

Safe Yard Product Buying Guide
Pest Solution Fact Sheet

Root Weevils



Root weevils feed on a wide variety of plants. Those that feed on shrubs prefer broadleaf evergreens, with rhododendrons and azaleas being their favorite food. Although adult root weevil damage to leaves rarely kills these plants, the damage can be visually irritating to the gardener.

During the day adult root weevils hide in loose bark, leaf litter or cracks in the soil, coming out only at night to feed on plant leaves. They do not fly, so they must crawl up plants to chew on the foliage.

Control measures are best directed at the adult prior to egg laying. The adults begin laying eggs 3 to 4 weeks after emerging. Once the adults are first noticed, the gardener has about three weeks to take action. The following products can help control root weevils without risking the health of your family, pets, or environment.

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Product/type	How to use
<i>Mechanical</i>	
Sticky Barriers	Wrap trunk in 3 inch band of paper or plastic, and apply sticky material to the wrap. Check twice per month, replace as needed. Remove wrap in late November for plant growth.
Traps	Place squares of 1/2 inch plywood on the ground and check under them daily before nightfall. Use a piece of plywood about 2 feet by 2 feet in size. Drop the weevils into a bucket of soapy water.
<i>Chemical</i>	
Neem Oil	Mix with water and soak soil around the plant soil to control larvae, beginning in April or May.
<i>Biological</i>	
Beneficial Nematodes	These work on both larvae and pupa. Apply when soil temps are 55 deg F. or greater. Mix with water, soak soil around the plant.

As with all pesticides, protect people, pets, and the environment by following all instructions and cautions on labels.



Grow Smart, Grow Safe®

Learn about the hazards associated with specific pesticide products at GrowSmartGrowSafe.org.

Disclaimer: List does not include all products carried by store. Product ratings are based on Grow Smart, Grow Safe®. Responsibility for misrepresentation of any product as a result of customization will rest solely with the creator of the altered content. See www.growsmartgrowsafe.org for disclaimer and copyright information.

Try These Products

- Tree Tanglefoot sticky adhesive
- Neem oil, many suppliers
- Sound Horticulture's Lawn and Garden Blend of Beneficial nematodes

Tips for pesticide application

Many pesticides pose a risk to people, pets, and the environment. Use the following guidelines to minimize these risks.

- Do not overuse. Apply according to directions.
- Time strategies appropriately for the larvae or adults, as needed



Pest control that's safer for your kids, pets, and the environment!



Root Weevils

Preventing Root Weevils—your best defense!

Build healthy plants	Healthy plants resist attack better than unhealthy plants. Keep 4 inches of mulch over the roots, build healthy soils using compost and slow-release fertilizers, and water appropriately.
Choose weevil-resistant varieties	Entomologists at Washington State University (WSU) have found many varieties of rhododendrons and azaleas to be resistant to root weevil damage. Leaves that have a slight roll on the edges tend to be avoided by weevils.
Monitor plants in Spring	Monitor your plants in spring for signs of root weevil damage. They feed at night, and you can spread a white cloth around the bush, shake the branches, collect the adults to identify them, or drop them in a bucket of soapy water.
Prune to Reduce Access	Pruning limbs so they don't touch the ground will make it more difficult for the adult weevils, which don't fly, to reach the leaves.

How pesticides work

Neem oil: Hormonal disruption affects feeding in the larvae. It does not kill eggs. Mix neem with water and thoroughly soak the soil surrounding the infected plant. Treatment for root weevil damage can begin in April or May. Oils break down after 4 - 7 days, and reapplication is often necessary for continued control.

Beneficial nematodes: Beneficial nematodes are microscopic worms that enter the larvae and release bacteria that kills most insects within 24 hours. They are also called parasitic nematodes. Two common ones sold for root weevils are *Steinernema feltiae* (Sf), and *Heterorhabditis bacteriophora* (Hb).

The nematodes require moist soil to move about, and temps of 55 degrees F or greater in the top two or three inches of soil. They are sensitive to ultra-violet light, so apply them in the early morning or late evening, in late spring or fall. The first autumn rain is a great time to start controlling root weevils with beneficial nematodes, especially if you saw lots of weevil damage last year.

Beneficial nematodes are mixed with water and are applied to the soil as a drench. It helps to pull back the mulch and plant debris around your plants, apply the nematodes and then cover the treated areas again with mulch to retain heat and moisture. You may not need to re-apply for several years.

Other Pesticides

Other pesticides that are commonly used to treat root weevils include azadirachtin, acephate and bifenthrin, which can be harmful to bees, salmon and/or people. Ingredients in many common insecticides can pose a significant threat to people, pets, and the environment. Understand the risks by visiting Grow Smart, Grow Safe®: www.GrowSmartGrowSafe.org



Root weevil larvae

What to consider when using pesticides

Pesticides can also harm beneficial insects that prey on root weevils. Be sure to choose a pest control product for root weevils that will not cause harm to people, pets, pollinators or other wildlife.

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www.gardengreen.webs.com

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