

Dahlia Pests

March 8, 2026



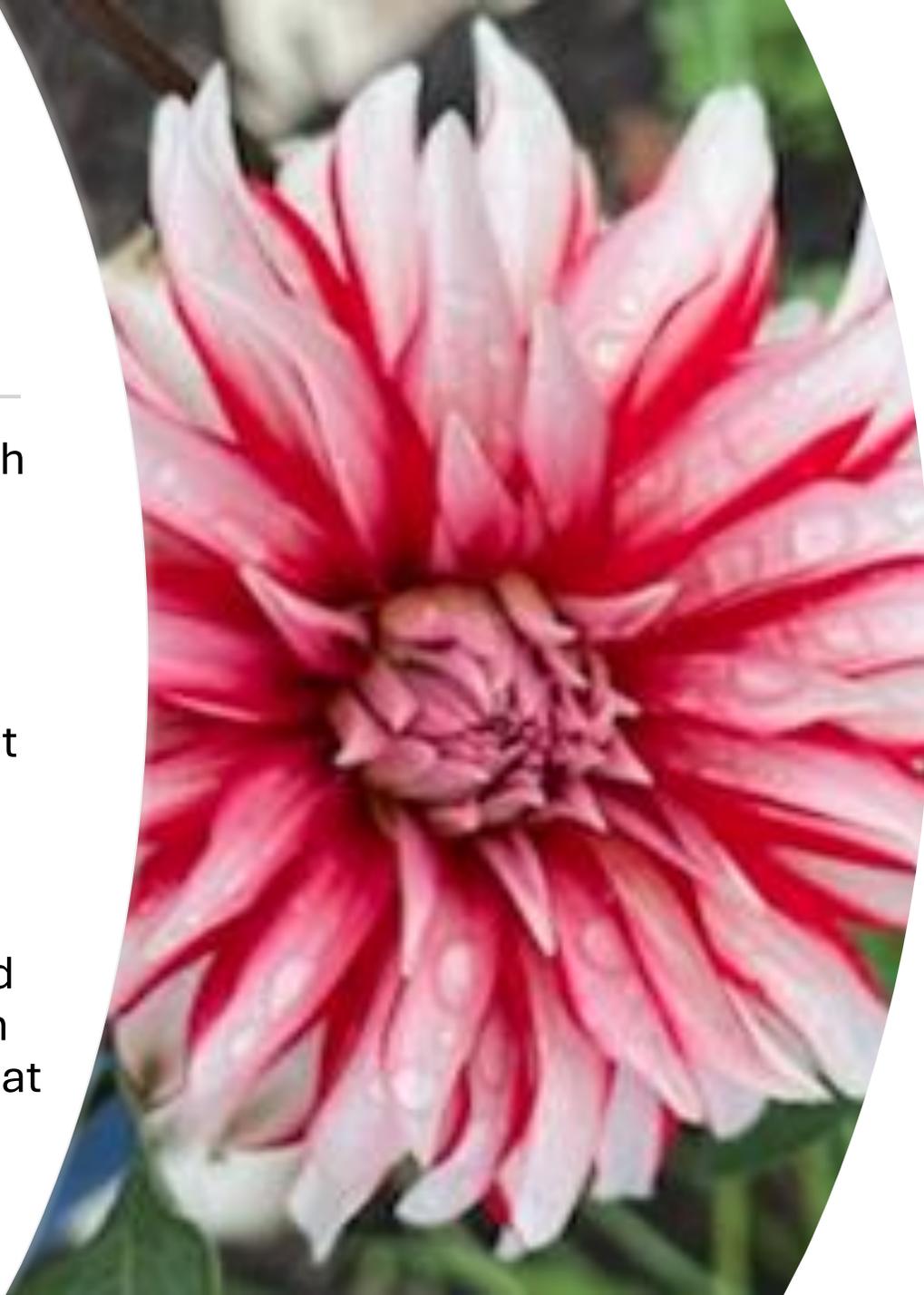
Agenda

- Organic vs Inorganic Pest Treatment
- Pests, Signs, and Treatments
- Q&A



Organic

- Sustainable approach that avoids synthetic pesticides
- Fosters natural ecosystems
- Relies on natural pest controls
- Chemical-free
- Work best for preventative care and are not as effective in treating a problem that already exists



