

Stop

The Invasion



Photographs courtesy of David Cappaert, Bugwood.org and Mike Reding and Betsy Anderson, USDA Agricultural Research Service, Bugwood.org

European Chafer

Amphimallon majale

Report
Sightings

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[InvasivesSpecies.wa.gov](https://www.invasivespecies.wa.gov)

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What are they?

The European chafer is a beetle that feeds on grass roots while in its larval (grub) phase, killing the grass and leaving visible dead patches. Grubs feed on grass in fall and spring. Most of the damage is caused in spring just before pupation, the transition from grub to adult. In summer the adult beetles swarm at sunset to reproduce before laying their eggs and starting the cycle over again. The adult beetles do not eat, bite, or sting; it is primarily the grubs that are harmful.

Are they here yet?

Yes. In 2015, the European chafer was found in SeaTac.

Why should I care?

The European chafer can destroy turf, and could cause extensive damage to homeowners' lawns if they become established in Washington. They can also feed on the roots of crops, which could be costly to the agriculture industry.

What should I do if I find one?

Report a sighting online at www.invasivespecies.wa.gov/report.shtml.

How can we stop them?

Irrigated lawns have shown resistance to damage in the Midwest and on the East Coast. Contact your local master gardener or Washington State University (WSU) Extension office for recommendations.



Photograph courtesy of Bruce Watt, University of Maine, Bugwood.org

What are their characteristics?

- Adults are about ½ inch long, brick red in color.
- Larvae ¼ to 1 inch long, dark brown head, C-shaped body with noticeable legs.

How do I distinguish them from native species?

Very few other beetle grubs that fit this description will be found in turf causing damage. If you find grubs that fit the description damaging your lawns outside of the infested area in King County, report the sighting and take the grub sample to your local master gardener clinic or WSU Extension office.

Where do I get more information?

- WSU Fact Sheet: cru.cahe.wsu.edu/CEPublications/FS078E/FS078E.pdf
- Michigan State University Extension: msue.anr.msu.edu/resources/european-chafer
- Insect Diagnostic Laboratory: idl.entomology.cornell.edu/files/2013/11/European-Chafer-sz87sw.pdf
- Minnesota Department of Agriculture: www.mda.state.mn.us/plants/insects/europeanchafer.aspx

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