



Question of the Week

Q: I've noticed a brown beetle coming out of the ground around the base of my plants. It's chestnut brown, nearly ½ inch long and it looks like a coffee bean. Can you please tell what this beetle is, and if it is destructive in the garden?

A: The Asiatic garden beetle fits your description. Chestnut brown, often with an iridescent, velvety sheen, the adult beetles are 5/16- to 3/8-inch long and broadly wedge-shaped. Adult beetles may be active from late June to the end of October, but do the most damage from mid-July to mid-August. The beetles hide in the ground during the day, emerging at dusk to feed off host plants in your garden. Since adult beetles are nocturnal, you seldom see them on the plants they damage.

The Asiatic garden beetle attacks more than 100 plants, feeding on both foliage and blossoms, and sometimes completely destroying a plant. Favored hosts include butterfly bush, rose, dahlia, aster and chrysanthemum. Products containing carbaryl, malathion, or pyrethrins will kill adult Asiatic garden beetles feeding on plant foliage, but during seasons when these beetles are abundant, even several applications may not result in total control. Insecticides are most effective when small-stage grubs are the target. For AGBs, the small first instar grubs are present July through early August. Applying an insecticide at this time, followed by sufficient irrigation to move the insecticide to the grubs, usually yields satisfactory results. Always apply any pesticide according to label directions.

Got questions? UNH Cooperative Extension's Family, Home & Garden Education Center Info Line offers practical help finding answers for your lawn and garden questions. Call toll free at 1-877-398-4769, M-F, 9:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m., or Wednesdays, 5:00 p.m.-7:30 p.m. You can also email us at answers@unh.edu

The University of New Hampshire Cooperative Extension programs and policies are consistent with pertinent Federal and State laws and regulations on non-discrimination regarding race, color, religion, gender, age, national origin, sexual orientation, disability, veteran status, or marital status. UNH, U.S. Dept. of Agriculture, and New Hampshire counties cooperating.