

# HEALTHY LANDSCAPE PROBLEM SOLVER



## APHIDS *and* MITES

**Aphids** are small, pear-shaped insects which suck plant sap from tender plant tissues. Their feeding causes leaf, bud and flower distortions. Aphids produce a sticky substance called honeydew that supports the growth of sooty mold and the spread of viral diseases.

**Mites** are barely visible but can cause significant plant injury. Damage appears as a light speckling on leaves and a bronze discoloration. To diagnose, tap an infested branch over white paper. Mites will appear as tiny moving specks.

**READ THE LABEL BEFORE BUYING ANY PESTICIDE.** Re-read the label before using, storing or disposing of the pesticide — the label is the law. Following label instructions will help reduce risks to human health and the environment.



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# APHID AND MITE — CONTROL OPTIONS

*There are usually several management options for solving any pest or disease problem. Use the non-pesticide approach whenever possible, saving pesticide use as the last line of defense. If a pest is identified at a damaging level, select a control targeted to the problem.*

*This is called “Integrated Pest Management” or “IPM”.*

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## PREVENTING INSECT INFESTATIONS

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Avoid heavy doses of highly soluble nitrogen fertilizer. Plant a variety of pollen and nectar flowers, and herbs which attract beneficial insects.

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## CONTROL OPTIONS

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First observe the aphid or mite problem for several days-allowing the natural enemies of aphids and mites to appear. Prune infested branches and continue observations.

**Strong water spray:** Knock aphids and mites off of plants with a strong spray from a garden hose. Repeat often, since new populations develop quickly.

**Beneficial insects such as ladybugs (lady beetles) and praying mantids:** Release insects at the base of plants, according to instructions.

**Horticultural oil:** Spray on trees in late winter/early spring to smother overwintering eggs. Use a summer concentration during the growing season to control crawlers as well as eggs. For spider mites, timing of applications is critical. Follow label directions.

**Insecticidal soap:** Spray during growing season, following label directions.

### Sources of information:

Greg Patchan, Horticulture Agent, MSU Extension - Oakland County.  
Ellis and Bradley, *Natural Insect and Disease Control*, Rodale Press  
Olkowski, et. al., *Common-Sense Pest Control*, Taunton Press

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### FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

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**Oakland County Garden Hotline:** 248/858-0902

**National Pesticide Telecommunications Network (NPTN):** 1-800-858-7378  
(Information about environmental and health effects of specific chemicals)

**Household pesticide disposal:** Call SOCRRA for an appointment: 248/288-5153

**Website:** [healthylandscapes.com](http://healthylandscapes.com)