you see a wasp or hornet nest, call a professional for removal.</p> | <p>Do not purchase plants or flowers that have been treated with neonicotinoids – check the plant label</p> <p><i>Neonicotinoids in Your Garden</i> https://bit.ly/gardenneonics</p> |
|  <p>Grass spider</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Help in the garden by preying on insects. Rarely bite ● Most Oregon spiders are not harmful – black widow spiders are uncommon in western Oregon, but there are several lookalikes | <p>Ignore spiders in the garden</p> <p>To keep spiders out of house, sweep around doors and windows</p> <p><i>Common Garden Spiders</i> https://bit.ly/GardenSpiders</p> <p><i>Spiders</i> https://bit.ly/aboutspiders</p> |
|  <p>Slug</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Eat the leaves on ornamental plants and vegetables ● | <p>Remove shelter, food, and moisture before using bait or instead of using bait. Choose plants that are not attractive to slugs.</p> <p><i>“Los caracoles y las babosas”</i> https://bit.ly/Caracolesybabosas</p> <p><i>“Cómo Controlar a las Babosas en su Jardín”</i> https://bit.ly/Babosas</p> |
|  <p>Cabbage Butterfly</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Lay eggs on cabbage leaves which hatch into larvae that eat cabbages and other members of the Cole family ● | <p>Hand-pick and destroy any caterpillars found on leaves or any pupae</p> <p>Remove debris which may shelter pupae</p> <p>Avoid use of broad-spectrum pesticides</p> <p>Contact Master Gardeners for information on pesticides</p> |

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|  <p>Image: Arbor Day Foundation</p> <p>Whiteflies</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● ● | <p>Whiteflies are tiny, sap-sucking insects that may become abundant in vegetable and ornamental plantings, especially during warm weather. They excrete sticky honeydew and cause yellowing or death of leaves.</p> | <p>Prevent whitefly problems using reflective mulches, reducing dusty conditions, choosing less susceptible plants, and avoiding pesticides that kill whitefly natural enemies.</p> <p><i>Whiteflies</i> https://bit.ly/Whiteflies</p> |
|  <p>Aphids</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● ● | <p>Aphids are small, pear-shaped insects that feed on plant sap and excrete sugary honeydew.</p> <p>Attract beneficial insects</p> | <p>Low to moderate numbers of aphids usually aren't damaging to gardens or landscape trees.</p> <p>Use nonchemical methods first to manage aphid populations.</p> <p>Prune infested leaves and stems.</p> <p>Knock aphid populations off plants by shaking the plant or spraying it with a strong stream of water.</p> <p><i>Aphids</i> https://bit.ly/Aphids1</p> |
|  <p>Image: Oregon State University Extension</p> <p>Spotted Wing Drosophila (SWD)</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● | <p>Invasive pest that damages fruits such as blueberry, strawberry and is a danger to crops</p> | <p>Look for damage on fruits</p> <p>Contact Master Gardeners™ for help on identifying "<i>Pest Alert: Spotted Wing Drosophila</i>"</p> <p>https://bit.ly/SWDrosophila</p> |
|  <p>Image: Arbor Day Foundation</p> <p>Japanese Beetle</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● | <p>Invasive pest that damages plants and is a danger to crops</p> | <p>Contact Master Gardeners™ for help on identifying "<i>2020 Japanese Beetle Alerta de Cuarentena por Plaga de Insectos</i>"</p> <p>https://bit.ly/JapaneseBeetleProj</p> |

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|  <p>Image: Oregon State University</p> <p>Brown Marmorated Stinkbug (BMSB)</p> | <p>●</p> <p>Invasive pest that damages fruits and vegetables, sometimes causing complete crop destruction.</p> <p>May overwinter in homes</p> | <p>Most garden insecticides are not very effective against stink bugs, especially adults.</p> <p>Destroy any found in the garden by hand picking.</p> <p>For large populations, several methods may be needed: row covers, hand picking, pheromone traps, trap crops, and natural enemies such as the green lacewing – see above.</p> <p>Seal openings where insects can gain access, such as cracks around windows, doors, screens, utility pipes, window air conditioners, vents, siding, and under fascia boards.</p> <p><i>Brown Marmorated StinkBug</i> https://bit.ly/brownmarmorated <i>Stink Bugs of Oregon</i> https://bit.ly/stinkbugsoregon</p> | | |

Resources –

- Master Gardeners™ <https://bit.ly/MetroMG>
- *Natural Enemies of Plant Pests*: <https://bit.ly/Naturalenemies> (Poster)
- *Insect Pests* <https://bit.ly/insectpest>
- Oregon State Beekeepers Association – honey bee swarm: <https://orsba.org/swarm-call/>