

# Rose Slugs



**“What is leaving all the holes in my roses?”**  
When you see rose leaves having either window pane type holes or complete holes in the leaves, but no bugs to be seen it's rose slugs. The reason the bugs aren't being seen, is 1.) They're very small and the same color of the leaf and 2.) They're feeding on the undersides of the leaves!



## HAND SMASHING

Hand smashing the rose slugs as you can find them on the undersides of the leaves (look early morning). This is very effective!

## REPEATED FOLIAR SPRAYS

Use Insecticidal Soaps or Horticultural Oils, but making sure to spray the undersides of the leaves where the rose slugs are feeding, not the tops of the leaves.

## SYSTEMIC INSECTICIDE

Apply a systemic insecticide such as a 3 in 1 Rose Care, Optrol, or Bonide, Bayer, or Fertilome Tree and Shrub Insect Control. The insecticide is taken up inside the plant and the sawfly larvae are killed as they feed on the leaves. It is best to apply before damages are seen, but can be applied later as well. *Note: Hand smashing and foliar sprays are the most effective 'immediate' controls, but a combination of the systemic and foliar sprays will do a nice job controlling them.*

## ABOUT ROSE SLUGS

The critter is called a rose slug, yet rose slugs are not slugs at all. They're actually in the sawfly family, and there have been different types seen, ranging from 1 to multiple generations each year. They look like very small caterpillars (at the early stages are very hard to see) and typically feed on the underside of the leaves that cause a window pane effect from the younger rose slug larvae to large leaf holes to total leaf skeletonization as the larva mature.

There may be several generations of the rose slug, so be persistent with the methods of control as you see the damages occur. And although the damages certainly make the rose plant's leaves look bad, it rarely affects the overall health of the plant.

**Have more questions? Email us at [questions@natorp.com](mailto:questions@natorp.com) or call our horticulturalists at (513) 398 - 4769.**