

Potomac Rose Society Information Bulletin

DEDICATED TO SERVE THOSE WHO ENJOY ROSES
District of Columbia and Potomac Area of Maryland and Virginia
Affiliated with the American Rose Society

THE ROSE SLUGS-- HOW DID THEY EVER GET THAT NAME?

For the record, rose slugs are in the Order of Hymenoptera which include sawflies, parasitic wasps, ants, wasps and bees. The adult form of the rose slugs are called sawflies, because they lay their eggs in slits in leaves produced by two neatly coordinated reciprocating saw-toothed blades moving in opposite directions.

BRISTLY ROSE SLUG *Clavius difformis*

The *bristly rose slug* is the sawfly larva and is never more than about 12 mm in length (½ inch) and about 1 mm in diameter. Being of that size and with a light green color, it is sometimes difficult to distinguish it from a leaf vein. It's easy to spot the skeletonized leaves that it leaves behind though. The pupal form is encased in a rather thin membranous cocoon attached to objects above or in the ground. The adult is described as being somewhat wasp-like. There are something on the order of 6 overlapping generations a year in this area so we are likely to see them throughout a good portion of the summer.

CURLED ROSE SLUG *Allantus cinctus*

The *curled rose slug* apparently is gifted

with a stronger chewing mechanism because it doesn't bother eating just one side of the leaf; it chomps through the whole leaf thickness-- very often perched along a leaf edge in a curled position. It can be distinguished from the *bristly rose slug* by its yellow brown head. It has 8 pairs of prolegs, whereas the *bristly rose slug* has only 7 pairs.

There are fewer generations per year of the *curled rose slug*. It appears to work on the leaves higher up on the plant than its bristly cousin and shows up later in the summer.

EUROPEAN ROSE SLUG *Endolomyia aethiops*

The *European rose slug* is about the same size as the *bristly rose slug*, but unlike that slug, it skeletonizes the rose leaf from the top. There is only one generation per year and is not as common in this region.

CONTROLS

Insecticidal soaps or better still, the "pick-and-squash" approach are both effective controls for all rose slugs.

This information bulletin is based on an article by Bob Alde for *The Newsletter of THE POTOMAC ROSE SOCIETY*. If you have questions on this or any other aspect of rose growing, please contact one of our consulting rosarians for free advice. For information regarding membership, contact Joseph M. Covey, (301) 279-0028.