

Is Something Eating Your Orchid

Ryan "The Orchid Guy"

And in today's bulletin, we're going to answer that all-too-familiar cry for help:

"Something is eating my orchid! What do I do???"

So if you've ever been in this position... relax, because help is on the way :-)

Now if you've discovered that something is eating your orchid, there's good news and bad news...

The BAD news is, unfortunately your infestation could be any number of things (I'll show you how to identify several of the most common pests in a few moments...)

But the GOOD news is, for each pest we've got an effective remedy that'll get them off your plant, and out of your life, FOR GOOD!

Now obviously, there are far too many orchid pests to cover in this newsletter, so we're going to focus on identifying & treating 3 of the most common pest.

PEST #1: APHIDS

SYMPTOMS:

Aphids come in all colors - green, red, black, yellow, etc. And they're usually found feeding in clusters on NEW shoots, leaves, and flower buds.

You've got to be careful with aphids, because they can do extensive damage by deforming flower buds.

SOLUTION:

When it comes to removing them, you should first try washing them off with warm water. If that doesn't work, use an insecticidal soap or try a product called "Confidor."

WARNING: Do NOT use chemical insecticides to remove aphids on flower buds... insecticides should be your LAST resort, because the chemicals will actually cause MORE damage to your buds than the aphids themselves.

PEST #2: MEALY BUGS

SYMPTOMS:

Mealy bugs are easily spotted, because they will leave white cotton-like bundles on your buds, flower stems, growing tips, and sometimes even on the roots.

You've got to be careful with mealy bugs because a female can lay between 100-200 eggs, which will only take about 2 weeks to hatch... and then you've got a REAL problem.

So be sure to regularly inspect your plant for these symptoms, and treat your orchid before the problem gets out of hand.

SOLUTION:

Fortunately, mealy bugs CAN be removed through persistent treatment. And one of the best (and perfectly safe) solutions is isopropyl alcohol.

Simply apply a liberal amount of isopropyl alcohol to the affected areas (only) using a cotton swab. You should apply a daily treatment until you see the mealy bug evidence disappear completely.

PEST #3: SPIDER MITES

SYMPTOMS:

Spider mites are tiny, hard-to-see green or red spiders. You can determine their presence by rubbing a white cloth over the damaged area. A brown residue will be left on the leaf and cloth if mites (or mite eggs) are present.

Spider mites often appear in dry and hot conditions, and they feed off the sap in your orchid's leaves - which will eventually result in a "stippling" effect on the leaves.

SOLUTION:

You should first try washing off with warm water, but if they persist - try using a Ego Oil

And I'll leave you with one final piece of advice for today when it comes to orchid pests:

No matter what kind of pest you might have on your hands, at the first sign of infection, you should immediately separate your infected orchid from the rest of your plants.

Pests will spread to other plants (and usually not just orchids) the first chance they get. Once you've isolated your infected plant, THEN you can begin determining the best course of action.

Until next time... To Healthy, Vibrant Flowering!