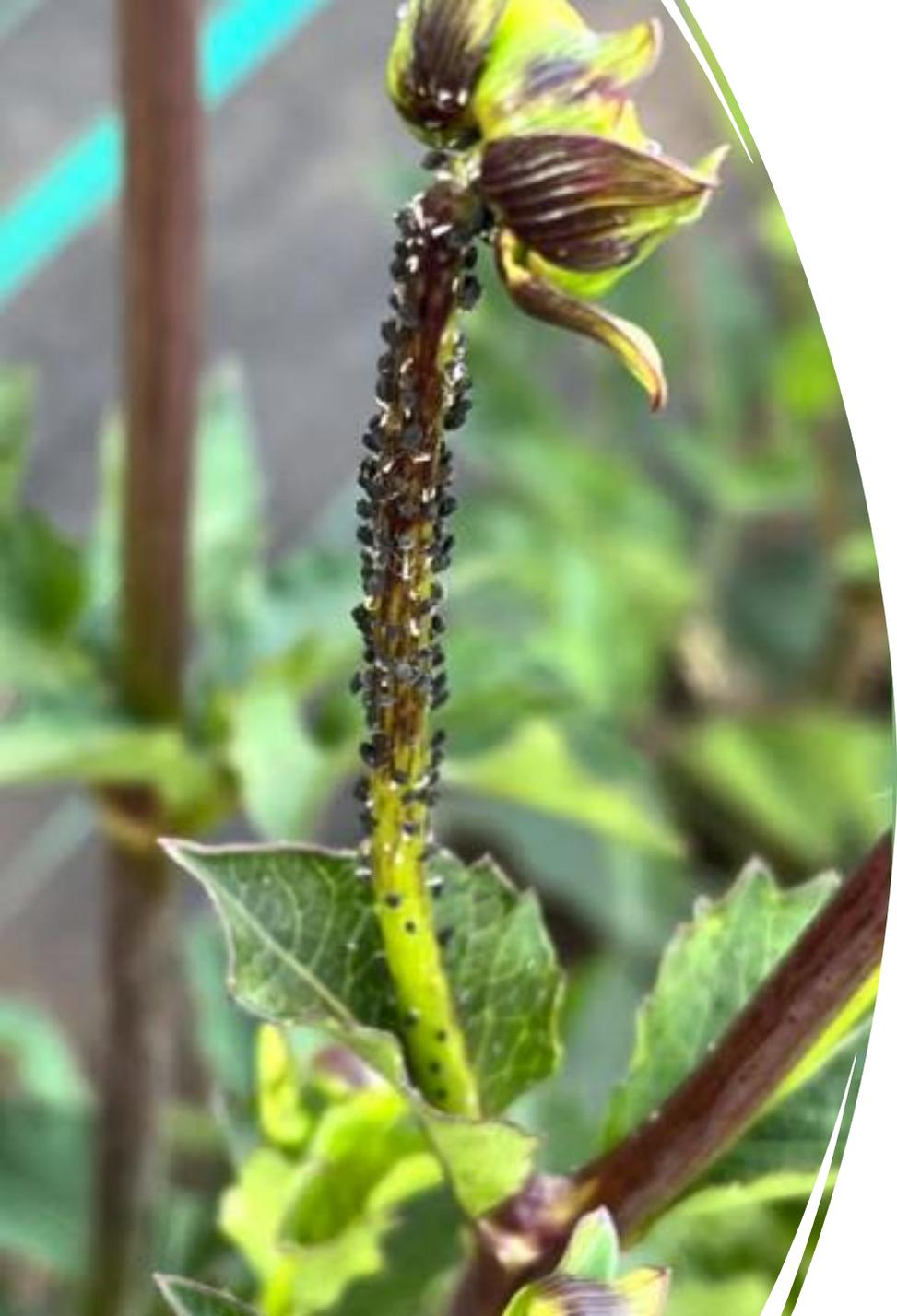
Inorganic

- The use of synthetic, man-made or mined mineral products to manage pests
- Engineered to provide rapid results
- Can kill ALL insects, even beneficial ones such as pollinators.

APHIDS

- What is it?
 - Small sap-sucking insects that gather on new leaves and buds, causing deformed, sticky (honeydew), or stunted growth.



