

Japanese Beetle in Mesa County

Japanese beetle (*Popillia japonica*) was discovered in Grand Junction in 2022. Mesa County declared Japanese beetle a public nuisance in March 2023.

Mesa County and the City of Grand Junction have embarked on a program to eradicate the beetle from Mesa County.

This handout is intended to help property owners participate in eradication efforts.

Japanese beetle is an exotic invasive insect that feeds on over 300 plants, including turfgrass. Both the immature form (a grub) and the adult (a beetle) feed on plants and cause damage.

Adult beetles feed on leaves and fruit of hundreds of species, including fruit trees, ornamental and shade trees, vines, and field and vegetable crops. Larvae feed on the roots of irrigated turf and can be one of the many causes of brown spots in a lawn.

The goal of activities related to Japanese beetles is to eradicate Japanese beetles from Mesa County.

How you can help:

Identification

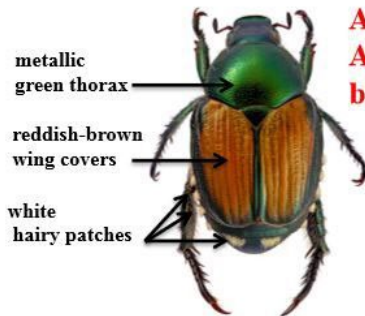
If you suspect you have Japanese beetle, adults or larvae, please bring a sample to the CSU Extension office located within the Mesa County Fairgrounds, 2775 US 50, Grand Junction; 970-244-1834. Place insects in a hard sided container. CSU Extension staff will identify the sample for you.

Adult beetles

Image: Oregon Department of Agriculture

Japanese Beetle

A beetle MUST have ALL these characters AND be the right size to be a Japanese beetle!



Japanese beetle size compared to a penny



Immature (larvae)



Immature Japanese beetles (larvae) are white grubs that often form a “C-shape.” There are lots of larvae that look like this, including various native beetle larvae. It is difficult to tell them apart. Professionals identify grubs like Japanese beetle by looking at the patterns of hair on the hind part of the abdomen.

David Cappaert, Bugwood.org



Actual size

What To Do

If you live in Mesa County

Mesa County and CSU Extension Tri-River Area recommend treating irrigated turf to kill grubs. This is especially important if you live near the area where beetles have already been detected. It is strongly recommended that those within 5-6 miles of this area treat any irrigated turfgrass.

If you live in Grand Junction in the delineated Japanese beetle area

Mesa County will pay to treat your lawn if you live in or near the hot zone in 2023 to help eradicate the beetle. Find out more information on treatments at the Mesa County Noxious Weed and Pest website by clicking [here](#).

Treatment Recommendations

Mesa County and CSU Extension Tri-River Area are recommending insecticides with the active ingredient chlorantraniliprole to manage larvae of Japanese beetle in turfgrass. Insecticides with this active ingredient have long persistence and very low hazard to humans, pets, and bees.

- **Scotts® GrubEx®** is available for purchase without a pesticide license and may be used on residential lawns once per year.
- **Acelepryn** is a product available only to licensed pesticide applicators.

FOLLOW ALL LABEL INSTRUCTIONS.

- ❖ Mow grass immediately before treating.
- ❖ Apply to dry lawn.
- ❖ Aerating lawns prior will not impact treatment negatively, and it may even help the chemical reach the root zone.
- ❖ Irrigate turf immediately after application to move the product into the soil. Do not over-irrigate. [Lawn watering guide](#).

FAQs on Treatment

How will treatment affect pollinators?

In turfgrass sites that are ONLY grass, there are no flowers that would attract pollinators. In these situations there is essentially no hazard to pollinators no matter what insecticide is used for grub control. However, potential problems can occur if there are flowering plants (dandelions, white clover, etc.) that are attractive to and visited by bees.

In lawn areas where pollinator attractive flowering plants are present, the risk from an insecticide application *can be greatly reduced* if the lawn is mowed before application, removing the blossoms. No insecticides should ever be applied to any plants that are flowering and attracting pollinating insects.

The type of insecticide being applied also greatly affects the potential risk to pollinators. Chlorantraniliprole, *Bacillus thuringiensis* var. *galleriae*, and insect parasitic nematodes are grub treatments that have very little, if any, hazard to pollinators when applied to turfgrass. (Adapted from Whitney Cranshaw)

For detailed information about Japanese beetle and treatment, please see the [CSU Extension factsheet on Japanese Beetles 5.601](#).



What about “drying down” my lawn to kill grubs?

Withholding water from turfgrass is an option, but is not recommended. The effect will be limited if we receive rainfall. It also kills the turf. If you have trees in your yard, they will continue to need water out to their dripline, which will limit the areas you can “dry down.”

What about using Milky Spore?

Milky Spore is not effective in Colorado. Our climate is too dry.

Can I trap beetles as a non-chemical management option?

No. Traps are effective for monitoring, but are not an effective tool to reduce numbers of Japanese beetles.

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