

Dealing with Cape Cod's Most Wanted Pests ~ Top Ten

A Hyannis Country Garden Seminar

1. **Winter moth** (most problematic on maples, fruit trees, birch, oaks and roses. Spinosad to the rescue!)
2. **Scale** (most often seen on Holly and Yews, but can be on other plants too. Look for "sooty mold" – grey coating on top of leaves or even on cars, boats etc. This is your sign that underneath the leaves or on the stems you have scale. Horticultural oil)
3. **Whitefly** (usually a problem on Japanese Holly bushes – look for sooty mold as above, and tiny white insects when you shake the shrubs. Note: many people think that their Japanese holly bushes are boxwood since they look similar. Horticultural oil)
4. **Lacebug** (watch for yellow stippling on the leaves of Rhododendrons, Azaleas and Pieris aka Andromeda. Underside of leaves will look dirty. Horticultural oil)
5. **Grubs** (Use the square foot test – if you can roll up a square foot of turf and only find fewer than 8 grubs you don't really have a problem. You'll naturally encounter a few when you dig in your gardens. Let all gardens and turf dry out between waterings because Japanese and Asiatic garden beetles like to lay their eggs in damp earth.)
6. **Earwigs** (usually eat new foliage on dahlias and butterfly bush. Dust with diatomaceous earth when the plants are young – not a problem later in the season.)
7. **Red Leaf Lily Beetle** (Beetle is red with black head – larvae look like clumps of mud. Spinosad works on larvae – handpick adults.)
8. **Hemlock Woolly Adelgid** (cottony looking insects on hemlocks only – Horticultural oil in spring and fall)
9. **Slugs** (most active in spring when things are damp – diatomaceous earth, Sluggo, etc.)
10. **Turpentine Borer** (biggest problem for native pitch pine trees – the borer carries bluestain fungus, *Leptographium* spp, and this kills the trees.)

Others: Ticks, Rhododendron root weevil, Nantucket Pine Tip moth

Insect pests in Vegetable Gardens

NOTE: All veggie garden insect pests are better controlled if the garden is cleaned out in the fall and plant debris composted far away from the garden. Turning the soil in the late fall also helps as the pupae that over-winter in the soil are then frozen or eaten by birds.

Colorado Potato beetle (worst on potatoes, some on tomatoes. Spinosad)

Squash Vine Borer (layer of wood ash on the ground when plants are small, continue to dust stems with wood ash as the plants grow. Alternative: inspect plants every four days, looking for a hole with greenish frass -caterpillar poop- coming out of it. When you see that, slit the vine until you find the borer and remove it. Bury that part of the vine shallowly and cover with some compost so that it stays moist and makes more roots. Farmer cure from 1800's: every 4 or 5 days wipe vines on all sides with cloth to remove the tiny eggs.)

Tomato Hornworm (If big sections of your tomato plants start to disappear, look for what appears to be chunks of black pepper below the damage. This is frass - caterpillar poop. Look carefully for the hornworm – fat and green – and remove. Squash it or leave on lawn for the crows to find.)

Cutworm (Larvae in the soil that chew through young stems. It's not a common problem here on the Cape, but if you've had it in the past wrap stems of young plants with a small piece of newspaper or slip a 3" tall paper or cardboard tube over the plants and bury the bottom inch in the soil.)

Squash Bug (Adult lays eggs on underside of squash and cucumber leaves – look for clusters of orange-ish color eggs and destroy them. *Squash* the eggs....get it?)

Cucumber beetle (striped beetles feed on cucumbers, melons, and squash spread the cucumber wilt bacteria and viruses into the plants. Hang yellow sticky traps near but not next to these plants and "bait" with bay leaf, or small cloth bag of cinnamon, allspice or cloves.)