

Raspberry pests

GWF221
Updated January 2009

Raspberry-beetle grubs feed on the fruit; cane midge causes damage, letting in diseases.

Q What is raspberry beetle?

A An inconspicuous beetle (*Byturus tomentosus*) with a grub that feeds on raspberries and other cane fruit.

Q How do I recognise it?

A The adult beetle is pale brown, around 4mm long and covered in short hairs. The grubs reach 8mm long, have a creamy-white body with pale-brown marks on the back, a brown head and three pairs of legs.

Q Tell me more about raspberry beetles.

A The adult beetles emerge from the soil from April to June and are good fliers. They feed on the flowers of the rose family, starting with apple, pear and hawthorn, then move on to soft fruit to lay their eggs in the flowers. The grubs first feed on the outside of the fruit, then move into the central plug. Once fully grown, the grubs leave the ripe fruit, drop to the ground and pupate in the soil.

Q How serious is the damage?

A If present in large numbers, the adults can do significant damage to the flowers, with many fruits being malformed or

not developing at all. However, this does not happen very often; the larvae are far more of a problem as the immature grubs spoil the fruit. They produce characteristic dried-out and blackened areas near the plug in the centre where they have eaten some of the developing drupelets - the tiny segments which make up this type of fruit.

Q How do I control it?

A If you see grubs on the surface of the berries they can be sprayed with a contact insecticide based on pyrethrum or rotenone. Ready-to-use pyrethrum-based sprays are convenient to use.

Q What if I don't want to spray?

A Most grubs will have left the fruit by the time it is ready to pick, or will be removed with the plug. The others should be removed, along with any damaged areas, as the fruit is prepared.

Q What is cane midge?

A A small, reddish-brown fly. It is the larvae that feed on the canes.

Q How do I recognise it?

A In itself, cane midge does not do a great deal of harm but, by damaging the canes, it lets in

diseases. The combination of cane blight, spur blight and a third fungus (*Fusarium culmorum*) results in young shoots dying back and is known as midge blight. An outbreak of this may be the first indication of cane-midge infestation. If you examine the canes you will see areas of split and damaged bark with black or brown tissue underneath. In mid-summer you may also see the grubs under the bark - they are pink, up to 4mm long, and there can be hundreds per cane. For more information on disease problems, ask for GWF222 Raspberry cane diseases.

Q Tell me more about it.

A The cane midges (*Resseliella theobaldi*) emerge from pupae in May and June and lay their eggs in splits in the bark of young raspberry canes when they are 20-30cm high. They do not attack mature canes. The larvae feed under the bark for two or three weeks, then drop to the soil to pupate. There are three generations in a typical year in southern England, and two further north. They overwinter in the soil either as pupae or as dormant larvae. 'Glen Clova', 'Glen Moy', 'Malling Jewel' and 'Malling Promise' are particularly susceptible to cane-midge damage, as the bark of their

young canes tends to split naturally at the right time of year for egg-laying.

Q How do I control it?

A There is no chemical treatment approved for cane midge. Even if the midges were controlled, the damage would encourage fungal problems, so badly infested canes are best cut out and burned.

What else does *Which?* Gardening offer?

Which? Gardening is the only truly independent gardening magazine. We don't accept advertising, free product samples from manufacturers or free plants from nurseries. This gives us the freedom we need to report the facts about the products, plants and companies we put to the test.

In each issue you'll find:

- ❖ News stories to keep you up to date with developments in gardening and horticulture
- ❖ Our thoroughly researched testing reports which reveal the Best Buy tools, chemicals and equipment
- ❖ Details of the best new plants and products
- ❖ Plant trials which highlight the best value plants for your garden
- ❖ Design ideas to inspire you
- ❖ Plant profiles packed with detailed information about popular plants
- ❖ New growing techniques to save you time, money and effort
- ❖ Membership benefits - including offers, competitions, give-aways and much more.

Nationwide trials

No-one works harder than *Which? Gardening* to find the best plants, products and techniques for your garden. We carry out tests and trials throughout Britain, including government test sites, universities and the state-of-the-art Consumer Research and Testing Centre at Milton Keynes. Many trials take place behind closed doors, but you can visit our Trial Gardens at Capel Manor College in north London.

Member benefits and services

- ❖ Free expert advice during our regular phone-ins
- ❖ Over 180 factsheets available online and on request
- ❖ Members' trials that give thousands of our members the opportunity to test new plants and techniques
- ❖ A soil analysis service to help you get the most from your plot
- ❖ Much more on our *Which? Gardening* website www.which.co.uk/gardening