

European Chafer Beetle

The European Chafer Beetle was first discovered in the Lower Mainland in 2001 and has continued to spread into surrounding communities. This invasive species reproduces rapidly and feeds on the roots of all kinds of plants, including grass and turf.

Adult European Chafer Beetles are tan or brown and measure approximately 1.5cm in length. The grubs measure approximately 2 to 2.5 cm, are soft, white, and C-shaped with tan-coloured heads and six prominent legs.

Monitoring Your Lawn

Heavy infestations may lead to your grass feeling "spongy" due to the grubs tunneling below and will commonly be wilted or dead and be easy to pull back, revealing the feeding larvae.

Chafer Beetle infestation is often most visible when raccoons, birds and other wildlife, eager to eat the grubs, begin digging up grasses and damaging turf.

You can monitor your grass for grubs by cutting a 30 by 30 cm square of sod to a depth of 5 cm in different sections of your lawn. If there are more than five grubs per section, you may want to consider Chafer Beetle control.

Preventing Infestations

Healthy, vigorously growing lawns can tolerate more grub feeding because they generally have more extensive root systems. Follow these steps to keep your lawn thick and healthy:

- Aerate regularly
- Top dress with compost
- Over-seed
- Water regularly
- Raise your mowing height to 6 to 9 cm since the beetles prefer laying eggs on closely cropped lawns. Higher grass blades will also help to protect the soil surface from water loss during the summer, and encourage deeper root growth.
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Treatment

Treatments are most effective if done in late July, after the European Chafer eggs have hatched and when the young grubs are most vulnerable to nematode attack. Nematodes are not a preventative measure, they control Chafer Beetles that have laid eggs in your lawn.

You can purchase nematodes (*Heterorhabditis bacteriophora*) from your local lawn and garden store.

When treating your lawn with nematodes to control European Chafer Beetles, your lawn should be as moist as a wrung-out sponge. The amount of water needed will depend on your lawn, soil depth, and weather conditions. If you need more water than provided under the watering regulations, you may apply for an exemption permit.