

Aphids

Aphis species



What they do

Aphids quickly multiply in numbers in spring by a process called parthenogenesis, where unfertilised females give birth to more unfertilised females, building numbers up rapidly. Scale insects also populate in this manner.

What to look for

Monitor for aphids in spring. If they are building up, squirt with a hose or rub them off by hand until the good bugs have a chance to find them and control them. Ladybirds, lacewings and hoverflies all help control aphids.

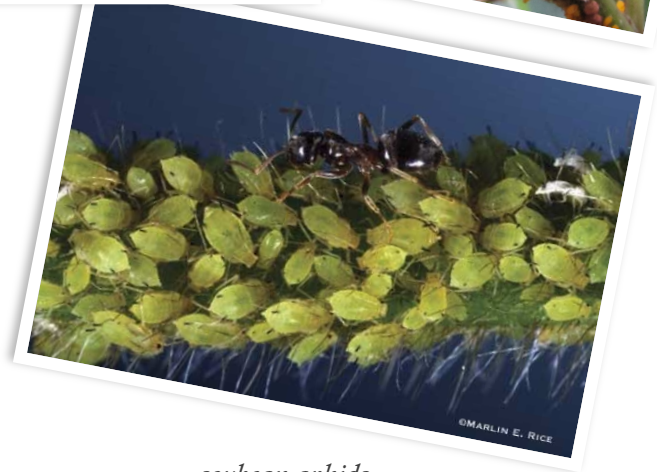
How to control them

Choosing the correct plants for your climate and soil and the time of year is also important. Stressed plants are more prone to insect problems.

Aphids love lush, sappy plant tips to chew on. Infestations can be reduced by not over-feeding with nitrogenous fertiliser early in spring. Wait for growth to occur naturally before feeding plants.

Control ants where aphids are present; ants 'farm' aphids, gathering the sweet honeydew that aphids excrete.

<http://www.ipm.iastate.edu/ipm/icm/2007/7-9/soybeanaphids.html>



soybean aphids



*Some aphids are even pretty.
Photo: V Boxell/humusbeings*