

Neem oil can control insects, diseases

Sunday, May 14, 2006

By PERNELL GERVER

Garden writer



PERNELL GERVER

Q: You've helped me in the past and I need your help again - every year I have a big problem with bugs on my flowers and some of them also get covered with a white substance. It makes the plants look bad so I was wondering if there is anything I can do now to prevent these problems. Thank you in advance for any recommendations you have. - A.W., Springfield.

A: I'm glad you submitted your question now at the beginning of the season, so I can help you practice preventative medicine so you won't have problems later on.

At this time of year I begin a regular preventative-spraying program. I use a special formulation of neem oil and what I like about it is you don't have to know what the problem is, since neem oil probably controls it. The neem oil I use is an organic, three-in-one treatment that works on everything - all sorts of insects, diseases, and mites.

Made from the seeds of the neem tree that grows in India, this amazing all-natural spray are an insecticide, fungicide, and miticide all in one. It can be used on all plants including roses, perennials, annuals, trees, shrubs, flowers, fruits, vegetables and house plants. It controls all stages of insects (adult, larvae and egg). It acts as a growth regulator, repellent and contact killer of many common and hard-to-control insect pests including Japanese beetles and other beetles, white flies, aphids, spider mites, mealy bugs, Colorado potato beetle, striped cucumber beetle, caterpillars, hemlock woolly adelgid, scale, lilyleaf beetle (small, bright-red beetles that have been spreading into western Massachusetts in recent years killing lilies), asparagus beetle, thrips, weevils or curculios (a type of weevil), sawfly, bean leaf beetle, Mexican bean beetle, flea beetle, spotted grapevine beetle, leafhoppers, leafminers, squash bug, leafrollers, psyllids, midges, fruit flies, lace bugs, and many, many more.

The oil component in neem oil makes it a very effective natural fungicide for controlling diseases like black spot on roses, rust, early blight on tomatoes, fruit tree

diseases, and powdery mildew on phlox, lilacs, and roses, downy mildew, anthracnose, fungal leaf spot, botrytis (gray mold), needle rust, scab, flower, twig, and tip blight, snow mold on lawn and alternaria. The white coating on your plants is called powdery mildew which can kill plants if left untreated. I've sprayed neem oil on powdery mildew and it rinsed the powdery mildew away.

Pernell Gerver welcomes questions on gardening, indoors and out. Questions may be submitted at his Web site www.PernellGerver.com (click on the "Ask Gardening Questions" link) or send questions to Pernell Gerver, Sunday Republican, P.O. Box 2350, Springfield, MA 01102-2350.

Courtesy: Dr.Rama, AgriInfoTech, Inc.

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