

Aphids

An Insect That Damages Leaves and Produces Honeydew

Aphids are one of the most common insects found on trees and shrubs. There are over 400 species of aphids that feed on numerous hosts. Aphids use their piercing-sucking mouthparts to extract sap from the tender new growth of plants. Aphids excrete a sticky substance called honeydew that can be a nuisance when it gets on sidewalks, vehicles and other structures.

Infested Trees and Shrubs Can Be Readily Treated

Most shrubs and trees are susceptible to aphids and can be treated with a systemic or topical insecticide. The insect rarely kills its host but can cause unsightly leaf deformation and reduce overall health.

What To Look For

- Curled, stunted, wilted, or discolored leaves.
- Plant sap excreted as honeydew making the plant sticky.
- A black fungus called sooty mold may be growing on the honeydew.
- Spots of sap on cars, sidewalks, houses, etc.

Treatment and Prevention

- Plant flowers to provide nectar for lady beetles, green lacewings, hover flies, parasitic wasps, and other aphid predators and parasites for natural control.
- Do not treat unless natural sources of control are not working.
- Aphids can be controlled by both systemic and topical insecticides.
- Insecticidal soap sprays are a "green" option for aphid control.
- Treatment should occur when it becomes an aesthetic nuisance to the landscape or reduces the overall health of the tree.



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Sticky honeydew from aphids.

