



Life in the Garden

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Do You Love Your Lawn?

If you have a lawn and live in the Lower Mainland there is a new introduced pest you should become aware of. The **European Chafer Beetle** has hit New Westminster and Central and West Burnaby and may soon be coming to your neighborhood.

What is the fuss? Well the very hungry grub stage of this beetle is very destructive to turf. During the summer through to spring the grubs feed on the roots of grasses chewing them off and killing the grass plants. Yellow patches on the lawn are usually visible by fall. But that is only the initial stage of the damage. The next stage of damage occurs in the fall and winter from animals, especially skunks, raccoons and birds digging up the grass to dine



on these tasty grub snacks. Eventually patches in the lawn are completely destroyed.

What can be done?

There are a few things that can be done to defend your lawn against the chafer. A healthy lawn, as is a healthy plant, is its own best defense. Do not over fertilize and burn you lawn, stressing it out and making it more susceptible to any pest infestation. Follow these guidelines put out by the City of New Westminster:

HEALTHY LAWN TIPS

FEED lawns with compost and leave grass clippings where they fall for nutrient recycling.



Damage cause by rodents seeking grubs

AERATE in the spring and fall to help oxygen, water and nutrients reach the roots.

MOW HIGH to a height of 7 cm or 3 inches to promote vigorous growth, prevent weeds and discourage insect pests. Always use a sharp mower blade and mow when the grass is dry

WATER DEEPLY to promote deep roots growth. Too much water starves the soil of oxygen and invites disease. Most lawns only need

WATERING ONCE PER WEEK to a depth of 2.5 cm or about one inch.

OVERSEED thinned areas or choose alternative ground covers in difficult spots.

REPLACE grass with mulch or paving stones in heavy traffic areas.

CHECK the lawn regularly to detect pests and other problems early.

DISCOVER that healthy lawns are less susceptible to pest problems.

ENJOY! A healthy lawn is an ideal place to relax and play.

Any good bugs to help fight off the grubs?

Over the last few years nematode trials have been done on the European Chafer in New Westminster. Specific variables were studied due to our temperate climate and the nature of the pest.

The results have been very promising and thus, THE BUGLADY has made available a European Chafer product designed specifically with the findings of the study in mind. The result is **GRUB THUGS... a Safer Chafer Solution** for your lawn. Nematodes are completely harmless to you, your children and pets so you don't have to be concerned by residual chemistry. Nematodes need to be applied when the Chafer adult lays eggs

in July. You want the **Grub Thugs** nematode (tiny microscopic worms), to battle it out when the grubs are just hatching out and are most susceptible to the nematodes. Application of nematodes is as easy as watering in. The only other requirement is to keep your lawn moist after application. Keeping in mind at this time of year there are usually watering restrictions on your garden, but the soil only needs to remain moist, not soaking!

The great thing about nematodes is that if you start a yearly application program for you lawn, garden and veggie bed you will be building up nature's natural defenders, protecting your garden without worrying about negative effects to the environment. It is about time we start thinking about how we can help nature fight back so that we can **Start Living in our gardens!**

Wasps, Wasps Everywhere!

"What's up with the wasps anyway" is the most common response I have when people discover what **The Bug Lady®** is all about.



Wasps are one of the best predators of

insects we have working for us naturally. Wasps will feed on aphids, caterpillars, flies and other tasty pests. Their population in a given season is directly related to the amount of food or host insects are available. In British Columbia and elsewhere in Canada, we have had conditions which favour an abundance of aphids. Hot, dry environments and stressed plants cause aphids to thrive thus provide a healthy source of food for the Yellow Jackets. Though these creatures may be supporting the system of natural biological control they can also be a pest too. At the picnic table, on the beach or around children who may be allergic wasps can be a problem. We will never be able to manage the entire wasp population but we can reduce the numbers in the areas that most matter to us. Using commercial traps or making your own at home works great if you use the right bait to attract the wasps in. Bacon, fruit and fish are amongst the top 3 lures. Place the traps around the areas you want to protect. The wasps will come to the lure and not your dinner plate.

Garden Projects

- Check plants susceptible to aphids like your Plums, Pansies, Roses, Iris, Calendula, Lupine and Apple Trees. Use ladybugs for control if the pests are found.

- Prop strawberry fruit up with dry straw to help eliminate disease and access by sow bugs

- Place copper collars around slug susceptible plants to protect your beauties.



- Check all your trees for emerging tent caterpillars. Prune off and burn the nests .

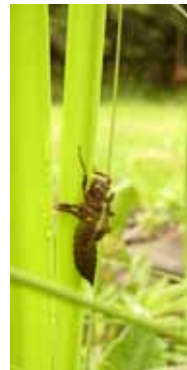


Baby tent caterpillars
Mid May

- Check concrete patios, the house foundation and wood piles for developing ant nests. Disturb these nests with a shovel or by pouring boiling water over the nest. This will encourage the queen to move the nest and stop being such a pest.

What's going on in The Bug Lady's Garden?

At this time of year the garden is a buzz with activity. One of the sure signs that summer is on its way is the emergence of **dragonflies** from the depths of the ponds. This usually coincides with the flowering of our lilac and buds on the Flag Iris.



Digging in the soil we are finding that the first generation of **cutworm** is in the pupa stage. This corresponds to the flowering of Cammisis, Spurge and Lady's Mantle.



The **lilac leaf miner** has returned full force on one of our most favourite shrubs. Picking the leaves off to burn on a daily basis provides us with the only management.



What's going on in your garden? Give us some feedback as to what is blooming in your neck of the woods.


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Good Riddance to Pesticides

Making the change to Earth friendly gardening practices requires a fresh start to pest control. However, getting rid of the poisonous pesticides requires responsible disposal. Synthetic compounds will harm our watersheds and ground water as the properties that make pesticides work are the properties that kill. These properties include high water solubility, slow absorption (the ability of a pesticide to remain in the soil), and high persistence (how long it takes for the chemical to degrade).

Getting rid of the pesticide bottles left lingering in the back corner of the garage is as easy as driving to a Product Care ["Paint Plus" Depot](#) location available to all BC residents. Product Care is a non-government response to stewardship regulations demanded of "brand owners". There is no charge to drop off leftovers that are accepted by the program. To find the Depot close to you check out <http://www.productcare.org>.

Consumer products accepted by Product Care must have both the poisonous (skull & cross bones)

symbol  and Pest Control Product (PCP) number. Maximum container size is 10 Litres.