

## Master Gardeners Garden Walk; Rose Slugs

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Please mark your calendars and grab your checkbooks: the biannual Tour de Fleur Garden Walk is coming!

Sponsored by the Southwestern Indiana Master Gardener Association (SWIMGA), the Tour de Fleur will be held over the weekend of June 24 and 25. Thirteen private gardens in Vanderburgh and Warrick Counties, as well as the always-interesting Master Gardener Display Garden, will be adorned in their summer finery and ready for appreciative visitors. In addition, a variety of succulents in planters will be on display at the Master Gardener Display Garden.

The gardens will be open from 9:00 a.m. until 4:00 p.m. central time on both days. Garden location/description booklets are distributed with admission tickets. Prior to the Garden Walk, admission tickets are \$15 and may be purchased in Evansville at Schnucks, Colonial Classics Landscape & Nursery, Judy Schneider Kron Greenhouse, Wild Birds Unlimited, and Purdue Extension Office in Vanderburgh County. Advance tickets are also available at Robin's Nest in Boonville. During the garden walk, admission tickets will be sold for \$20 at the Master Gardener Display Garden and other participating gardens. The Display Garden is located south of Lloyd Expressway between Stockwell Rd. and Vann Ave., next to Eykamp Scout Center at 3501 E. Lloyd Expressway.

The Garden Walk funds horticulture scholarships and educational programs throughout Southwestern Indiana. SWIMGA volunteers maintain nearly 20 public gardens in Vanderburgh, Warrick and Posey counties, including the 1.2-acre Master Gardener Display Garden in Evansville. In addition to managing the exquisite floral gardens, approximately 10,000 pounds of vegetables are harvested at the Display Garden by the master gardeners and donated to the Tri-State Food Bank each year.

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Are your roses looking a little ragged? Are you seeing tiny holes in the leaves? If so, your roses are infested with a creature called the rose slug. Contrary to its name, this is not a true slug. Rose slugs are the larval stage of flying insects known as sawflies.

Rose sawfly larvae resemble inchworms: they are yellow-green in color and can grow to a maximum length of three-quarters of an inch. Despite their appearance, they are not

true caterpillars, and the organic products we'd normally use to kill caterpillars (B.T., Dipel, etc.) will not work against them.

Rose slugs feed on the surface of rose leaves, removing the soft tissue and leaving behind the papery, translucent surface and veins. Heavy defoliation gives plants a brown scorched appearance. In general, light to moderate infestations are cosmetic in nature and rarely harm the host plant. Heavier attacks, however, can weaken plants when leaf loss stresses them to the point of vulnerability to other insect and disease attacks.

Starting after the plants leaf out, begin checking the undersides of the leaves for the tiny larvae. You can wash them off the plants with a strong blast of water from the hose, aiming at both the upper and lower leaf surfaces. Horticultural oil, insecticidal soaps, neem oil, bifenthrin, carbaryl, malathion, permethrin, cyfluthrin, imidacloprid, and acephate can all be used to control sawflies. Apply pesticides only when larvae are actually present, before infestations reach critical levels. Always be careful to read the label directions fully before applying any pesticide, and follow directions completely.

For more information on the Garden Walk or rose pests, contact the Purdue Extension Service at 812-435-5287.



Rose slug and feeding damage. Photo courtesy of Missouri Botanical Garden.