



FLEA BEETLES

Flea beetles are so named because of their ability to jump like fleas when bothered. The beetles are tiny, dark, and shiny. Eggs are laid at the base of plant stems in early summer after a feeding period, and larvae feed at the roots. Adult beetles, about 1/16 inch long, feed on foliage, producing “shotholes” in the leaves.

FLEA BEETLE DAMAGE

Look for shotholes or a lacy appearance in leaves, especially on young seedlings. They don't usually kill the plant but on occasion can spread plant disease that can.



Photo Credit: University of California White Mountain Research Center. Flea beetles can cause leaves to appear lacy after they've caused a lot of damage.

TREATMENT AND CONTROL

- Homemade spray to control flea beetles: 2 cups rubbing alcohol, 5 cups water, and 1 tablespoon liquid soap. Test mixture on a leaf first, let it sit overnight, then spray the rest of the plant if you don't notice any adverse effects. Spray the mixture on the foliage of garden plants that are susceptible to these pests.
- Dusting your plants with plain talcum powder repels flea beetles on tomatoes, potatoes, peppers, and other plants. Diatomaceous earth can be used carefully on non-flowering plants
- Use white or yellow sticky traps to capture flea beetles as they jump.
- Flea beetles are repelled by catnip and basil. They are attracted by nasturtium and radishes
- Delay planting until after the beetles are most active
- In Fall, clean up the garden and dig the soil to unearth hiding beetles.

Information taken from: <https://www.almanac.com/pest/flea-beetles>