

Pest Alert: Japanese beetle (*Popillia japonica*)



Figs- 1- 4 left to right: Fig 1: An adult Japanese beetle with the white hairy tufts on its side. **Fig 2:** Adult feeding on a rose flower. **Fig 3:** Typical skeletonization of a vine leaf. **Fig 4:** The larvae are a typical grub. Fig 1 © Lawrence Barringer, Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture. Figs2-3 © Fiona Eyer, Strickhof. Fig 4 © <http://entoweb.okstate.edu>

- The **Japanese beetle** has been recorded on **over 400 plant species**, feeding on a wide range of trees, shrubs, wild plants and crops such as vines, fruits and ornamentals. The adult beetles feed on flowers, fruits and **foliage** leading to skeletonized leaves (**Fig. 3**), with the larvae feeding on **grass roots** causing the grass to turn yellow.
- The life stage that is mostly encountered is the **adult beetle, which emerges at the beginning of July**, as the beetle prefers warmer temperatures. The beetles have a green head and back as well as brown wing cases (**Fig. 1 and 2**). Adults are 8-10 mm in length. They are quite distinctive and can be identified by the **5 white hairy tufts visible on their sides** as well as the **2 hairy tufts at the rear**. The larvae may also be encountered but can only be identified from native species in the lab (**Fig 4**).
- Originally from Japan, the beetle has been established in the USA since the early 20th century and spread to the Azores in 1977, Italy in 2014 and Switzerland in 2017. Single finds have been reported in Germany and Slovenia. The pest is absent from the UK

If you suspect the presence of the pest, please inform the relevant authority (see over for details).

For finds at garden centres, plant nurseries or private gardens in England and Wales, contact your local APHA Plant Health and Seeds Inspector, or the PHSI headquarters, in York:

Tel: 0300 1000 313

Email: planthealth.info@apha.gov.uk

For Scotland, contact the Scottish Government's Horticulture and Marketing Unit:

email: hort.marketing@gov.scot

For Northern Ireland, contact the DAERA Plant Health Inspection Branch:

Tel: 0300 200 7847 Email: planthealth@daera-ni.gov.uk

Web: daera-ni.gov.uk/topics/plant-and-tree-health

For additional information on UK Plant Health please see:

planthealthportal.defra.gov.uk/pests-and-diseases/uk-plant-health-risk-register/

planthealthportal.defra.gov.uk/

www.gov.uk/plant-health-controls

www.gov.scot/Topics/farmingrural/Agriculture/plant/PlantHealth/PlantDiseases

www.daera-ni.gov.uk