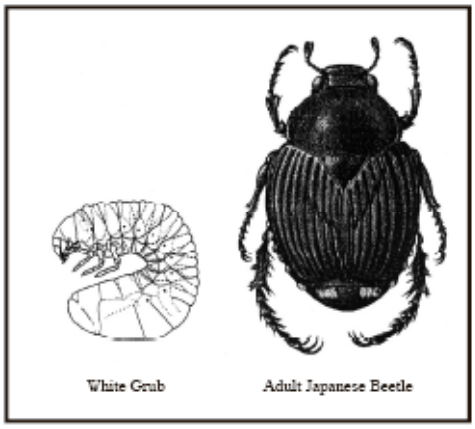
Controlling Grubs in the Lawn

The most common grub is the **Japanese beetle** grub. They have a worm-like appearance distinguished by a curved body shaped in the form of the letter "C". Other identifying characteristics are three pairs of legs located close to their head and body color that ranges from dull tan to chalky white.

Grubs damage lawns by feeding on the turfgrass roots. They prefer to feed in sunny areas over shady. They can destroy large areas of turf if left untreated.

Moles often become a secondary problem when they tunnel under the lawn as they feed on the grubs. Treating the grubs will usually alleviate the mole problem.

Although grubs have one generation per year they cause damage twice within the same year. This is because the eggs hatch in late summer and the grubs feed in the fall, then overwinter underground, then the same generation feed again the next spring.



The life cycle is as follows. The previous years' generation overwinter underground and then move closer to the soil surface in spring and begin feeding in April and May. Then they pupate and emerge as adults in June. The adults feed on foliage, flowers, and fruit. The adults lay eggs in July and die in August. The eggs hatch and the new generation of grubs begin feeding in August and continues into October. This second feeding cycle is longer and more damage occurs during this time. In November the grubs move down deeper into the soil to overwinter. The following spring they feed again and then complete their life cycle by changing into adults.

There is a new grub control insecticide that has been available for the past two years. The chemical name is *Imidacloprid* and is sold as "*Merit*". It is formulated in both liquid and granular products.

For more information about horticulture or the Master Gardener Program in Frederick County, call the Frederick County Office of the Maryland Cooperative Extension, 301- 600-1596, or visit http://www.frederick.umd.edu/. Our mission is to educate Maryland residents about safe, effective and sustainable horticultural practices that build healthy gardens, landscapes and communities.

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