

# Timely Turf Tips

## JULY 2012

**Armed and dangerous!** The dreaded Japanese Beetle invasion has begun. Japanese beetles can create havoc in a garden by feeding on the leaves of a number of different plants, skeletonizing the leaves and eventually defoliating the plants. An individual Japanese beetle doesn't do that much damage while feeding on a plant, but they tend to congregate in large numbers and can easily defoliate shrubs and trees. A new non-toxic approach is becoming popular. Plug a **vacuum cleaner** (preferably a shop vac) into the nearest grounded outlet and hose the little nasties up like they were dust bunnies under a couch. One gardener remarked, "So if you go by and I'm vacuuming my roses, I really haven't lost it completely."

### Yard and Garden Tips for July:

- Side-dress tomatoes and peppers with a complete fertilizer such as 12-6-6 Grower's Special (available at the Mill) when they start to flower and produce fruit. If flowers appear when the plants are still small, nip them off to give the root system more time to develop.
- As soon as tomatoes set fruit, begin to monitor lower leaves for Septoria leaf spot. Remove infected foliage and spray plants with a registered protective fungicide if disease is severe. Mulching around the plants may help prevent disease organisms from splashing up from the soil.
- Pull out any left over early spring crops such as radish and lettuce. They become bitter and woody in the heat of July.
- Stop harvesting asparagus and rhubarb in early July. Rhubarb grows "woodier" in summer's heat but the stalks are never poisonous, only the leaves. Asparagus fronds and rhubarb leaves are needed to manufacture energy for the following year's growth.
- Adult apple maggot flies begin to emerge in early July. If you have apple trees, hang sticky ball traps or start a spray program. For more information: <http://tinyurl.com/cvg6lsc>
- Once raspberry canes finish summer fruiting, cut them down to the ground. Regardless of whether they're spring-bearing or ever-bearing, canes that bear fruit now will never flower or fruit again.
- Cut back leggy hanging baskets by 1/3 and fertilize every two weeks. Water daily.
- Keep the grass 3 to 3.5 inches tall. Taller grass is more drought-tolerant and better able to compete with pests.



Japanese Beetle

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