

Rose Stem Girdler

by Charles Shaner – Consulting Rosarian – Staunton, Va.

The rose stem girdler (*Agrilus aurichalceus*) is not commonly found in my area of the country but one case was reported to me. I received a call from a gentleman that had a row of rugosas planted along his driveway which he said had many dead canes but the canes were live about half way down and putting out new growth. Not having seen rose stem girdler, it took some research on my part and his to arrive at an answer.



The rose stem girdler is a small, dark bronze beetle that emerges from infected stems in May and June. The time the beetle appears will vary with your growing season. Beetles are about 1/4" long (6-8 mm) and may appear metallic or copper green in color. There is only one generation per year and it is thought that it may take two years for larva to develop. The adult females deposit eggs on woody stems of new growth where larva feed on the cambium beneath. This produces a swelling in the canes as the plant tries to overcome the injury. The cane will soon be *girdled* and die. This will result in a cane of dead leaves which if the attack is severe can even kill the bush. The canes may break off at the point of the swelling. There will generally be new, strong growth below the swelling. If you cut into the swelling, it will be black inside.



The recommended remedy is to cut out the affected cane or canes below the swelling at the point of new growth. It is recommended to dispose of the affected cane by burning. You may also cut off and properly dispose of affected canes in the winter or early spring before the beetle appears.

Sprays have not been found to be very effective on the beetle but chlorpyrifos or malathion are the components listed for control of this pest and should be used in the spring until early summer to control adults before eggs are laid. Consult the label for mixing instructions and safety precautions.

Pictures are compliments of James W. Anrine, Jr. – West Virginia University