



PESTS & DISEASES

Aphids

Aphids have small rounded bodies, usually 1 to 2 mm long and come in a range of colours. Green, black, yellow, grey and brown are most commonly seen. Aphids belong to the order Hemiptera, which is characterised by their piercing and sucking mouth parts.

They also have two tubes projecting from the back of their body called 'cornicles', this is a distinguishing feature found only on aphids. Aphids are usually found on new growth and flower buds but can be found all over the plant. Aphids can multiply very quickly, they are capable of live birth and laying eggs that can last till the next season. When populations reach a certain capacity, they will start producing wings that enables them to fly between plants.

Aphids cause damage to plants by sucking the sap from the new growth causing distortion. They can also spread diseases between plants via their tubular mouth pieces when they pierce plant surfaces. Aphids produce honeydew that attracts ants and can lead to black sooty mould to start growing on lower leaf surfaces.

Honeydew is a clear substance and when freshly covering a leaf will have a shiny appearance. Aphid populations will diminish throughout the colder months but can still be found on brassica species and thistle like weeds in the garden.

Control Methods

- Control Weed populations in the garden that aphids inhabit and spread from.
- If left undisturbed they often get attacked by parasitic wasps, ladybugs, hoverflies, and lacewings.
- Using a low toxic contact spray containing pyrethrin's or soapy water can control them.
- Natural predators such as ladybirds and parasitic wasps will control numbers.