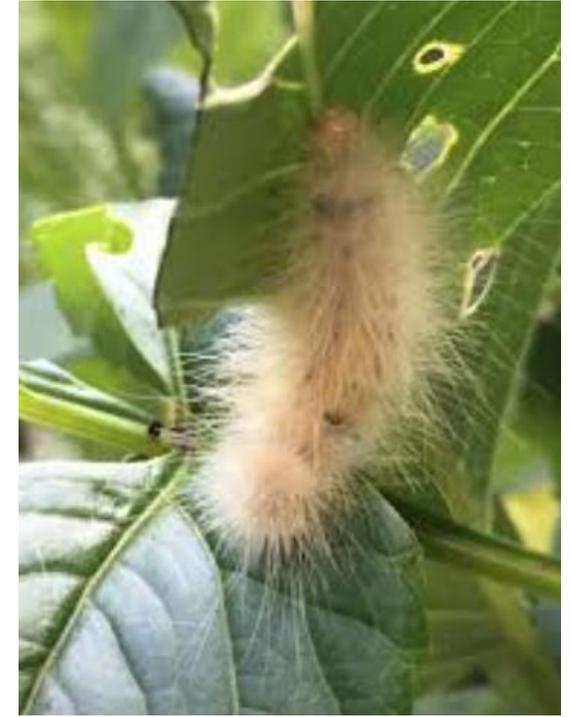


Treatments

- Organic
 - Insecticidal Soap/Neem oil
 - Blast with strong jet of water
 - Encourage natural predators like ladybugs
 - Control ants, which protect aphids

CATERPILLARS

- Signs:
 - Visible chewed leaves
 - Skeletonized foliage
 - Silk threads
 - Frass (caterpillar droppings)



Treatment

- Organic
 - Hand-pick in the early morning or evening
 - Blast with strong jet of water
 - *Bacillus thuringiensis* (Bt)



CUCUMBER BEETLES

- Signs:
 - Feed on petals, pollen, and foliage
 - Irregularly shaped, tiny, or shot-holes in leaves
 - Ragged, chewed petals that ruin blooms
 - Burrow deep into flowers, leaving behind small black fecal dots



Treatment

- Organic:
 - Hand-pick
 - Use Kaolin clay BEFORE infestation, will not kill them
 - Combination of pyrethrin insecticides and neem
 - Spinosad
 - Diatomaceous earth





EARWIGS

- What is it?
- Nocturnal pest that chews holes in young leaves and buds, leaving black, granular frass (excrement)



Treatment

Organic	Inorganic
Spray containing Pyrethrins = Bonide	Sevin-5 dust or spray
Avoid mulching with shredded leaves or straw	Malathion
<i>Sluggo Plus</i>	
Place upside down pot filled with straw on stakes, or use rolled-up wet newspaper near plants to trap	

Japanese Beetles

- Common in Ohio during the summer, skeletonizing foliage and ruining blooms



Treatment

- Organic
 - Use mesh bags to protect blooms
 - Apply milky spore in the soil to reduce grubs
 - Japanese beetle traps



LEAF MINERS

- Symptoms appear as pale, winding tunnels, squiggly lines, or blotches just under the leaf surface



Treatment

- Organic:
 - Remove and destroy heavily infested leaves (do NOT compost)
 - Neem oil



LEAFHOPPERS

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- Usually early summer; feeds on plant sap, potentially leading to stunted growth and reduced yields.
 - Characterized by “hopperburn” – yellowing, curling, and browning leaf tips and margins



Treatment

- Organic:
 - Encourage natural predators like lady bugs and lacewings
 - Insecticidal soaps or neem oil for nymphs, especially spraying the underside of leaves
 - Spray containing pyrethrins



SLUGS AND SNAILS

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- Most destructive to young plants, leaving slimy trails and ragged, chewed foliage.



Treatment

- Organic:
 - Hand-pick in the early morning or evening
 - Use copper tape or diatomaceous earth for slugs
 - Sluggo



SPIIDER MITES

- Thrive in hot and dry (low humidity) environments.
- Will target plants that are already stressed or weak
- Tiny yellow, white, or brown spots on leaves caused by feeding.
- Fine, silky webbing
- Leaves may look dirty, pale or prematurely turn brown





Treatment

Organic	Inorganic
Immediately isolate infested plant and wash with strong stream of water, focusing on the underside of leaves	Bifenthrin = Talstar
Insecticidal soap, neem oil, repeating every 3-7 days for several weeks to break life cycle	Abamectin = Avid, Syngenta
Predatory mites or green lacewings	
Remove and destroy infected leaves	

NOTE: Pesticides claiming “for mite suppression” are usually weak miticides and will not perform well. If a miticide has been used correctly and the population has not been controlled within 5-7 days, do not use the same miticide!

Q&A

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