

Curl Grubs

When digging the garden or making compost you may come across larvae that are white in colour, have a characteristic 'C' shape, three pairs of legs and a distinctive head and abdomen. Commonly known as curl grubs, they are beetle larvae (including Christmas beetles, cane beetles, dung beetles, flower scarabs and). The larvae vary in size with the large rhinoceros beetle larvae (pictured) growing up to 70mm long.

The beetles lay their eggs in the soil during late spring, summer and early autumn. The eggs hatch into larvae that feed on plant roots or decaying organic matter. The larvae grow and pupate during late autumn, winter and early spring. Curl grubs are favourite bandicoot fare and small conical holes in lawns or larger excavations within gardens are the telltale signs of bandicoot activity. Wasps also parasitise curl grubs by piercing the skin and laying their eggs inside. The young wasps hatch and live inside the body, eating the non-essential tissues of the curl grub before finally emerging through the body wall of the larvae and ultimately causing its death. Larvae of the African black beetle and scarab cockchafer that attack lawns may warrant control. Products based on tea tree oil are effective or drench the affected areas with molasses spray.



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Rhinoceros Beetle