

Protecting Your Blooms from Japanese Beetles

Diane Sommers is the ARS Region 5 Director and a 2018 candidate for ARS Vice President. A frequent writer and speaker on rose topics, she is a Master Rosarian and an accredited Horticulture and Arrangement Judge. She has served as the ARS Treasurer, Executive Committee member and many other ARS committee positions.



Japanese Beetles appear to be particularly fond of "Randy Scott" in my garden

At a recent program at the Buckeye Fall Rose Show, we talked about the challenges of exhibiting when faced with Japanese beetles in the garden. In the North Central District, paint strainer bags have become extremely popular and are an effective way to prevent those beetles from devouring your blooms. Some rosarians have claimed to have as many as a hundred or more bags on their roses on the days leading up to a rose show. The concept is simple - Japanese Beetles don't fly upward or even crawl up your rose bush. This summer I have had an explosion of beetles in my garden, which has given me the opportunity to observe them in action. They really tend to hover around the bushes and glide onto the top of the bush. Covering those special blooms with a five gallon paint strainer bag seems to do the trick!



This spray of "Baby's Blush" in my garden was eventually dry wrapped and won the Best HT Spray at the NCD District Rose Show, August 2017

Prop the bag up with a couple of wooden dowels so the bag is not sitting on your plant. The paint strainer bag has an elastic edge to it so no need to tie down on your plant. The bags are reusable - I even wash mine! Bees and other insects will still find their way to the blooms. Rosarians in Wisconsin and Minnesota have been buying out the supply of bags from the local paint stores. I have been purchasing them through Amazon.