

ASK THE LANDSCAPE PROFESSIONAL

Welcome

To my Weekly Series

Feel free to send me questions you'd like to have me answer and I will do my best to address the ones of most general interest. Email or mail your questions to:

info@sprigsandtwigs.net or Linda Lillie,
Sprigs & Twigs Inc, PO Box 245, Gales
Ferry, CT 06335



Question this Week:

Dear Linda:

For the last two years I have had a problem with bugs, black flat ones, that ate mostly my orange lantern leaves right up to the flowers in two separate gardens. Up until now, I've always had good luck with orange lanterns and I'm wondering if I should spray them with something? What should I do? You always have great advice. Thank you. April



Chinese Lantern



Flea Beetle

Linda's Answer:

Dear April, My best guess is the Flea Beetle has eaten your Chinese Lantern plants. Flea Beetles are a small jumping, flat insect similar to fleas. They can cause tremendous damage to plants by chewing countless holes in the leaves and quickly defoliating and killing the plants. Flea beetles like to feed on hot, sunny days with their favorite foods being tomatoes, lettuce, potatoes, eggplant corn, cabbage and beans.

Here are several ways to control Flea Beetles. All of these items are readily available at local garden centers.

1. **Yellow Sticky Traps-** set every 15-30' to trap the adults.
2. **Diatomaceous Earth-** is a powdery substance composed of microscopic, fossilized, algae-like, aquatic organisms. These fossilized organisms have very sharp edges that slice into the insect's body as it crawls over the powder and eventually dies. Sprinkle around the base of plants on the surface of the soil. Do not mix into soil.
3. **Neem Oil (70%)**-can be sprayed on fruit trees, vegetables, and flowers to kill eggs, larvae and adult insects. Mix 1 oz. per gallon of water and spray all leaf surfaces especially the underside of the leaves.
4. **Grow "trap plants"** like Radish nearby. A trap plant is one that attracts and diverts the pest away from your prized plants.

Good Luck.